

**Together for
humanity**



**30TH
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**

GENEVA 2007



REPORT OF THE 30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

**INCLUDING THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE 2007
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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RESULTS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

1.1 RESOLUTIONS OF THE 2007 COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

1.1.1 RESOLUTION 1: WORK OF THE STANDING COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

The Council of Delegates,

taking note of the report submitted by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission) on its work since November 2005,

commending the Standing Commission for its continued efforts to seek the views, active cooperation and involvement of National Societies in the identification and analysis of issues important to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) as a whole,

appreciating in particular the input obtained from National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) in consultations held in preparation for the Council of Delegates and the 30th International Conference in 2007,

taking note with appreciation of the work carried out with the aim of clarifying the procedures and principles for the election of the Standing Commission to ensure more equitable geographic representation,

recalling Resolution 4 of the 2005 Council of Delegates requesting the Standing Commission to review

the modes of financing its work and to present its recommendations to the 2007 Council of Delegates,

1. *requests* the Standing Commission to continue actively to promote cooperation and harmony within the Movement and among its components through consultations, through involvement in the preparation of issues important to the Movement as a whole and by participating in existing Movement fora where it finds it useful and necessary for these purposes;
2. *encourages* the Standing Commission to continue, in line with Article 18 of the Statutes of the Movement and with established practice, to involve personalities from National Societies and from the ICRC and the International Federation and to set up such ad hoc working groups or consultative mechanisms as it deems necessary;
3. *invites* the Standing Commission to maintain an advisory working group, with representatives of all the components, on timely planning for the 2009 Council of Delegates and actively to promote and follow up resolutions adopted by this Council and the 30th International Conference;
4. *adopts* the revised principle for financing the work of the Standing Commission and the implications of paragraphs 1-3, which shall be based on a two-year plan of action and budget to be the joint financial responsibility of the International Federation, the ICRC and the National Societies, on the basis of one-third each, with the National

Society contributions continuing on a voluntary basis.

1.1.2 RESOLUTION 2: TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND THE AGREEMENT ON OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY AND THE MAGEN DAVID ADOM IN ISRAEL

The Council of Delegates,

taking into account the report presented to it by Mr Pär Stenbäck, the independent monitor appointed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) with the agreement of the Magen David Adom in Israel (MDA) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) to monitor the progress achieved in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements (AOA) of 28 November 2005 between the PRCS and the MDA,

noting with profound concern the information brought by the monitor on the suffering of the population in the occupied Palestinian territories,

noting also that the report indicates clearly that much remains to be done for the MoU and AOA to be implemented,

1. *calls upon* the authorities concerned to facilitate the implementation of the MoU, as referred to in the report presented by the independent monitor, since this will contribute to the alleviation of the suffering of the population of the occupied Palestinian territories;
2. *requests* the ICRC and the International Federation to continue to support and strengthen the monitoring of the implementation of the MoU as well as the cooperation between the two National Societies envisaged in the MoU;
3. *requests* the ICRC and the International Federation to arrange for the provision of a report on progress towards the full implementation of the MoU to the Council of Delegates, and through it to the International Conference;

4. *calls upon* the National Societies concerned to continue their dialogue with the authorities on their obligation to respect the principles and rules of the Movement as well as international humanitarian law;

5. *requests* the Chairman of the Council of Delegates to bring this resolution to the attention of the 30th International Conference.

1.1.3 RESOLUTION 3: SPECIFIC NATURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT IN ACTION AND PARTNERSHIP AND THE ROLE OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES AS AUXILIARIES TO THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES IN THE HUMANITARIAN FIELD

The Council of Delegates,

recalling the Movement's Fundamental Principle of independence as well as Articles 3 and 4.3 of the Statutes of the Movement whereby the National Societies are recognized by all governments as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field,

recalling Articles 24, 26 and 27 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, of 12 August 1949, Articles 24 and 25 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, of 12 August 1949, and Article 63 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,

recalling Resolution 9 of the Council of Delegates of 2005,

reaffirming the obligation of all the components of the Movement to act at all times in conformity with the Fundamental Principles, the Statutes of the Movement and the rules governing the use of the emblems and to take full account of the relevant Movement policies,

1. *recognizes* that the public authorities, and National Societies as auxiliaries, enjoy a specific 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 National Society supplements or substitutes for public humanitarian services; the National Society must be able to deliver its humanitarian services at all times in conformity with the Fundamental Principles, in particular those of neutrality and independence, and with its other obligations under the Movement's Statutes as agreed by States at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent;

2. *emphasizes* that National Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field;
 - a) have a duty to consider seriously any request by their public authorities to carry out activities within the agreed framework;
 - b) have a duty to decline any request by their public authorities related to the above activities if it is in conflict with the Fundamental Principles, the Statutes or the mission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;
3. *underlines* the need for the public authorities to respect the above decisions of the National Societies;
4. *calls upon* National Societies to engage in a balanced relationship with their respective public authorities, with clear and reciprocal responsibilities in the humanitarian field, and thereafter to maintain and enhance a permanent dialogue at all levels within this agreed framework for humanitarian action;
5. *stresses* that the National Society, whilst acknowledging that its personnel and assets are provided to the medical services of the State's armed forces in accordance with Article 26 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949 and are thus subject to military laws and regulations, must respect the Fundamental Principles, including that of neutrality, and at all times maintain its autonomy and ensure that it is clearly distinguishable from military and other governmental bodies;
6. *calls upon* National Societies to build capacity enabling them to promote their auxiliary role domestically in their dialogue with the government and encourages the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to support the National Societies therein;

7. *welcomes* the concept of a toolbox on good partnerships for use by National Societies when concluding partnership arrangements, including those relevant to the auxiliary role of National Societies, and invites the International Federation and the ICRC to develop this toolbox and put it at the disposal of the National Societies;
8. *welcomes* the Code of Good Partnership initiative, encourages all the components of the Movement to further develop this Code and tools to implement it and to take part in open consultation processes that build on experiences from various partnership initiatives and to make recommendations or submit a resolution, as appropriate, to the Council of Delegates in 2009;
9. *requests* the International Federation and the ICRC to further assist members in ensuring that their respective domestic legislation provides for the appropriate legal framework for the effective functioning of the National Society as auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

1.1.4 RESOLUTION 4: RESTORING FAMILY LINKS STRATEGY (AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN) FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT (2008-2018)

The Council of Delegates,

recalling with deep concern the suffering endured by those who have lost contact with, or have no news of, their loved ones as a consequence of armed conflict or other situations of violence, natural or man-made disasters or other circumstances requiring a humanitarian response,

recognizing that families provide the basis for all individuals to cope with the consequences of these tragic events, and *reiterating* the responsibility of each component of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) to help in the restoration or maintenance of contact between members of families separated in such circumstances,

recalling the role which the Central Tracing Agency (CTA) of the International Committee of the Red

Cross (ICRC) plays as a coordinator and as a technical adviser to National Societies and governments and the specific responsibility of the National Societies in restoring family links and also *recalling* the importance for the Movement of relying on a sound international Red Cross and Red Crescent network in order to take effective action in restoring family links (RFL) as recognized in Resolution 16 of the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross,

recognizing and reaffirming the lead role of the ICRC in RFL within the Movement,

noting the need to strengthen the capacity of the Family Links Network to assist people who are without news of their families,

recalling further the Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted in Resolution 1 of the 28th International Conference, in particular its General Objective 1 on respecting and restoring the dignity of missing persons and their families and General Objective 3 on reducing the risk and impact of disasters,

expressing appreciation for the efforts and the commitment of the ICRC to develop the Restoring Family Links Strategy (and Implementation Plan) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2008-2018 (RFL Strategy) as part of the implementation of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action,

noting with satisfaction the consultation process within the Movement that led to the successful development of the RFL Strategy, in particular the role played by the Advisory Group composed of 19 National Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the ICRC and by the four regional RFL conferences attended by the leaders of National Societies in 2006,

1. *reaffirms* the commitment of the Movement to RFL and reinforces its resolve to stay the leader in this field;
2. *adopts* the Restoring Family Links Strategy (and Implementation Plan) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2008-2018;
3. *commends* the commitment expressed so far by all the components of the Movement to contribute to the implementation of the RFL Strategy;
4. *calls upon* all National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation to:
 - a) promote knowledge and understanding of this Strategy at all levels of their respective organizations;
 - b) implement the actions outlined in this Strategy as part of their organizational strategies and plans at national, regional and international levels;
 - c) allocate the necessary resources to carry them out;
5. *recommends that* the ICRC and the International Federation further enhance their cooperation with a view to supporting National Societies in their efforts to implement the Strategy, taking into consideration the challenges that National Societies have identified and highlighted during the consultation process;
6. *encourages* partnerships amongst National Societies to support each other in building their RFL capacity;
7. *requests* the ICRC to bring the RFL Strategy to the attention of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent with a view in particular to encouraging member States to better understand and support the RFL activities carried out by the Movement;
8. *welcomes* the ICRC's initiative to establish and chair an implementation group composed of National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC, to provide guidance and support in the implementation process as well as to develop the criteria for its success and indicators to measure that success;
9. *further requests* all the components of the Movement to carry out the required self-assessments on the implementation of the Strategy and provide this information to the ICRC for monitoring and reporting purposes;
10. *invites* the ICRC to report to the 2011 and 2015 Council of Delegates on the results achieved through the implementation of the Strategy.

Annex to Resolution 4

Document prepared by the Central Tracing Agency of the International Committee of the Red Cross in consultation with National Societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, August 2007 (Original: English).

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1. VISION AND INTRODUCTION

Whenever people are separated from, or without news of, their loved ones as a result of armed conflict, other situations of violence, natural disaster or other situations requiring a humanitarian response, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement responds efficiently and effectively by mobilizing its resources to restore family links.

Armed conflicts, other situations of violence, natural and man-made disasters, international migration and other hardships leave countless people seeking news of family members. Respect for family unity goes hand in hand with respect for human dignity. A person's well-being depends greatly on his/her ability to stay in touch with loved ones or at least receive information about what has happened to them. The various components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) have been striving for decades to restore family links (RFL). This unique service, with the moral support it affords, lies at the heart of the Movement's work. Every year RFL benefits hundreds of thousands of people.

RFL is the generic term given to a range of activities that aim to prevent separation and disappearance, restore and maintain contact between family members and clarify the fate of persons reported missing. These activities are often interconnected with psychological, legal and material support for families and persons affected, resettlement or reintegration programmes and social-welfare services. Other activities include the management of human remains and forensic identification.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is strongly committed to helping people left without news of their relatives. In reaffirming and implementing the commitments it made at the International Conference of Governmental and Non-Governmental Experts on the Missing and their Families (2003) and as part of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action of the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2003), the organization launched a global initiative to strengthen the Movement's ability to restore family links. The RFL Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is the outcome of this initiative. It is also a reaffirmation of the ICRC's support for National Societies in meeting their RFL obligations, as defined in the Movement's Statutes and in resolutions adopted over the years by the Council of Delegates and the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Today, the Family Links Network (comprising the Central Tracing Agency, the tracing agencies in ICRC delegations, and the National Societies' tracing services) faces significant challenges. Across the Network there

is insufficient understanding of the work of restoring family links and an inadequate sense of commitment and responsibility. When this is combined with the problem of scarce resources, the increasing scale and complexity of the situations requiring humanitarian action, and the growing number of other entities involved in this traditional field of Movement activity, great effort is needed if the various components of the Movement are to retain their high profile.

The ICRC, the National Societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) all have a responsibility to build, strengthen and maintain the Family Links Network. The effectiveness of this unique international network depends on the components' ability to strengthen capacity, intensify cooperation and prioritize action. To address these issues, the Movement needs to take a more global approach to building capacities across the Network by:

- increasing National Society participation;
- strengthening the operational efficiency of the ICRC and its partnership approach with National Societies in operational contexts;
- increasing cooperation between the ICRC and the International Federation to support both the development of National Societies and their RFL activities.

The RFL Strategy for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement builds on the Movement's Statutes and on resolutions of the International Conference and the Council of Delegates, and is underpinned by the Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Seville Agreement, Council of Delegates, November 1997) and its subsequent Supplementary Measures (Council of Delegates, Seoul, November 2005). The Strategy was not drawn up in a vacuum. It is based on the strengths and knowledge of individual National Society tracing services and the experience and expertise of the ICRC, and seeks to develop a consistent approach that will enhance RFL work, both locally and worldwide.

Effective change takes time and needs resources. The RFL Strategy for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement recognizes the importance of the task and expresses the Movement's long-term commitment to shouldering it.

2. RESTORING FAMILY LINKS STRATEGY

2.1 Restoring family links and the role of the Movement's components

The RFL activities of the various components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in particular the ICRC and the National Societies, are drawn from the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Movement's Statutes, and the resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and those of the Council of Delegates. They are further based on resolutions of the International Federation's statutory meetings, together with the policy frameworks of the ICRC, individual National Societies and the International Federation.

Under international law, everyone has the right to know what has happened to missing relatives, and to correspond and communicate with members of their family from whom they have been separated. The main responsibility for ensuring that these rights are respected lies with authorities of the State (including armed security forces) and, in situations of armed conflict, any other organized armed groups. However, they may be unable or unwilling to do so.

The Movement's principal strength lies in its potential to provide a worldwide RFL network and at the same time a grassroots network in each country that can apply the same principles and working methods. The Movement can thus achieve greater results than any other humanitarian organization in the world.

The relevant components of the Movement undertake RFL activities whenever required and for as long as needed, helping people whose loved ones are unaccounted for or who are separated from them as a consequence of specific situations such as:

- armed conflicts and other situations of violence;
- natural and man-made disasters;
- population movements including international migration;
- other situations requiring a humanitarian response and where the specific capacities and mandates of the components of the Movement and the Red Cross/Red Crescent principles represent added value.

RFL activities may take various forms, depending on the situation and context:

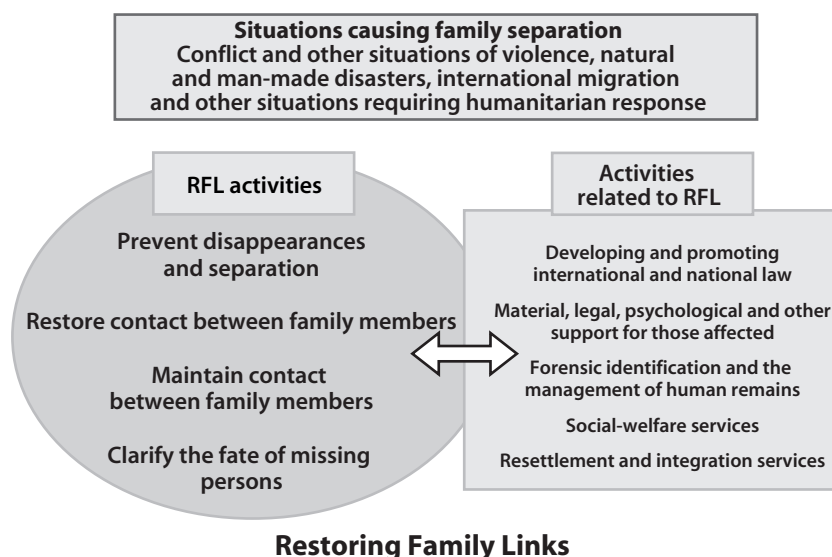
- organizing the exchange of family news;

- tracing individuals;
- registering and following up individuals (children or adults) to prevent their disappearance and to enable their families to be informed;
- reuniting families and repatriation;
- collecting, managing and forwarding information on the dead (location, recovery and identification);
- transmitting official documents, such as birth certificates, identity papers or various other certificates issued by the authorities;
- issuing attestations of individual detention and documents attesting to other situations that led to individual registration;
- issuing ICRC travel documents;
- monitoring the integration of those reunited with their family members;
- promoting and supporting the establishment of mechanisms to clarify the fate of persons unaccounted for.

These activities imply regular contact and interventions with the authorities on the right of relatives to communicate with one another and be informed of each other's whereabouts or fate.

These activities relate to other activities including:

- the development and promotion of international law and support for its application, including reform of existing law where needed;
- the management of human remains and forensic identification;
- material, legal and psychological support to the families of missing persons;
- resettlement services or reintegration programmes for vulnerable groups, such as street children, where family reunification has failed or is not possible;
- dealing with cases of successful reunification where, however, there may be a need for integration (e.g. children formerly affiliated with fighting forces);
- social-welfare services.



This requires a cross-disciplinary approach and almost always involves working with actors outside the Movement, including the private sector.

Protecting personal data and confidential handling of other sensitive information are crucial to people's safety. This must be kept in mind when using public information networks, forwarding data electronically, conducting active searches in the field and making use of other organizations or individuals.

The safety of Red Cross and Red Crescent workers must also be ensured.

The Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures re-emphasize the crucial importance of coordinating the efforts of the Movement's components to optimize assistance. They also confirm the organizational concept of a "lead role" based on specific competencies assigned to a component by the Geneva Conventions, the Movement's Statutes and/or resolutions of the International Conference of the

Red Cross and Red Crescent. The concept of lead role implies the existence of other partners with rights and responsibilities in these matters.

The role of the ICRC

As a neutral and independent organization, the ICRC has the role of protecting and assisting the victims of 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. In this regard the ICRC takes a comprehensive approach to RFL and aims to prevent separation, restore and maintain contact between separated family members, clarify what has happened to persons reported missing, and provide support for their families. Unaccompanied children separated from their families are of particular concern to the ICRC, given their vulnerability, as are other affected persons such as women acting alone as heads of households.

The part played by the ICRC in RFL, including its lead role within the Movement, is more precisely defined by the following instruments:

- the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols;
- the Statutes of the Movement, in particular Article 5.2 (e) specifying that the ICRC must ensure the operation of the Central Tracing Agency (CTA) as stipulated by the Geneva Conventions;
- resolutions of the Movement's statutory bodies, in particular, those of the 25th and 26th International Conferences (Geneva, 1986 and 1995), which draw the attention of the States to the role of the ICRC's CTA as coordinator and technical adviser to National Societies and governments;
- resolutions of the Council of Delegates, and the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures.

In addition to its operational responsibilities the ICRC, through the CTA, must coordinate, advise and strengthen the capacity of its partners within the Movement in RFL matters, whether in connection with a conflict or other situation of violence, natural or man-made disaster, international migration or other situations requiring a humanitarian response from the Movement.

The CTA promotes consistency within the Network and provides the National Societies with methods and guidelines.¹

As coordinator, the CTA decides what action is to be taken in armed conflict or other situations of violence. In other circumstances requiring an international effort it coordinates the activities of National Society tracing services to ensure the most effective possible response to RFL needs.

As technical adviser, the CTA establishes working practices for tracing services in all situations. Training seminars and regional meetings are held for the purpose of pooling experience and consolidating shared knowledge.

The role of the National Societies

The functions of the National Societies are set out in Article 3 of the Movement's Statutes. The National Societies must carry out their humanitarian activities in conformity with their own statutes and national legislation and act as auxiliaries to their national authorities in the humanitarian field. In particular, their role is to assist the victims of armed conflict as stipulated by the Geneva Conventions, and the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies for whom help is needed (Articles 3.1 and 3.2). They contribute, as far as they are able, to the development of other National Societies (Article 3.3). The Seville Agreement stresses that a National Society is responsible for its own development.

As outlined in Resolution XVI of the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross, 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, natural or man-made disaster, or other emergency.

¹ Such as *Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies* (ICRC, November 2000) and the *Recommendations and Conclusions of the International Conference of Governmental and Non-Governmental Experts on the Missing and their Families* (2003).

National Societies are also called upon to take action in accordance with the resolutions of regional Red Cross and Red Crescent conferences and the policy frameworks established within the International Federation. These cover migration as well as natural and man-made disasters.

In view of the Movement's responsibility for helping to preserve or restore the family unit, the National Societies need to incorporate their RFL activities in an overall plan of action. They must also draw the attention of the public, humanitarian agencies and governments to the existence and significance of their RFL activities.

Individual National Societies are responsible for setting up or consolidating an effective national RFL network. Depending on the circumstances, they must work with the CTA, the relevant ICRC delegations and/or the tracing services of other National Societies. They must decide what action is to be taken during national disasters, and may call on the ICRC where the RFL response is beyond their capacity.

The role of the Secretariat of the International Federation

The functions of the Secretariat of the International Federation are defined in Article 6 of the Movement's Statutes, and in the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures. The Secretariat has the lead role regarding the development of National Societies and coordinating support for those Societies in terms of institutional development.

Although the Movement's Statutes do not specifically mention the part played by the International Federation in RFL, the Federation Secretariat strives, in coordination with the ICRC, to have RFL activities included in National Society development plans and to ensure that disaster-preparedness and response plans emphasize the role and importance of RFL.

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, the Secretariat will ensure that assessments of the situation 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, particularly the CTA (so that the ICRC can play its lead role), and cooperation in the deployment of tracing delegates.

2.2 The status of the Family Links Network

To determine how the Movement will achieve its vision in RFL, it is necessary to understand the current capabilities of the National Society tracing services, the CTA and ICRC delegations, and to identify the key issues.

The capacities of the National Societies

In 2005, a global mapping exercise was initiated to assess the capacities of the National Societies' tracing services. Over a 12-month period, 154 National Societies completed an RFL assessment, often in consultation with ICRC delegations.

The capacity assessment considered five core areas:

- programme ownership;
- programme planning and organization;
- the skills and expertise needed to carry out and manage RFL activities;
- the network of relationships;
- tools and other resources needed to achieve professionalism and efficiency.

The assessment indicates that there is an overall lack of a sense of commitment to RFL activities within the National Societies. While some Societies see RFL as part of their responsibilities, generally RFL is not viewed as something that should be placed at the centre of the Movement's humanitarian response. While some National Societies are well able to conduct RFL activities, capacity across the Network is uneven and in some areas insufficient. Very few National Societies have assessed needs in terms of RFL. Such assessments are an important means of identifying individuals and populations requiring help and of supporting programme planning, resource allocation and service delivery.

While some National Societies have a good understanding of RFL and of the expertise needed to conduct and manage those activities, the majority could improve in this area. Programme tools and resources require further development if the National Societies are to fully provide professional and effective services. Without the knowledge, skills and material resources required to carry out RFL, it is impossible to meet the needs.

It is essential for a National Society to develop and maintain relationships with other components of the Movement, and to have contact with other humanitarian agencies and national authorities as well as affected

individuals and populations, if it is to engage in strategic dialogue, develop targeted services and disseminate information. However, the majority of National Societies have few or no relationships of this sort, and have little or no regular contact with other components of the Movement regarding RFL, at either strategic or service delivery levels.

Overall, the capacity of National Society tracing services to identify and meet RFL needs is insufficient. The Movement faces significant challenges if it is to have a truly functional worldwide Network to help people who are without news of loved ones. However, strengths do exist within National Societies in all areas covered by the capacity assessment. The Network must capitalize on these strengths, making better use of information, skills, tools and resources to enhance the capacity of individual Societies and to strengthen the Network as a whole.

The capacity of the ICRC, through the CTA, to act as coordinator and technical adviser on RFL

In 2006, the ICRC/CTA undertook a review of its capacity to act as coordinator and technical adviser on RFL to National Societies. This assessment entailed interviews with headquarters staff, field questionnaires and visits involving other humanitarian actors, national authorities and some National Societies.

The assessment considered several key areas:

- the role of coordinator and technical adviser;
- the management and development of human resources;
- RFL methods and tools.

The review highlighted the importance of the ICRC's proximity to individuals and populations through its extensive, long-term field presence, and the strength this provides. Its solid experience in the field of RFL and its ability to mobilize financial resources are well recognized and considered a strength that could be further exploited. Nevertheless, the ICRC could do more to mainstream RFL in emergency and contingency planning. Systematic deployment of RFL specialists in emerging situations or in the start-up phase of new operations would enhance both assessment and planning.

The definition and positioning of RFL within the ICRC plays an important role in communication, promotion and lobbying, both internally and externally. There is a need for clear definitions of the role of coordinator and technical adviser, and of RFL itself. These terms are understood in different ways within the ICRC and this has an impact on how National Societies and others outside the Movement understand the concepts. Clear terminology should be consistently applied in all documentation and communication regarding RFL.

One of the strengths of the CTA is its expertise in protecting and managing personal data and its tradition of confidentiality. The value of this cannot be overstated.

On the other hand, the ICRC/CTA could strengthen its quality-assurance role by clearly defining the desired RFL results and developing indicators for monitoring and performance management. Systematic consultation of beneficiaries would also provide an opportunity to learn more about their needs and expectations.

RFL knowledge management has a significant impact on the effectiveness by which the Network and the ICRC undertake RFL. While tools are available, they are often not known, or are not used consistently. Up-to-date, accessible, high-quality tools are essential to improving performance and to raising the ICRC's and National Societies' profile in the field of RFL.

As coordinator of the Family Links Network, the CTA has the role of both facilitating and leading. The ICRC/CTA nevertheless needs to improve its understanding of the needs of the Network and its activities. The ICRC could strengthen this role by aiming to become a centre of excellence while broadening access across the Network to RFL knowledge, principles and tools. In addition, the ICRC/CTA could take greater advantage of the experience and interest of National Societies to build capacity across the Network.

Overall, the ICRC/CTA has great ability in terms of its traditional tasks. However, further investment is needed in building National Society capacity and exploiting the resources available within the Network.

2.3 The external environment

The work of restoring family links takes place in an ever-changing environment to which the Movement must constantly adapt. The changing nature of armed conflict and other situations of violence, the increase in the number of natural and man-made disasters, massive population movements and forgotten social cases, and the emergence of new technologies all affect the environment in which the Movement undertakes RFL.

- **Armed conflicts and other situations of violence**

Today, internal armed conflicts and other types of internal violence account for most cases of armed violence. These are generally characterized by the widespread proliferation of weapons and by mass displacement, especially from the countryside to towns, resulting in sprawling urban centres in many countries. In such situations, families become dispersed, combatants and civilians are wounded, people are killed and their bodies are not properly identified, and people are detained without anyone being notified. In addition, regions become inaccessible and means of communication are disrupted. While the total number of refugees has decreased in recent years to an estimated 8.4 million persons,² the number of internally displaced persons resulting from conflict and other situations of violence is currently estimated at around 23.7 million, involving some 50 countries.³

- **Natural and man-made disasters**

Global climate change is expected to have wide-ranging effects on the natural environment, on societies and on economies. Scientists predict that this change will increase the number of extreme weather events. Population growth, urbanization and the impact of poverty on people's ability to move make it more likely that increasing numbers will be vulnerable to natural disasters. From 2004 to 2006, millions of people were displaced and hundreds of thousands lost their lives or livelihoods as a result of tsunamis, earthquakes and hurricanes.

- **Management of human remains and information on the dead**

Failure to identify people who have died during emergencies – especially armed conflicts or other situations of violence – significantly increases the number of persons classified as missing. Very often, little or nothing is done to find, collect and deal with the remains of those killed in fighting or in other circumstances. Human remains are often buried without being identified and graves are often not marked. As a result, valuable information on the dead is lost or unavailable, and families either do not know that their missing relatives have died at all, or are aware of their death but do not know the location of their bodies.

Managing human remains is also one of the most difficult aspects of the response to natural and man-made disasters. Recent events – the continuing plight of relatives of persons missing in connection with the conflicts in the Balkans and the massive loss of life following the South Asian tsunami in 2004 and several other recent major disasters in the Americas and South Asia – highlighted limits to the ability of local systems to enable identification of human remains. There are also challenges involving inter-agency coordination, especially in situations where fact-finding missions are taking place alongside humanitarian operations, with clear differences in mandates and priorities.

- **International migration**

Cross-border population movements have steadily increased and now constitute one of the most complex issues faced by governments, humanitarian organizations and other bodies. The United Nations⁴ estimated the number of migrants⁵ at 191 million in 2005 and this figure is projected to reach 230 million by 2050. International migration affects countries at different levels of economic development and of varying ideologies and cultures. Migrants are now to be found in every part of the world, with many States being simultaneously countries of origin, transit and destination. Increasingly restrictive migration policies have resulted in the proliferation of processing and detention centres and the increased involvement of various organizations in helping people deprived of their freedom in the areas of legal and psychological support, family tracing and integration. In addition, trafficking in persons and human smuggling are two of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity.

² *Global Refugee Trends* (UNHCR, 9 June 2006): "By the end of 2005, the global number of refugees reached an estimated 8.4 million persons, the lowest level since 1980." This figure does not include 4.3 million Palestinian refugees falling under the responsibility of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East.

³ *Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2005* (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, March 2006).

⁴ *Trends in Migrant Stock* (United Nations, Revision 2005).

⁵ People who crossed an international border.

According to various studies, 600,000 to 800,000⁶ people are allegedly trafficked each year, the majority women and children. Extreme poverty, lack of economic opportunity, civil unrest, political uncertainty and disregard for the basic principles of humanity all contribute to an environment that encourages the smuggling and trafficking of human beings.

- **Civil society**

Demands on public services for support to individuals and whole communities continue to grow as a result of conflicts, natural and man-made disasters, poverty and the movement of populations within and from outside countries. Public services will face increasing pressure to meet the need for:

- information on the whereabouts of family members;
- legal advice and social and psychological support for the families of missing persons and for migrant populations;
- family reunification, integration and resettlement services.

- **Science**

Forensic sciences play an increasingly important role in the management and identification of the remains of people who have disappeared or been killed in connection with conflict or other man-made or natural disasters. In particular, forensic procedures (autopsies, fingerprinting, dental examinations and DNA analysis) are used to identify remains and to find out what has happened to missing persons.

- **Technology**

Access to information technology continues to grow across the world, providing greater opportunities for communication and shortening the time needed for a humanitarian response. Major differences in access to and use of these technologies persist, but substantial change has taken place. Mobile-phone capacity has grown significantly in recent years in nearly all parts of the world, particularly Asia and Latin America. Despite major differences between countries and areas, Africa is also experiencing impressive growth in mobile-phone use. Increased access to the Internet, greater use of computers and regionally accessible protected databases are providing more effective ways of communicating and transmitting data. At the same time this raises issues for the protection of personal data and other sensitive information.

- **Media**

The media are present on the ground in selected crises of humanitarian concern, playing a catalytic role as formers of public opinion and affecting the way in which governments and humanitarian agencies deal with those crises. The immediacy of international news (especially television) and widespread access to information technologies increase, it is true, the ability of the humanitarian sector to respond rapidly to needs. But they also generate unrealistic expectations. Meanwhile, other crises – often with a more severe impact in humanitarian terms – receive little media attention. The media can today define what is and what is not a “humanitarian emergency” by emphasizing or ignoring an event.

- **Other actors**

The number of organizations conducting, or willing to conduct, RFL continues to increase, especially in connection with unaccompanied minors and/or minors separated from their families. The United Nations Children’s Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Save the Children Fund, the International Rescue Committee and World Vision International are some of the best-known organizations helping these children. The International Organization for Migration is stepping up its work in the field of migration, and other bodies such as the International Commission on Missing Persons are intensifying their work to resolve cases of persons unaccounted for. Increasingly the Movement finds itself in competition with international and national organizations that today engage in this traditional Movement activity. There is often a lack of inter-agency cooperation and coordination owing to inadequate specialized skills and common standards and procedures, to an absence of operational planning and knowledge of activities carried out by others, to limited financial resources and to a desire to promote one’s own organization. The corporate sector – especially software companies – is increasingly itself taking RFL action or supporting others in this realm during high-profile natural and man-made disasters.

⁶ “Migration in an interconnected world: New directions for action,” *Report of the Global Commission on International Migration* (October 2005).

In an increasingly competitive environment, the impact of external trends must be anticipated, with services reviewed and adapted to render them increasingly professional, targeted and innovative. Intensified coordination within the Movement and cooperation with external actors is essential if the Family Links Network is to help affected groups and individuals and if the service is not to be taken over by other humanitarian organizations.

2.4 Strategic objectives

The capacity assessments and the factors in the external environment highlight the significant challenges faced by the Movement in improving RFL performance. While conflicts and other situations of violence account for the bulk of its work, the Family Links Network also meets RFL needs arising from natural and man-made disasters, population movements (including international migration) and other situations requiring a humanitarian response.

Specific situations require specific RFL responses. Before any services can be provided, the needs related to dispersed family members and missing persons must first be identified, then the gaps in services and the resources required to fill them. This process must ensure that RFL needs are met somehow either by components of the Movement or by other entities.

The RFL Strategy for the Movement therefore proposes three objectives. These objectives flow from an analysis of the current status of the Family Links Network and the present and future challenges presented in the external environment.

Strategic Objective 1

Improving restoring family links capacity and performance

Building a Family Links Network that is robust and meets the needs of affected individuals and populations requires medium- and long-term investment in order to enhance and effectively utilize skills and resources. Building capacity requires coherent methodology, effective mobilization of human resources, training and systematic exchange of information to ensure that the best practices are employed.

The Movement must also better understand the environment in which it works and be able to adapt and fully utilize modern technologies.

Strategic Objective 2

Enhancing coordination and intra-Movement cooperation

The Movement's ability to effectively meet the needs of people separated from their families depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Family Links Network. Improving capacity to respond rapidly in emergencies, enhancing functional cooperation and coordination within the Movement at all times and strengthening interaction with the authorities and other organizations will improve performance across the Network.

As coordinator of the Family Links Network, the ICRC draws more than previously on National Society contributions to build capacity, strengthen regional linkages and share responsibility for building a stronger Network.

Strategic Objective 3

Strengthening support for restoring family links

The Movement is in a unique position to conduct RFL since it is the only organization having a worldwide network with the potential to aid affected individuals and populations everywhere. To lead in the field of RFL, the Movement must place its work on a solid foundation, encourage and motivate staff and volunteers to adopt its vision and practices, and improve communication so as to assume a commanding position in the humanitarian sector. The Movement can enhance its leading role in RFL by strengthening its components.

For the Family Links Network, building capacity means investing in the development and strategic orientation of RFL activities. The Implementation Plan for the RFL Strategy focuses on the following actions:

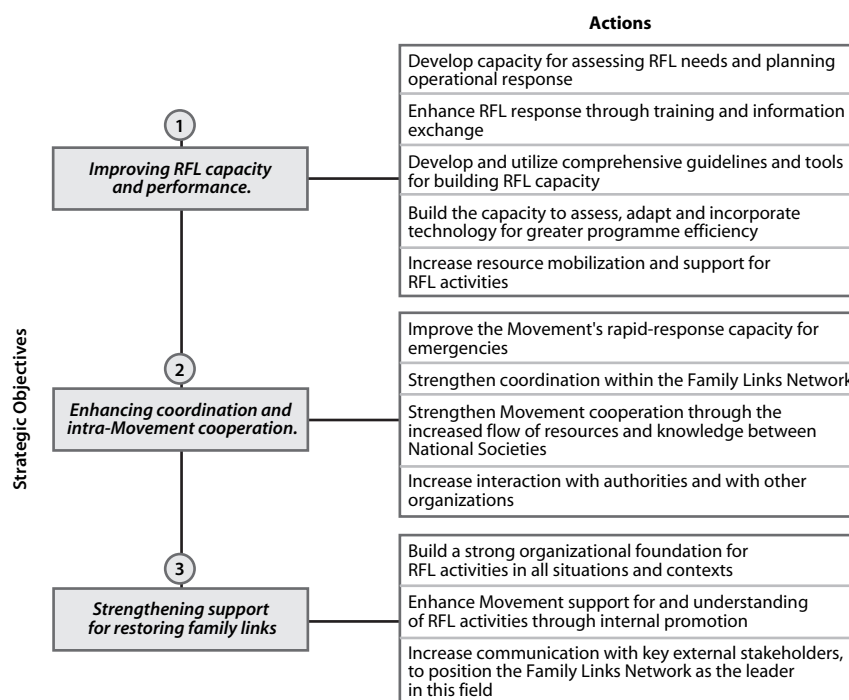
- understanding RFL and the related needs of separated and missing people;
- strengthening programme ownership for RFL activities;
- raising the profile of RFL and enhancing its positioning;
- improving RFL capability and services;
- improving cooperation between National Societies and across the Network as a whole;

- coordinating more effectively and consistently; and
- understanding and improving coordination with authorities and other organizations providing services in this field.

Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – Summary chart

Vision

Whenever people are separated from their loved ones as a result of armed conflict and other situations of violence, natural disaster or other situations requiring a humanitarian response, the Movement responds efficiently and effectively by mobilizing its resources to restore family links.



3. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE MOVEMENT

The ultimate aim of the RFL Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is to better meet the needs of individuals and entire populations by improving the performance of the Family Links Network.

The three strategic objectives cover performance management, coordination and cooperation, and leadership and positioning in the field of RFL. The strategic objectives are all interlinked and the measures taken for one will affect the others.

The Implementation Plan outlines the actions to be taken to achieve each of the strategic objectives and lists the results expected. It also proposes implementation measures and sets out the responsibilities and time frames for the Movement components concerned.

The time frames proposed for implementation of the various measures should guide all components in adapting the Strategy and developing their individual plans. The time frames take into consideration – and may be adapted according to – global, regional, national and local particularities. They are intended to be specific enough to indicate the measures required but general enough to allow adaptation to local circumstances and needs.

Underpinning the Strategy is the effort to enhance participation in the Family Links Network by all the Movement's components. The Strategy and Implementation Plan outlines a Movement-wide approach which recognizes that meeting RFL needs and building capacity is not only an ICRC responsibility but a responsibility for all the components within the framework of their respective mandates.

Strategic Objective 1:

Improving restoring family links capacity and performance

Building a Family Links Network that is robust and meets the needs of affected individuals and populations requires medium and long-term investment in order to enhance and effectively utilize skills and resources. Building capacity requires coherent methodology, effective mobilization of human resources, training and systematic exchange of information to ensure that the best practices are employed.

The Movement must also better understand the environment in which it works and be able to adapt and fully utilize modern technologies.

Action 1: Develop capacity for assessing RFL needs and planning operational response

RFL needs and the capacity to meet them must be systematically and meticulously assessed. The Movement must regularly review and adapt its services to account for needs, capacities, resources and the operational context.

Expected results

- RFL needs are identified, the ability to meet them known. There is regular assessment and adaptation.
- The affected individuals and populations take part in the RFL assessments.
- Plans of action are developed to provide suitable programmes for affected individuals and populations.
- Operational plans clearly respond to national, regional and international needs in emergencies and non-emergencies.

Implementation

The **National Societies** and the **ICRC/CTA** will:

- 1.1.1 Undertake, in consultation with the affected individuals, populations and other concerned parties, comprehensive RFL assessments incorporating:

- existing and potential populations in need of RFL assistance (RFL core activities and interconnected activities);
 - the capacity of the National Society or the ICRC to respond;
 - the role and activities of authorities and other organizations in this field;
- Assessments of RFL needs should include, according to the respective contexts;

- people affected by armed conflict (international and non-international);
- people affected by internal disturbances and other situations of internal violence;
- refugees and asylum seekers;

- migrants;

- people affected by natural and man-made disasters;

- particularly vulnerable people (children, the elderly and social cases, where the components of the Movement may play a specific role by virtue of their respective mandates).

- 1.1.2 Develop operational plans to meet the needs of affected populations and respond to enquiries from within the Family Links Network. Plans should include systematic consultations with beneficiaries and review of RFL action, and consider, where necessary, combining RFL activities with other programmes (e.g. health, social-welfare, disaster-preparedness and response, first-aid).

- 1.1.3 Revise, by 2010, the assessment tools needed to systematically include RFL in surveys of vulnerable populations.

The **ICRC** will:

- 1.1.4 Develop, by 2009, comprehensive RFL assessment tools in consultation with National Societies.

- 1.1.5 Support National Societies, where requested, in the incorporation of RFL in operational plans.

The **International Federation** will:

- 1.1.6 Include RFL in disaster-preparedness and emergency-response plans.

- 1.1.7 Encourage and, in coordination with the ICRC, support National Societies in their incorporation of RFL in operational plans.

Action 2: Enhance RFL response through training and information exchange

To improve performance and build professional practices, it is important to develop the knowledge and skills required for RFL. Greater awareness of the connections between RFL and other Movement programmes leads to better service.

Investing in professional development for staff and volunteers will have a direct, positive impact on performance and enhance the Movement's credibility.

Expected results

- RFL staff and volunteers possess the professional skills and adopt the practices needed for high-quality RFL.
- Greater exchange of information between RFL practitioners at the ICRC and in National Societies.
- International Federation Secretariat staff and delegates understand RFL and the connection between RFL and other programmes.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 1.2.1 Devise and run training programmes for professional staff and volunteers covering RFL response to national needs and to requests from the Family Links Network. RFL will be incorporated into training programmes for volunteers wherever possible.
- 1.2.2 Develop RFL programmes to supervise and support RFL practitioners at headquarters and in the branches.
- 1.2.3 Carry out staff exchanges, programme visits or internships involving other National Societies, convey useful practices and build an understanding of RFL across a variety of contexts.

The **ICRC/CTA** will:

- 1.2.4 Devise and conduct, by 2010, a professional training and development programme enabling heads of National Society tracing services and ICRC practitioners to build skills, consolidate knowledge and enhance information exchange.
- 1.2.5 Devise, by 2011, RFL training modules for various types of situation on the basis of the Restoring Family Links Manual for the Movement.
- 1.2.6 Incorporate the following into professional development programmes for ICRC staff: staff exchanges, programme visits to or internships in National Societies.
- 1.2.7 Every three years conduct regional capacity-building courses for RFL practitioners (commencing in 2011). These workshops will focus on developing professional skills and knowledge, regional and inter-regional issues and the Implementation Plan of the RFL Strategy for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- 1.2.8 Further develop and run training programmes for ICRC staff covering RFL response to national needs and response to requests from the Family Links Network. Increase involvement and training of locally hired ICRC staff in RFL.
- 1.2.9 Increase knowledge and understanding of RFL capacity-building principles and concepts among ICRC staff.
- 1.2.10 Encourage National Societies to carry out staff exchanges, programme visits and internships with other National Societies.

The **International Federation** will:

- 1.2.11 Include, by 2010, RFL in training programmes for Secretariat staff, disaster-preparedness and emergency-response teams and field delegates, utilizing the RFL modules devised in cooperation with the ICRC.
- 1.2.12 Include, by 2010, RFL in training programmes for organizational development delegates.

Action 3: Develop and utilize comprehensive guidelines and tools for building RFL capacity

Restoring family links across a range of diverse situations of humanitarian concern requires common guidelines and tools for building coherent methods, practices and understanding across the Network. To measure performance and ensure that services are of high quality and truly benefit those in need, performance indicators, monitoring and evaluation tools must be used.

Expected results

- Standard guidelines and tools for the development of RFL activities are developed and utilized across the Movement.
- Performance management in RFL is improved through the development and use of indicators, monitoring, evaluation and regular reporting systems.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 1.3.1 Regularly collect, by 2013, data on RFL using the Family Links Network data collection tool and analyse that data to ensure high-quality service and optimum use of resources.
- 1.3.2 Establish, by 2013, processes for the monitoring and evaluation of RFL activities, using the Family Links Network performance management tools.
- 1.3.3 Develop, by 2013, RFL guidelines and tools adapted to the context and culture, in accordance with the Restoring Family Links Manual for the Movement and the Family Links Network performance management tools.
- 1.3.4 Disseminate, by 2014, RFL guidelines and tools throughout their headquarters and branches.

The **ICRC/CTA** will:

- 1.3.5 Lead the development of a comprehensive *Restoring Family Links Manual* for the Movement. Such a manual will build on *Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Conclusions and Recommendations of the Expert Conference on the Missing and their Families, Guiding Principles for Separated and Unaccompanied Children, Guidelines for Tracing in Disasters, Management of Dead Bodies after Disasters: A Field Manual for First Responders*, and the forthcoming *Field Manual for Restoring Family Links in Disasters*, to be completed by 2011.
- 1.3.6 Finalize, by 2008, the *Field Manual for Restoring Family Links in Natural or Man-made Disasters*.
- 1.3.7 Adapt, by 2009 and in cooperation with National Societies and the International Federation, traditional RFL guidelines and tools for use in migration situations and human trafficking.
- 1.3.8 Develop, by 2011, a single RFL data-collection tool for use by all National Societies and the ICRC, and produce periodic reports on the activities of the Family Links Network.
- 1.3.9 Develop, by 2011 and in consultation with National Societies, performance-management tools for the Family Links Network including: indicators (for example, timelines, situation analyses), monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.
- 1.3.10 Support National Societies in incorporating RFL guidelines into disaster-preparedness and response plans, and performance-management systems.
- 1.3.11 Increase, by 2012, the use of qualitative data collection and analysis in the monitoring systems for ICRC operations.

The **International Federation** will:

- 1.3.12 Encourage and, in coordination with the ICRC, support National Societies in incorporating the ICRC's RFL guidelines and tools in disaster preparedness and response, and in performance-management systems.

Action 4: Build the capacity to assess, adapt and incorporate technology for greater programme efficiency

The Movement's components use methods and technologies adapted to the context. To ensure that the Network is responsive and effective, they use electronic data transmission, mobile computers, database systems, the Internet, and new technologies. Modern technologies are assessed and integrated to provide increasingly professional, targeted and innovative services, and thus improved response.

All RFL activities must ensure the protection of individual data and of any other sensitive information, at all times. The confidentiality of personal and other sensitive data is paramount and the principles for their protection must be respected by all.

Expected results

- The Movement has the ability to use the methods and technology best suited to each situation. It anticipates, reviews, adapts and applies new methods and technologies to improve its services.
- The Family Links Network utilizes information technologies according to need, culture and operational context to ensure maximum effectiveness. It protects personal and other sensitive data.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 1.4.1 Ensure that their tracing services have access to the Internet and other technologies that help improve performance.
- 1.4.2 Share with the ICRC applications or technologies developed for RFL.
- 1.4.3 Contribute, by 2012 and in cooperation with the ICRC, to the appraisal and development of new RFL methods and technologies.

- 1.4.4 Approach the CTA to use the ICRC's Family Links website for RFL response in major natural or man-made disasters.
The **ICRC** will:
- 1.4.5 Conduct, by 2010, regular assessments of existing and new RFL methods and technologies.
- 1.4.6 Propose and implement, by 2012, new methods and technologies, backed up by guidelines, for the Family Links Network. These will be based on needs, culture and context.
- 1.4.7 Assess, by 2012, the feasibility of cooperation with private companies to further develop technical tools and provide support materials in accordance with Movement standards.
- 1.4.8 Develop, by 2012 and in consultation with National Societies, standardized software with training materials for National Society RFL activities.
- 1.4.9 Continue to provide National Societies with space on the ICRC's Family Links website, in accordance with defined guidelines.
The **International Federation** will:
- 1.4.10 Support, in coordination with the ICRC, National Societies in making the Internet available to tracing services and accessing other needed technologies.

Action 5: Increase resource mobilization and support for RFL activities

In order to support the development and delivery of RFL activities, the Movement's components must better utilize the resources they have and increase the resources at their disposal. All the components can boost their ability to raise funds. In addition to financial resources, the Movement will better identify the skills, capacities and contributions that the various components need to share. In this way, resources can be better utilized across the Network.

Expected results

- National Societies have the capacity and expertise to raise funds for RFL activities and to support service delivery.
- The different components of the Movement mobilize the resources (financial and non-financial) required to meet the need for RFL.
- Governments and private donors provide financial and material support for RFL.

Implementation

- The **National Societies** will:
- 1.5.1 Ensure cooperation between fundraising, communication and tracing services and develop plans of action to raise funds for RFL that are part of the overall fundraising policy.
- 1.5.2 Share with each other information and best practices regarding fundraising.
- 1.5.3 Allocate core funds to develop and maintain RFL, and assess diversified funding sources.
- 1.5.4 Incorporate RFL in their regular fundraising appeals.
- 1.5.5 Participate, in 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017, in the RFL contributions assessment that will identify the skills, capacities, time and resources that can be shared across the Network.
The **ICRC** will:
- 1.5.6 Coordinate a pan-Movement effort to devise tools to raise funds for National Society RFL, a process to be completed by 2011.
- 1.5.7 Work with National Societies to devise communication and marketing tools for RFL by 2010.
- 1.5.8 Commencing in 2008, undertake every three years an RFL contributions assessment together with National Societies to identify the skills, capacities, time and resources available within the Network and to maximize their use.
The **National Societies** and the **ICRC** will:
- 1.5.9 Devise fundraising proposals based on identified RFL projects.
- 1.5.10 Talk to donors about RFL to ensure that this work is known and understood.
The **International Federation** will:
- 1.5.11 Work with the ICRC to support National Societies in their efforts to ensure cooperation between their fundraising, communication and tracing services, and to include RFL as part of their overall fundraising policies.

Strategic Objective 2:

Enhancing coordination and intra-Movement cooperation

The Movement's ability to effectively meet the needs of people separated from their families depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Family Links Network. Improving capacity to respond rapidly in emergencies, enhancing functional cooperation and coordination within the Movement at all times and strengthening interaction with the authorities and other organizations will improve performance across the Network.

As coordinator of the Family Links Network, the ICRC draws more than previously on National Society contributions to build capacity, strengthen regional linkages and share responsibility for building a stronger Network.

Action 1: Improve the Movement's rapid-response capacity for emergencies

Increasingly major and complex emergencies, combined with varying capacities for RFL response within the Movement, require better coordinated and faster response. Reducing the time taken to assess needs and deliver RFL activities is essential for effectiveness.

Taking into account that RFL operational activities are coordinated by:

- the ICRC in conflicts and other situations of violence or in disasters requiring an international response,
- individual National Societies during national disasters, and
- the ICRC at the request of the National Society where the RFL response is beyond the latter's capacity during national disasters,

greater emphasis must be placed on a rapid and coordinated response, making better use of Movement resources and experienced RFL specialists.

Expected results

- The Movement's various components have incorporated RFL in emergency-preparedness and response plans.
- The components respond rapidly and effectively to RFL needs in emergencies.
- The components mobilize resources at a local, regional and/or international level, as required by the emergency.

Implementation measures

The **National Societies** will:

- 2.1.1 Incorporate RFL action in emergency-preparedness and response plans in accordance with ICRC guidelines for RFL response in natural or man-made disasters, and ensure appropriate training for all first responders.
- 2.1.2 In national disasters, call on the ICRC without delay for support where the need for RFL outstrips their capacity.
- 2.1.3 In accordance with the Framework for the Deployment of International RFL Specialists during Disasters, provide the ICRC/CTA with trained RFL specialists for rapid deployment. Such specialists for rapid deployment will be taken from a pre-defined pool only with the agreement of each National Society.
- 2.1.4 Assess, by 2011, the need for, and feasibility of, establishing National Society sub-regional focal points for RFL response in natural or man-made disasters. If deemed useful, establish such RFL focal points.

The **ICRC/CTA** will:

- 2.1.5 Systematically deploy RFL specialists in conflict or other situations of violence to assess the situation and plan action. Ensure that RFL is included as part of the general rapid-response approach.
- 2.1.6 Help National Societies, in cooperation with the International Federation, to incorporate RFL in emergency-preparedness training programmes.
- 2.1.7 Launch and guide, by 2008, the development and management of an international disaster-response mechanism for rapid deployment of RFL specialists and devise a framework for the deployment of international RFL specialists during disasters.
- 2.1.8 Activate, according to established criteria and at the request of the National Societies, the disaster-response mechanism in natural or man-made disasters.

- 2.1.9 Ensure suitable training for staff to be deployed and monitor and evaluate both the deployment and RFL response.
- 2.1.10 When coordinating the RFL response in natural or man-made disasters, deploy RFL specialists to assess and plan an action strategy, and disseminate information through the Family Links Network. Ensure cooperation with the International Federation disaster-response teams.
- 2.1.11 Help National Societies, by 2011, to assess the need for, and feasibility of, establishing sub-regional RFL focal points for natural or man-made disasters, in collaboration with the International Federation and other National Societies. Support the establishment of such focal points if deemed useful.
The **International Federation** will:
- 2.1.12 Support National Societies, in cooperation with the ICRC, and help them include RFL in their disaster-preparedness and response plans in accordance with ICRC guidelines for RFL response in natural or man-made disasters.
- 2.1.13 Ensure that any RFL-relevant information gathered by emergency-response teams will be shared with the host National Society and the CTA to ensure optimum RFL response.
- 2.1.14 Incorporate RFL requirements in emergency appeals where requested by the ICRC.
- 2.1.15 Encourage National Societies to share with the ICRC/CTA best RFL practices in natural and man-made disasters.

Action 2: Strengthen coordination within the Family Links Network

Harmonizing the Movement's work to provide an internationally consistent response over the short, medium and long terms requires participation by all components. This should not be a static exercise – coordination requires increased interaction, the exchange of information, the identification of issues and the building and retention of RFL knowledge. Employing a specific regional focus enhances services and makes better use of existing knowledge and skills within the Family Links Network.

Expected results

- Information exchange is stronger, leading to better building and coordination of organization-wide RFL knowledge.
- Regional interaction is increased and issues identified. Consistent action is taken to address existing and emerging RFL needs.
- The role of the ICRC as the facilitator and coordinator of the Family Links Network is strengthened and National Society participation is increased.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 2.2.1 Contribute to greater regional coordination in RFL by prioritizing this subject in regional forums, strengthening the exchange of information and best practices with other National Societies and the ICRC/CTA, and building stronger links with other National Societies in their respective regions.
- 2.2.2 Seek to harmonize criteria for the acceptance of RFL cases, ensuring that they take into account regional particularities.

The **ICRC/CTA** will:

- 2.2.3 Devise, by 2010, a new interactive Family Links Network Extranet that provides on-line training tools and offers the possibility of exchanging best practices, data, tracing criteria and thoughts on development issues, among other things.
- 2.2.4 Explore, by 2011, the establishment of new regional ICRC/CTA RFL units that act as focal points for networking and information exchange, professional development training and capacity building in restoring family links. If deemed useful, set them up.
- 2.2.5 Commencing in 2009, conduct biennial regional RFL meetings for National Society practitioners, ICRC staff and representatives of the International Federation to coordinate and develop consistency in RFL policy, implementation and methodology.

The **International Federation** will:

- 2.2.6 Incorporate RFL in regional meetings with National Societies, when needed, to improve coordination.

Action 3: Strengthen Movement cooperation through the increased flow of resources and knowledge between National Societies

High-quality RFL in both emergency situations and stable environments means involving different components of the Family Links Network at different times. The Network's resources are better utilized and cooperation strengthened if the National Societies play a greater role in RFL capacity building (within an agreed framework).

Expected results

- Strategic partnerships between National Societies and the CTA support long-term capacity development.
- Sufficient RFL specialists are available for capacity-building programmes and operational deployment.
- Stronger relationships exist between RFL practitioners and there is an improved exchange of best practices.

Implementation measures

The **National Societies** will:

- 2.3.1 Contribute, by 2009 and in coordination with the ICRC, to a framework for partnerships addressing the international involvement of National Societies in programmes to build the capacity of tracing services.
- 2.3.2 Use, commencing in 2010 and for all international RFL, the ICRC's capacity-building framework for RFL together with National Societies.
- 2.3.3 Contribute, by 2011 and in cooperation with the ICRC, to the development of training modules for RFL capacity building.
- 2.3.4 Increase the availability and training of, and support for, experienced RFL staff to create a pool of capacity-building experts for international work.
- 2.3.5 Regularly engage in bilateral contacts with the tracing services of other National Societies, to improve RFL results and better share information.

The **ICRC** will:

- 2.3.6 Review and revise, by 2009 and in coordination with interested components of the Movement, the framework for partnerships for National Societies working internationally in programmes to build the capacity of tracing services.
- 2.3.7 Promote and support partnerships with National Societies working internationally to build the capacity of individual National Societies or across regions within the above-mentioned framework.
- 2.3.8 Maintain an overview of bilateral cooperation and exchanges between the tracing services of National Societies.
- 2.3.9 Create, by 2012, a pool of RFL capacity-building experts to work with National Societies, supervised and coordinated by the ICRC at the regional and worldwide levels.
- 2.3.10 Adapt and further develop RFL capacity-building tools, including training modules, all by 2011.
- 2.3.11 Devise, by 2008, minimum conditions for commencing RFL capacity-building programmes with National Societies, and indicators to measure progress.
- 2.3.12 Support joint pilot initiatives by National Societies wishing to be involved in RFL for specific situations, particularly migration.

The **International Federation** will:

- 2.3.13 In conjunction with the ICRC, help National Societies incorporate RFL in organizational-development programmes.
- 2.3.14 Work in cooperation with the ICRC to ensure best use of resources, programme planning and management for organizational-development activities and capacity-building programmes.

Action 4: Increase interaction with the authorities and with other organizations

Successful implementation requires a better integrated, more compatible and better coordinated approach when dealing with the various interested parties outside the Movement. To avoid duplication of effort and achieve better results, there must be greater understanding of the role and activities of non-Movement parties concerned with RFL, the development of common principles for RFL and improved consistency in selecting target populations, identifying areas of expertise and determining which activities are needed.

Expected results

- Common definitions and principles regarding RFL are applied by the various components of the Movement and other parties concerned with this work.
- Optimum interaction is achieved with the authorities and other organizations, thus improving RFL response.
- State authorities comply with their obligations under international law regarding dispersed family members and missing persons and cooperate with National Societies and the ICRC on the basis of the Geneva Conventions and the resolutions of the International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 2.4.1 Regularly both remind State authorities of their responsibilities towards affected individuals and populations requiring RFL assistance and seek their increased support for that work.
- 2.4.2 Ensure that they comply with national laws on the protection of personal data.
- 2.4.3 Develop a close relationship with governmental services in order to avoid delays in response. Consider memorandums of understanding with governmental bodies.
- 2.4.4 Establish and strengthen relationships with the authorities and other organizations providing similar or related services at the local and national levels.
- 2.4.5 Review national legislation to ensure that family links issues are included in national disaster-preparedness and response plans, and engage with State authorities for their inclusion where necessary. This should include ensuring that such plans set out the role of the National Society in restoring family links.

The **ICRC/CTA** will:

- 2.4.6 Regularly remind State authorities, armed groups and security forces of their obligations under international law and commitments undertaken at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.
- 2.4.7 Support National Societies, where needed, in their discussions with State authorities on their responsibilities and the role of the National Societies and the ICRC in RFL. Support adaptation of relevant national legislation if necessary.
- 2.4.8 Work for the development, by 2013, of common principles for RFL. Such principles would include common definitions, professional standards and ethical norms, compatible procedures and systems, the definition of target populations, specific aspects of RFL activities (e.g. child protection), data protection and needed coordination mechanisms.
- 2.4.9 By 2010, collect examples of good practice in collaboration with international and national organizations, and draw up a list of factors contributing to success.
- 2.4.10 Draw up, by 2012, guidelines on how the Movement can cooperate with international and national organizations on RFL in emergencies, and disseminate those guidelines throughout the Movement and as appropriate within other international organizations.
- 2.4.11 Strengthen dialogue with international organizations with whom the Movement seeks coordination regarding RFL and, where necessary, explore framework agreements aimed at better meeting needs.

Strategic Objective 3:**Strengthening support for restoring family links**

The Movement is in a unique position to conduct RFL since it is the only organization having a worldwide network with the potential to aid affected individuals and populations everywhere. To lead in the field of RFL, the Movement must place its work on a solid foundation, encourage and motivate staff and volunteers to adopt its vision and practices, and improve communication so as to assume a commanding position in the humanitarian sector. The Movement can enhance its leading role in RFL by strengthening its components.

Action 1: Build a strong organizational foundation for RFL activities in all situations and contexts

The Movement's ambition is to lay a solid foundation for RFL. Much remains to be done for its components to shoulder their responsibility in this field. The process of revising both National Society statutes and the policy frameworks of the various components to reflect RFL signals a commitment to improving RFL activities and working toward a consistent response to needs. So too does the effort to improve service development and management.

Expected results

- National Society statutes and policy frameworks reflect the legal basis for RFL, its objectives and the specific tasks involved.
- National Society strategic and development plans specifically address RFL commitments made at statutory meetings of the Movement.
- National Societies have management structures that support and develop RFL activities.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 3.1.1 Define their precise RFL roles and functions in the different situations that may arise, taking into account the Movement's resolutions.
- 3.1.2 Revise their Statutes, in accordance with the International Federation's *Guidance for National Society Statutes*, to reflect their RFL roles and responsibilities as defined in the Movement's Statutes and resolutions.
- 3.1.3 Create or revise national strategic and development plans to include national and international RFL activities.
- 3.1.4 Establish operational links between tracing services, disaster-preparedness and disaster-response programmes, volunteer management and other relevant units such as dissemination and information.
- 3.1.5 Develop an internal system to support RFL, including management, service development and involvement of volunteers.

The **ICRC** will:

- 3.1.6 Coordinate with the International Federation in supporting revision and amendment by the National Societies of their statutes, development plans and strategies.
- 3.1.7 Review, by 2009, internal policies and guidelines in situations of violence (including conflict) and other situations to ensure that RFL activities are included.

The **International Federation** will:

- 3.1.8 Review and revise, by 2011, policy and strategic documents, tools and guidelines for inclusion of National Society RFL activities across all programme areas.
- 3.1.9 Support, and actively promote, the inclusion of RFL in the revision of Strategy 2010.
- 3.1.10 Support, in conjunction with the ICRC, the National Societies in revising their statutes and incorporating RFL in their development plans and strategies.
- 3.1.11 Undertake, by 2009, a mapping exercise with National Societies for organizational development and work closely with the ICRC to ensure the incorporation of RFL.

Action 2: Enhance Movement support for and understanding of RFL activities through internal promotion

Making RFL responsibilities and action better known among the Movement's components will increase both understanding and support. Since RFL needs are inadequately communicated within the Network, continuous effort is required to raise awareness and pool information. This will lead to National Society leaders feeling a greater sense of direct responsibility for RFL activities and to volunteers and staff better identifying needs, and to a more integrated response.

Expected results

- All governance representatives, volunteers and staff understand the importance of RFL and the respective roles of the Movement's different components.
- National Societies have a consistent approach to promoting their RFL activities.
- Knowledge and understanding of RFL is strengthened across organizational departments and programmes.

Implementation

The **National Societies** will:

- 3.2.1 Keep governing bodies, volunteers and staff informed about the RFL roles of the National Society and the Family Links Network.
- 3.2.2 Incorporate RFL news in meetings and other means of disseminating information within the organization.

- 3.2.3 Strengthen relationships between communication departments and tracing services and draw up plans of action for publicly promoting this work.
- 3.2.4 Regularly communicate to governing bodies, staff and volunteers the outcomes and commitments regarding RFL of the Movement's statutory meetings.
The **ICRC** will:
- 3.2.5 Undertake, by 2009, an inventory of guidelines and communication tools, and revise them to ensure clear terminology regarding the definition of RFL-related terms.
- 3.2.6 Regularly remind all staff of the importance of RFL and the role played by the ICRC and the Family Links Network.
The **International Federation** will:
- 3.2.7 Undertake, by 2009, a knowledge inventory, both within its Secretariat and together with field staff, of RFL activities across all programming areas, and draw up action plans to fill gaps.
- 3.2.8 Regularly remind all staff of the respective roles of the Movement's components regarding RFL.

Action 3: Increase communication with key external stakeholders, to position the Family Links Network as the leader in this field

To be more effective in RFL, the Movement's components must disseminate information and raise public awareness of the needs of people separated from their families. The Movement must promote a strong and consistent image of this unique and very human service, raising its profile and ensuring that the general public, governments, donors and others all view the Movement's RFL activities as a vital humanitarian service.

Expected results

- A consistent image of the Family Links Network is projected to key external stakeholders concerned by this work.
- The Movement's components take clear positions on the need for RFL, highlighting its impact on affected individuals and populations.
- Those concerned recognize and support the RFL role played by the National Societies and the ICRC/CTA.

Implementation

The **National Societies** and the **ICRC** will:

- 3.3.1 Draw up and share with the Family Links Network, by 2009, a *worldwide communication plan* to support implementation of the RFL strategy. This plan will include:
 - key messages on RFL activities adapted to the various target groups and contexts;
 - communication tools to explain and promote RFL activities, the role of the Network and the plight of people left without news of loved ones;
 - an increased focus on RFL in the various promotional activities;
 - devising a visual identity for the Family Links Network;
 - exploring the concept of "goodwill ambassadors" to raise awareness of the impact of family separation and to promote RFL activities;
 - identifying promotional opportunities;
 - engaging media representatives in raising awareness of RFL needs and promoting RFL itself.
- 3.3.2 Undertake regular meetings with affected individuals and populations to promote RFL and the Family Links Network.
- 3.3.3 Give regular information on RFL to donors, the authorities and other organizations.
The **National Societies** will:
- 3.3.4 Devise, by 2013, a communication plan to support RFL. National Society communication plans can be further strengthened on the basis of the *worldwide communication plan*.
The **International Federation** will:
- 3.3.5 Disseminate to National Societies, by 2009, the *Communication Guide* for use in promoting RFL.
All components of the Movement will:
- 3.3.6 Use existing forums, meetings and networks to spark interest in individuals and populations affected by family separation and to promote the Movement's RFL work.

4. MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

Responsibility for implementing the RFL Strategy for the Movement is shared by all the components.

The National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation are individually responsible for incorporating the Strategy's contents in their own strategies, plans and training programmes at the national, regional and international levels.

Each action defined in the Strategy has expected results and implementation measures. It will be possible to achieve some of the expected results via the annual operational plans of the various components, while others can be achieved through the capacity-building programmes of the ICRC, the organizational-development or disaster-management programmes of the International Federation, or in partnership with National Societies working internationally. Regional meetings that the ICRC organizes for RFL practitioners constitute further opportunities for implementation, as do regional disaster-preparedness and response meetings conducted by the International Federation. Additional opportunities exist within the Movement's regional statutory meetings.

As the Movement's RFL coordinator and technical adviser, the ICRC will supervise the Strategy's implementation in cooperation with other components. It will set up an Implementation Group, including National Societies and the International Federation, to provide guidance and support for the implementation process. The Group will, as a priority, clarify what success would look like if the Movement were to achieve the strategic objectives and individual actions, and devise guidelines to measure that success. Indicators will be developed at the global, regional and national levels to measure performance and progress in implementing the strategy. Given the considerable differences in criteria for success across the Network, different degrees of implementation should be expected and varying practical targets aimed at as a result. The emphasis will be on the grassroots level (including branches and volunteers) in order to build on existing practical examples.

At the 2011 and 2015 Council of Delegates, the ICRC will present the results achieved based on a self-assessment of the Movement's components. In this way the actions and/or objectives may be adjusted where needed. On each occasion, the report presented will include a brief overview of any new external trends, together with recommendations for any modifications to the strategic approach.

In 2016 the ICRC will undertake a reassessment of the global mapping of the Family Links Network, as a means of measuring progress and generating recommendations for changes to the Strategy.

5. RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The resources needed to implement the Strategy go beyond the realm of fundraising. Human resources, various skills, different kinds of knowledge, greater cooperation and participation by all the components of the Movement – all play a role in ensuring successful implementation.

The key is a sense of direct responsibility and commitment.

As a first step toward ensuring that sense, RFL must be recognized as a core activity at all levels, first and foremost by the leadership. Recognition and ownership will ultimately lead to RFL being incorporated in the National Society structures. This is indispensable for sustainability. To successfully raise funds and mobilize resources for RFL, emphasis must therefore be placed entirely on further promoting recognition, which will lead to a sense of responsibility and commitment, to incorporation of RFL and, ultimately, to sustainability.

Regarding fundraising, in its lead role for RFL within the Movement the ICRC will explore the establishment of funding tools.

Since developing the capabilities of National Societies and strengthening the Family Links Network are long-term commitments, the ICRC and participating National Societies will establish partnerships to support capacity development within the Network.

All National Societies are responsible for helping people without news of their families, so individual Societies will include RFL activities in national fundraising plans as a means of supporting self-sustaining RFL.

GLOSSARY

Contributions assessment

A contributions assessment across the Family Links Network will gather information on the skills, resources, tools, time and interest that exist in RFL within each National Society, and maximize the use of those resources to address needs within the Network.

Family Links Network

The Family Links Network comprises the ICRC (CTA and tracing units in the delegations) and the National Society tracing services. Also referred to as “the Network.”

Family Links Network data-collection tool

Data-collection tool used jointly by all National Societies and the ICRC to gather standardized information on RFL.

Family Links Network Extranet

An interactive Extranet for Restoring Family Links. The Extranet is a web-based resource centre incorporating online training tools, RFL information by context, films, photos, networking and information exchange.

Framework for deployment of international RFL specialists during disasters

The framework will incorporate information on the mechanism for deployment, human-resource management and training.

Global mapping exercise

A global mapping of the status of the Family Links Network was undertaken between 2005 and 2006 by the ICRC and National Societies. It comprised three assessments: (i) capacity of National Society tracing services (ii) capacity of the ICRC/CTA to act as coordinator and technical adviser on RFL to National Societies and (iii) an initial RFL needs survey.

International disaster-response mechanism for RFL

To mobilize Movement resources for rapid response where needed at national, regional or international levels.

Performance-management tools in RFL

Such tools would include: performance indicators (incorporating tools to measure timeliness of action and contextual analysis), monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment.

Regional ICRC/CTA units

The ICRC will explore the establishment of regional ICRC/CTA units to act as focal points for capacity building, professional development, networking and information exchange in RFL. Such units would explore RFL-related issues from the regional perspective and develop plans to address these issues with the National Societies concerned.

Restoring Family Links (RFL)

Restoring Family Links is the generic term given to a range of activities aimed at preventing separation, restoring and maintaining contact between family members and clarifying what has happened to persons reported missing (see point 2.1 above).

Restoring Family Links manual for the Movement

A comprehensive handbook covering a wide range of situations in which the Movement must take action. Such a manual would contain training modules and case studies, explain how to provide emotional support for beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, give advice on community networking and referral models, teach presentation skills, and present guidelines for different beneficiary populations.

Sub-regional National Society focal points for natural or man-made disasters

Consortiums of National Societies within a sub-region might designate one Society as the focal point for RFL response in disasters. The focal point could provide RFL assistance to the Society of the affected country.

Tracing services

Tracing services are units within National Societies that help to restore or maintain contact between members of families separated as a consequence of armed conflict or other situations of violence, natural disasters or any other situations requiring a humanitarian response. The National Society tracing services form part of the Family Links Network. Each tracing service works in accordance with CTA guidelines. (*N.B. In some countries tracing services may be named differently.*)

1.1.5 RESOLUTION 5: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The Council of Delegates,

recalling and reaffirming the resolutions on topics relating to migration 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 the resolutions adopted by the Council of Delegates (Resolution 9, Budapest, 1991; Resolution 7, Birmingham, 1993; and Resolution 4, Geneva, 2001),

taking into account the respective roles and mandates of the different components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) as outlined in the Statutes of the Movement and the Seville Agreement and as inspired by the Movement's Fundamental Principles,

1. *recognizes* that migration is a multifaceted and complex global issue, which today affects every country in the world;
2. *calls upon* the components of the Movement to seek to give more prominence to the humanitarian consequences of migration at international, regional, national and local levels;
3. *welcomes* the decision by the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) to develop a policy on migration for National Societies,¹ noting that it will benefit from the specific role, experience, and expertise of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in restoring family links and other protection issues, in particular regarding persons deprived of their liberty, and *requests* the International Federation to report back on this at the next Council of Delegates in 2009;
4. *takes into account* previous resolutions on restoring family links and its relevance to the field of migration;
5. *requests* the ICRC, in close consultation with the International Federation and National Societies, to develop guidelines for National Societies working

or wishing to work in places where migrants are being detained, basing itself on the work already initiated by the ICRC and several National Societies in this respect, and to report back on this to the next Council of Delegates in 2009;

6. *endorses* the general orientations described in the background note concerning the respective roles of the different components of the Movement in the field of cross-border migration;
7. *requests* the ICRC and the International Federation, in accordance with their respective mandates, to support the efforts of National Societies to gain access and provide impartial humanitarian services to migrants in need, regardless of their status, and to do so without being penalized for such action;
8. *invites* National Societies to utilize their capacity as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field to engage in a dialogue with their public authorities to clarify their respective roles relating to the humanitarian consequences of migration, noting that while acting in an auxiliary capacity National Societies will be in a position to base their services strictly on vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs and maintain their independence and impartiality at all times;
9. *calls upon* the different components of the Movement, in accordance with their respective mandates, to promote in this context respect for international law, including international human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law;
10. *requests* the various components of the Movement, in conformity with their respective mandates, to cooperate in the development of advocacy strategies addressing the humanitarian consequences of migration;
11. *requests* the International Federation, National Societies and the ICRC, in accordance with their respective mandates, to cooperate closely and coordinate within and beyond the Movement to support the provision of the necessary services and protection to vulnerable persons throughout the entire migratory cycle, including return and reintegration.

¹ In 2003 the International Federation adopted a Policy on Refugees and other Displaced People. However, feedback from National Societies shows that this policy does not provide them with sufficient guidance in their work to address the plight of persons made vulnerable as a consequence of migration.

1.1.6 RESOLUTION 6: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEVILLE AGREEMENT

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Resolution 8 of its 2005 session, including the adoption of the Supplementary Measures of the Seville Agreement,

noting the positive momentum created by the implementation of the Supplementary Measures and acknowledging the importance of the Seville Agreement and its preamble emphasizing a collaborative spirit among the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement),

recognizing that the Movement's components are responsible for coordinating their international activities in accordance with Movement policies to deliver optimal benefit for people affected by conflict and disasters,

1. *welcomes* the report of the Group on the Implementation of the Seville Agreement established pursuant to Resolution 8 of its 2005 session;
 2. *adopts* the following seven recommendations of the report;
 3. *calls* upon each Movement component – the National Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – to ensure full implementation of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures and of the following recommendations of the Group's report:
 - a) The Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures should continue to be applied as the framework for organizing the Movement's international relief operations;
 - b) Training of senior operational managers and members of governance within all the Movement's components must be compulsory. National Societies, with the support of the International Federation and the ICRC, must develop and implement a training action plan. In the first instance, training should focus on countries with large-scale international relief operations;
 - c) All the Movement's components must develop their capacities to work together in partnership.
- The ICRC, the International Federation and National Societies working internationally should build their capacities to be effective partners to host National Societies, whereby each institution emerges strengthened from operational cooperation. Practical measures taken in this regard must, where necessary, enhance the ability of the host National Society to be the primary partner and, where applicable, lead agency;
- d) National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC must place emphasis on preparedness measures that facilitate working together in emergencies as provided for in the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures. Such measures include:
 - i. Meetings between Movement components present in a country: information exchange, analysis and opportunities to build the working relationships and trust required to assist affected persons and vulnerable groups appropriately.
 - ii. Negotiation processes opened to develop country-level memorandums of understanding that define the roles and responsibilities of Movement components articulated in the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures.
 - iii. Contingency planning that assesses risks and the resources that could be mobilized within the Movement and considers how such resources would be coordinated to deliver effective services to beneficiaries;
 - e) Coordination efforts must first and foremost focus on the needs of affected persons and vulnerable people, be results-oriented, always take the local context into consideration and be established within the framework of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures;
 - f) National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC must ensure that learning and best practices are documented and shared so that the Movement as a whole can benefit and improve its performance for beneficiaries;
 - g) In order to build on the positive momentum and achievements that followed the adoption of the Supplementary Measures, implementation of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures must be continuously monitored. The International Federation and the ICRC must regularly inform National Societies of progress in implementation in accordance with the monitoring framework.

1.1.7 RESOLUTION 7: STRATEGY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Resolution 6 of the 2005 Council of Delegates, which adopted the updated Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) reinforcing the ambition of building a stronger Movement through enhanced cooperation for effective humanitarian action throughout the world,

taking note with appreciation of the consolidated implementation report by the Standing Commission, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation), and in particular of the initial work done by the Standing Commission on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of meetings within the Movement to “enhance dialogue and consultations within the Movement through better use of existing fora, and improved coordination of the agendas of statutory and other meetings,” as per Action 4 in the Strategy,

welcoming the Study on Operational and Commercial and other Non-operational Issues Involving the Use of the Emblems (Study) prepared by the ICRC,

reaffirming the validity of the existing rules governing the use of the emblems, notably those contained in the 1949 Geneva Conventions, their Additional Protocols and the 1991 Regulations on the use of the emblem¹ by the National Societies, and *emphasizing* the vital importance of respect for those rules to guarantee the protective value of the emblems and access to people in need of protection and assistance and to strengthen the identity of the Movement as a neutral and independent humanitarian actor,

further welcoming the report of the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes emphasizing that the adoption of a strong legal base is a crucial element allowing National Societies to perform their mandate efficiently and in compliance with the Fundamental Principles,

acknowledging the continued relevance and importance of the Strategy for the Movement,

bearing in mind the need for ongoing analysis on how the components of the Movement can improve their individual and collective functioning in response to changing contexts and new challenges,

1. *urges* all the components of the Movement to continue and, if possible, increase their efforts to implement the 10 Actions of the Movement's Strategy and to report on their achievements, through the International Federation and, when relevant, through the ICRC, to the Standing Commission for an updated report to the 2009 Council of Delegates;
2. *urges* the National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation to generate better links to the local communities to which our humanitarian action is addressed, so that our mission is accomplished with quality and efficiency with full recognition of victims and vulnerable persons as an integral part of the Strategy;
3. *invites* the International Federation, the ICRC and the Standing Commission to continue to monitor the implementation of the Strategy, with greater focus on measurable progress made by National Societies, and to submit a consolidated implementation report to the 2009 Council of Delegates along with recommendations as necessary;

On Action 3

Monitor and protect the integrity of the components, and ensure that every component complies with the Fundamental Principles

4. *urges* all National Societies, as requested under Action 3 of the Strategy for the Movement, to examine and update their statutes and related legal texts by 2010, in accordance with the *Guidance for National Society Statutes* and relevant International Conference resolutions;

On Action 4

Enhance dialogue and consultations within the Movement through better use of existing fora, and improved coordination of the agendas of statutory and other meetings

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

¹ Regulations adopted by the 20th International Conference (Vienna, 1965) and revised by the Council of Delegates (Budapest, 1991).

- 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;
- On Action 10**
Strengthen the components of the Movement's relationship with the private sector
7. *invites* the components of the Movement to utilize the recommendations of the Study to enhance the implementation of the rules governing the use of the emblems and to provide feedback to the ICRC on the content and use of the Study;
8. *requests* the ICRC to continue its work on the Study, taking into account feedback received from the components of the Movement and further extending its consultations to States, and to inform the Council on progress made.

1.1.8 RESOLUTION 8: INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS

The Council of Delegates,

recalling its Resolution 2 on Weapons and International Humanitarian Law (Seoul, 16-18 November 2005), and welcoming the ICRC's follow-up report,

stressing that adequate controls on the use and proliferation of weapons are essential to protecting civilians from indiscriminate effects and combatants from unnecessary suffering,

deeply concerned by the severe consequences of cluster munitions for civilian populations and humanitarian action during and after conflicts, and acknowledging the obstacles these weapons pose for post-conflict reconstruction and development,

alarmed by the millions of inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions in national stockpiles around the world,

welcoming the ICRC's report on its Expert Meeting on the Humanitarian, Military, Technical and Legal Challenges of Cluster Munitions held in Montreux in April 2007,

welcoming the commitment made by States at an international conference in Oslo in February 2007 to conclude an international treaty by the end of 2008 prohibiting cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and the agreement by States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to negotiate a proposal to address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions,

welcoming the commitment in the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War to minimize the post-conflict effects of explosive remnants of war, as well as the increasing number of States that have decided to enact a moratorium on the use of cluster munitions that are inaccurate or unreliable and to eliminate such weapons,

1. *encourages* all work currently under way to alleviate the suffering of victims of cluster munitions and to remove submunitions and other explosive remnants of war already contaminating war-affected countries;
2. *urges* the components of the Movement to promote adherence to and full implementation of the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons;
3. *encourages* all components of the Movement to promote national measures to address the humanitarian concerns resulting from the use of cluster munitions, including ending the use and transfer of inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions, providing assistance to victims, enhancing clearance efforts and eliminating inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions from national stockpiles;
4. *urges* all components of the Movement to raise awareness of the severe human and socio-economic costs of cluster-munition use and to help build national support for an effective new treaty of international humanitarian law that will prohibit inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions;
5. *urges* governments that support the Oslo Declaration to fulfill their commitment to conclude a treaty in 2008 prohibiting the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians;

6. *urges* States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to continue their efforts and to work towards developing legally binding rules on cluster munitions as a matter of urgency;
7. *requests* the ICRC to report to the 2009 Council of Delegates on the progress made in implementing these objectives.

1.1.9 RESOLUTION 9: AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF THE 30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

The Council of Delegates,

having examined the Provisional Agenda and Programme of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, prepared by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

adopts the Agenda and Programme of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

1.1.10 RESOLUTION 10: PROPOSAL OF PERSONS TO FILL POSTS AT THE 30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

The Council of Delegates,

having examined the list of candidates nominated for election as officers of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

endorses the list of candidates and requests the Chairman of the Council of Delegates to submit it to the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for approval.

Annex to Resolution 10

Chairman of the Conference

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams (Red Cross – South Africa)

Vice-Chairmen of the Conference

Ambassador Boudewijn J. Van Eenennaam (Netherlands)

Ambassador Juan Martabit (Chile)

Mr Abdul Rahman Attar (Red Crescent – Syrian Arab Republic)

Ms Annemarie Huber-Hotz (Red Cross – Switzerland)

Rapporteur of the Conference

Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki (Japan)

Drafting Committee

Chairman

Ambassador Masood Khan (Pakistan)

Vice-Chairmen of the Drafting Committee

Mr Ian Courtenay (Red Cross – Belize)

Mr Abbas Gullet (Red Cross – Kenya)

Ambassador Valery Loshchinin (Russian Federation)

Commission A

Chairman

Ms Jane McGowan (Red Cross – Canada)

Vice-Chairman

Ambassador Makarim Wibisono (Indonesia)

Rapporteur

Mr Muctarr A.S Jalloh (Red Cross - Sierra Leone)

Commission B

Chairman

Ambassador Nicholas Thorne (United Kingdom)

Vice-Chairman

Ambassador Mabel Gómez Oliver (Mexico)

Rapporteur

Mr Jeffrey Chan Wah Teck (Red Cross – Singapore)

Commission C

Chairman

Dr Raymond Forde (Red Cross – Barbados)

Rapporteur

Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü (Turkey)

Secretary-General of the Conference
Ambassador Stephan Husy (Switzerland)

Assistant Secretaries-General
Mr Frank Mohrhauer (International Federation)
Mr Bruce Biber (ICRC)

1.2 RESOLUTIONS OF THE 30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

1.2.1 RESOLUTION 1 AND THE DECLARATION “TOGETHER FOR HUMANITY”

Resolution 1

The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

taking account of the views expressed during the Conference on the humanitarian consequences of major challenges facing the world today,

welcoming the many pledges made by members and observers of the Conference in response to these humanitarian challenges,

taking note with appreciation of the measures taken by States and the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement¹ to implement the 2003 Agenda for Humanitarian Action, Declaration “Protecting human dignity” and pledges as requested in Resolution 1 of the 28th International Conference, and *welcoming* the follow-up report prepared by the ICRC and the International Federation on progress made,

1. *adopts* the Declaration “Together for humanity” of the 30th International Conference;
2. *encourages* all members of the Conference, in accordance with their respective powers, mandates and capacities, to work together to alleviate the suffering caused by the humanitarian consequences of the challenges outlined in the Declaration;
3. *urges* all members of the Conference to include the resolutions adopted and their pledges made at the Conference in their efforts to optimize interaction and partnerships amongst themselves and together with other actors at the international, regional and local levels;
4. *invites* all members of the Conference to keep the ICRC and the International Federation informed of actions taken and progress made with respect to the implementation of the Declaration and the resolutions of the Conference as well as of their pledges;
5. *requests* the ICRC and the International Federation to report to the 31st International Conference on the follow up by Conference members to the resolutions and pledges of this Conference;
6. *welcomes* the adoption by the Movement of its Restoring Family Links Strategy (2008-2018) in Resolution 4 of the 2007 Council of Delegates and calls upon State authorities to continue their support for the activities of the components of the Movement in the field of restoring family links, particularly by strengthening National Societies’ capacities, in conformity with their role and mandate;
7. *notes* that the International Federation has circulated its Global Health and Care Strategy 2006-2010 to member States and National Societies within the framework of the World Health Assembly and on other occasions, and expects that this document will add value to partnerships aimed at meeting public-health challenges, including those identified at this Conference;
8. *thanks* the ICRC for its comprehensive work on the study on customary international humanitarian law and for initiating, with the British Red Cross, the updating of the “practice” volume of the study;
9. *expresses* its appreciation to the ICRC for its report on international humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts, and invites it to continue to analyse current and emerging challenges, to generate reflection and to conduct broad consultations on the issues identified;

¹ The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is composed of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation). Throughout this document, the term “Movement” covers all the aforementioned components.

10. *urges* all members of the Conference to continue and intensify their efforts to implement the 2003 Agenda for Humanitarian Action as a relevant and comprehensive framework for action to address:

- the suffering caused by family separation and the persistent tragedy of persons missing in connection with armed conflict or other situations of armed violence;
- the human costs of the uncontrolled availability and misuse of weapons in armed conflicts;
- the risk and impact of disasters and the improvement of preparedness and response mechanisms;
- the risk and impact of HIV and other infectious diseases in relation to vulnerable people.

Annex to Resolution 1

Gathered in Geneva for the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we, the members of this Conference, have focused on the humanitarian consequences of four great challenges facing the world today which affect the individual and specifically the most vulnerable people:

- environmental degradation and climate change;
- humanitarian concerns generated by international migration;
- violence, in particular in urban settings;
- emergent and recurrent diseases and other public-health challenges, such as access to health care.

The global scale of each of these challenges requires a collective response as it exceeds the coping capacity of individual States or humanitarian organizations. In addressing the humanitarian consequences of those challenges, and in the spirit of the slogan of this Conference, “Together for humanity,” we need to intensify operational interaction and partnerships among ourselves, and with other institutions – e.g. intergovernmental, supranational, non-governmental, academic – as well as with the media and the private sector. For the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) this must be done in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and policies of the Movement.

Humanitarian consequences of environmental degradation and climate change

We are deeply concerned that people everywhere, especially the poorest of the poor, face an increased burden due to the rise in disasters and the scarcity of resources induced by multiple factors, such as environmental degradation and climate change, which contribute to poverty, migration, health risks and an aggravated risk of violence and conflict.

We are resolved to work with partners to raise awareness of these serious humanitarian concerns, including their causes, and to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people, in particular those in affected developing countries.

We will capitalize on the community base of National Societies to decrease the vulnerability of communities where environmental hazards and degradation are severe and adaptive capacity is low.

We reaffirm that preparedness for disaster is a key element in the management of response, and we will seek to improve individual and collective capacity to respond swiftly to humanitarian challenges induced by environmental degradation and climate change.

We are resolved to ensure that environmental degradation and adaptation to climate change are integrated, where relevant, in disaster-risk-reduction and disaster-management policies and plans. We will seek to mobilize the necessary human and financial resources to implement them, giving priority to actions for the most vulnerable people.

We acknowledge the commitment of States to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the core mechanism for addressing climate change at the global level, and we affirm that aspects of the Movement’s work support and complement elements of the UNFCCC.

Humanitarian concerns generated by international migration

While acknowledging the many benefits of international migration as well as its complex and multifaceted nature, we recognize that migration may generate issues of humanitarian concern in all regions of the world. We are particularly concerned that migrants, irrespective of their status, may live outside conventional health, social and legal systems and for a variety of reasons may not have access to processes which guarantee respect for their fundamental rights.

We reaffirm the importance of examining ways and means to reinforce international cooperation at all levels to address the humanitarian concerns generated by international migration.

We acknowledge the role of governments, within the framework of national laws and international law, especially international human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law, to address the humanitarian needs of persons negatively affected by migration, including families and communities, and to take effective measures. We are deeply concerned by all forms of human trafficking and exploitation, in particular those involving children and women, and we acknowledge the role of governments in preventing such practices, in providing protection and assistance to all victims of such practices and in

ensuring respect for the national and international instruments prohibiting them. We also acknowledge the role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in this respect.

When addressing the humanitarian needs of persons negatively affected by migration, particularly migrants and members of their families, in their countries of origin, transit and destination, we take into account, where relevant, the considerable experience of the Red Cross and Red Crescent with respect to:

- a) Humanitarian assistance: providing food, shelter, clothing, health care, first aid, psycho-social support, etc.
- b) Protection: e.g. restoring family links, legal and administrative advice, acting against exploitation and deception, providing information on the risks of irregular migration, visiting migrants in detention with a view to helping improve their detention conditions and their treatment when necessary.
- c) Advocacy: bringing a humanitarian perspective to policy decisions, combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination, promoting international norms in that respect.
- d) Integration and reintegration: e.g. reception services, fostering social participation and solidarity (e.g. as Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers).
- e) Human dignity: promoting respect for human dignity.

Taking into account the negative consequences of large-scale influxes resulting from humanitarian crises, international actors should consider the needs of host-country communities.

We acknowledge the role of National Societies, based on the principles of humanity and impartiality, and in consultation with public authorities, in providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants, irrespective of their legal status.

Violence, in particular in urban settings

We recognize that violence is a leading cause of preventable death, injury and human suffering worldwide. Violence in urban areas poses a particular challenge, where problems are often aggravated by rapidly growing populations, poverty and economic inequalities, unemployment, social exclusion and marginalization, insufficient public security and services, and the easy availability of drugs and weapons.

We acknowledge that States are responsible for providing safety and ensuring adequate care and support for the victims of violence, to the extent

feasible, and for the creation of policies and legal frameworks which aim to prevent and mitigate violence. Such policies and frameworks may also need to address cases of urban armed violence between organized groups.

We are resolved to work together to develop at all levels comprehensive violence-prevention and reduction programmes in order to build safer communities through practical measures that take into account social and economic development objectives, and to facilitate the rehabilitation of youth affected by violence in order to reduce their alienation and radicalization and reduce their vulnerability to drugs and crime. We will intensify efforts to mobilize community respect for diversity and action against racism, discrimination, xenophobia, marginalization and other forms of exclusion, faced by all vulnerable groups, also empowering volunteers and youth in humanitarian activities to prevent, defuse or mitigate violence, particularly in urban settings, basing ourselves on the considerable experience of National Societies.

Emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges

We recognize that HIV, pandemic influenza, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases as well as other public-health threats endanger individuals and communities everywhere in the world, and particularly women and children. We also note the disproportionate impact of HIV, tuberculosis and malaria on communities in sub-Saharan Africa. The decline in capacity of the public-health infrastructure in many countries and in its ability to cope, as well as demographic change, water and sanitation shortcomings, food insecurity and poor nutrition and their consequences for increased morbidity and mortality have also exacerbated these threats, with a particular impact on the poorest of the poor.

We stress 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 to ensure that programming and its implementation reach all affected and vulnerable populations – such as people living with HIV, drug users, communities exposed to the threat of emergent and recurrent diseases, victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking and other forms of violence, prisoners and former prisoners and orphaned children.

We acknowledge the need for these vulnerable people to have access, without discrimination, to prevention, health promotion and curative care as well as to essential medicines, vaccines and other health-care products. Access to safe blood through

voluntary non-remunerated blood donation is and will remain an essential public-health objective.

We also stress the importance for medical services to have access to any individual in need, on the basis of accepted domestic and international norms and regardless of his/her legal status, and the importance for such services to enjoy the necessary protection.

We are resolved to include public health as an integral part of effective disaster management (comprising public health, water and sanitation, epidemic control and public-health emergencies).

We recognize that a comprehensive public-health approach must address the issue of tuberculosis, HIV and other health threats in prisons, including the necessary follow up of former prisoners.

In responding to all of these challenges, we will:

- take into consideration the varying capacities of States and National Societies;
- strengthen our operational capacity and resources accordingly;
- optimize the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities at all levels in the humanitarian field;
- capitalize on the community and volunteer base (particularly the youth) of National Societies to influence positively and act upon vulnerable communities from within, particularly in situations beyond the reach of the public authorities;
- take into account considerations of diversity;
- ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed into all programmes and activities;
- learn from the experiences and best practices worldwide of the various components of the Movement;
- promote knowledge of and respect for the relevant provisions of international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law and refugee law;
- build on the unique ability of the components of the Movement, in acting at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, to gain the confidence of all in order to have access to those in need;
- intensify and coordinate operational interaction and partnerships among ourselves, the members of this Conference, and with other institutions, whenever there is a clear benefit for the victims and the most vulnerable people.

Our work together needs to be measurable, with transparency accompanying action at the national level and through sharing best practices and experiences. The International Federation and the ICRC agree to support National Societies in

their work, including through representation of their interests and concerns at the international level, and will provide the necessary knowledge-sharing mechanisms to facilitate these tasks.

1.2.2 RESOLUTION 2: SPECIFIC NATURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT IN ACTION AND PARTNERSHIP AND THE ROLE OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES AS AUXILIARIES TO THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES IN THE HUMANITARIAN FIELD

The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

acknowledging that strong partnerships between States, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) and other humanitarian actors, such as international organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, are essential to address effectively the needs of vulnerable people worldwide, in the spirit of the slogan of the Conference “Together for humanity,”

acknowledging the different mandates of the various components of the Movement,

recalling the Movement’s Fundamental Principle of independence as well as Articles 2.3, 3 and 4.3 of the Statutes of the Movement whereby National Societies are recognized by all governments as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field,

recalling Articles 24, 26 and 27 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, of 12 August 1949, Articles 24 and 25 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, of 12 August 1949, as well as Article 63 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,

noting the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations (A/RES/49/2 of 27 October 1994) which recalls that National Societies are recognized by their respective governments as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field on the basis of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,

recalling the Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted at the 28th International Conference, whereby States, recognizing the importance of the independent and auxiliary role of National Societies, agreed, *inter alia*, to negotiate clearly defined roles and responsibilities with their respective National Societies in risk-reduction and disaster-management activities, as well as in public-health, development and social activities,

recalling Resolution 1 of the 28th International Conference which welcomed the study carried out by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) on National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field and contained the concept of the “characteristics of a balanced relationship,” and *noting* the work done by the International Federation in consultation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) pursuant to that resolution,

recognizing that the cooperation and dialogue of National Societies with their respective governments includes the key role and responsibilities of National Societies in the fields of promotion, dissemination and implementation of international humanitarian law,

recognizing that National Societies represent reliable partners for national and local public authorities that provide service through their diverse volunteer base and their unique capacity to mobilize human and material resources at the community level,

noting with appreciation that the Council of Delegates, in its Resolution 3 of 2007, endorsed the concept of a toolbox for use by National Societies when concluding partnership arrangements, including those relevant to auxiliary relationships,

reaffirming the obligation of all the components of the Movement to act at all times in conformity with the Fundamental Principles, the Statutes of the Movement and the rules governing the use of the emblems and to take full account of the relevant Movement policies,

acknowledging that the autonomy of National Societies and their commitment to neutrality and impartial assistance provide the best available means to gain the confidence of all in order to have access to those in need,

recalling Article 2.4 of the Statutes of the Movement adopted by the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross at Geneva in 1986, as amended in 1995 and 2006, which stipulates that “the States shall at all

times respect the adherence by all the components of the Movement to the Fundamental Principles,”

1. *reaffirms* that it is the primary responsibility of States and their respective public authorities to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable persons on their respective territories and that the primary purpose of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field is to supplement them in the fulfilment of this responsibility;
2. *calls upon* National Societies and their respective public authorities to consolidate a balanced relationship with clear and reciprocal responsibilities, maintaining and enhancing a permanent dialogue at all levels within the agreed framework for humanitarian action;
3. *recognizes* that the public authorities and the National Societies as auxiliaries enjoy a specific and distinctive partnership, entailing mutual responsibilities and benefits, and based on international and national laws, in which the national public authorities and the National Society agree on the areas in which the National Society supplements or substitutes for public humanitarian services; the National Society must be able to deliver its humanitarian services at all times in conformity with the Fundamental Principles, in particular those of neutrality and independence, and with its other obligations under the Statutes of the Movement as agreed by States at the International Conference;
4. *emphasizes* that
 - a) National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field have a duty to consider seriously any request by their public authorities to carry out humanitarian activities within their mandate;
 - b) States must refrain from requesting National Societies to perform activities which are in conflict with the Fundamental Principles or the Statutes of the Movement or its mission, that National Societies have the duty to decline any such request and underlines the need for the public authorities to respect such decisions by the National Societies;
5. *invites* National Societies and governments to clarify and consolidate the areas in which National Societies as auxiliaries cooperate at all levels with the public authorities;

6. *stresses* that the National Society, whilst acknowledging that its personnel and assets are provided to the medical services of the State's armed forces in accordance with Article 26 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949 and are thus subject to military laws and regulations, must respect the Fundamental Principles, including that of neutrality, and at all times maintain its autonomy and ensure that it is clearly distinguishable from military and other governmental bodies;
7. *invites* the International Federation and the ICRC, in consultation with States and National Societies, to make available and further develop relevant information material for National Societies, the public authorities and other interested bodies, including guidelines, legal advice and best practices, in support of partnerships between National Societies and the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

1.2.3 RESOLUTION 3: REAFFIRMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: PRESERVING HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY IN ARMED CONFLICT

The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

recalling the Declaration and the Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted by the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, stressing that these documents remain as pertinent today as they were in 2003, and *encouraging* all members of the Conference to continue to work towards their full implementation,

convinced that international humanitarian law remains as relevant today as ever before in international and non-international armed conflicts and continues to provide protection for all victims of armed conflict,

underlining, in this regard, that the protection offered by human rights law does not cease in the event of armed conflict, save through the effect of provisions for derogation, *recalling* that while some rights may be exclusively matters of international humanitarian law, others may be exclusively matters of human rights law and yet others may be matters of both these branches of international law, and *emphasizing* that human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee

law provide protection to victims of armed conflict, within their respective spheres of application,

renewing the unequivocal commitment of all members of the Conference to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all circumstances,

stressing, however, that international humanitarian law governs only situations of armed conflict, and should not be extended to other situations,

welcoming ongoing discussions on international humanitarian law in view of its reaffirmation and implementation in facing the challenges posed by contemporary armed conflict,

deeply concerned that civilian populations and individual civilians continue to bear the brunt of armed conflicts and remain the main victims of violations of international humanitarian law committed by parties to an armed conflict, and *strongly condemning*, in this regard, attacks on civilian objects and civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities, including humanitarian relief personnel, journalists, other media professionals and associated personnel, as well as the use of human shields,

recalling the need to take into account the specific requirements in terms of protection, health and assistance of women, children, the elderly, the disabled, the infirm, displaced persons, refugees, persons deprived of their liberty and other persons with specific needs,

welcoming the universal ratification of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, expressing the hope that other international humanitarian law treaties will also achieve universal acceptance and *calling upon* all States to consider adhering to international humanitarian law treaties to which they are not yet party,

noting the entry into force of Protocol III additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions on 14 January 2007,

noting that the principles and provisions of international humanitarian law derive not only from international treaties, but also from customary international law,

recalling that the obligation to respect international humanitarian law binds all parties to an armed conflict, and emphasizing that this obligation is not based on reciprocity,

welcoming the progress made in the implementation of international humanitarian law and *acknowledging*

the importance of taking measures at all levels to achieve effective implementation, dissemination and enforcement of international humanitarian law,

noting with appreciation the increasing number of partnerships and synergies, in the fields of implementation, dissemination and development of international humanitarian law, between States, international and regional organizations, the ICRC, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and their International Federation, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society,

recalling, in particular, the special responsibilities of National Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their respective States in the humanitarian field, to cooperate with and assist their governments in the dissemination and implementation of international humanitarian law, including its provisions for the protection of the emblems,

acknowledging that, while progress has been made, efforts to enforce international humanitarian law at the domestic and international levels still fall far short of the requirements of justice, and *recognizing* that impunity for crimes under international law is not acceptable and that victims' rights can no longer be disregarded,

Resolves as follows:

Respect and ensure respect

1. *reaffirms* the obligation of all States and parties to an armed conflict to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all circumstances;
2. *stresses*, in this regard, the obligation of all States to refrain from encouraging violations of international humanitarian law by any party to an armed conflict and to exert their influence, to the degree possible, to prevent and end violations, either individually or through multilateral mechanisms, in accordance with international law;

Fundamental guarantees

3. *reaffirms* that all persons in the power of a party to an armed conflict, including persons deprived of their liberty for reasons related to the armed conflict, are entitled to the fundamental guarantees established by international humanitarian law in both international and non-international armed conflict and that, as a result, no one can be outside the law;

4. *stresses* that these fundamental guarantees apply without any adverse distinction based upon race, colour, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, wealth, birth or upon status, or on any other similar criteria;

5. *reaffirms*, in this regard, the continued importance of full compliance with Article 3 common to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which expresses certain fundamental guarantees, as supplemented by applicable treaty law and customary international law;

6. *reaffirms* the obligation of humane treatment for all persons in the power of a party to an armed conflict, including persons deprived of their liberty for reasons related to the armed conflict, and the obligation to respect their personal convictions and religious practices, and *reaffirms*, in this regard, the prohibition of murder, torture, whether physical or mental, cruel or inhuman treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, corporal punishment, mutilations, medical or scientific experiments, rape and other forms of sexual violence, the taking of hostages, enforced disappearance and collective punishments;

7. *stresses* the vital importance of providing all persons deprived of their liberty for reasons related to an armed conflict, whether detained or interned, with procedural safeguards aimed at ensuring that such detention or internment is lawful and does not amount to arbitrary deprivation of liberty, including a review of the basis for and continued legality of the detention or internment by an independent and impartial body, without prejudice to the legal regime applicable to prisoners of war;

8. *reaffirms* that all persons subject to arrest on a criminal charge and those on trial are entitled to a fair trial affording all the essential judicial guarantees, including the presumption of innocence, trial by an independent, impartial and regularly constituted court, and necessary rights and means of defence;

9. *recognizes* that additional, specific protections are provided under international humanitarian law to prisoners of war and other protected persons, such as civilian internees;

Humanitarian and medical assistance

10. *reaffirms* the obligation of parties to an armed conflict, as well as third States, to grant humanitarian

relief and relief workers rapid and unimpeded access to civilian populations in need, subject to and in accordance with international humanitarian law, including sovereign consent, and further *reaffirms*, in this regard, the obligation to respect and to protect humanitarian relief personnel;

11. *recalls* the obligation to respect and to protect medical personnel, including Red Cross and Red Crescent workers, their means of transport, as well as medical establishments and other medical facilities at all times, in accordance with international humanitarian law, and recognizes the importance of medical personnel having access to any place where their medical services are required;
12. *stresses* the obligation of all parties to an armed conflict to recognize and uphold the protective value of the distinctive emblems recognized by the Geneva Conventions and, where applicable, their Additional Protocols;
13. *deplores* the misuse of medical establishments and other medical facilities and of the distinctive emblems to carry out military operations that place civilians, the wounded and sick, and medical personnel in danger;

Conduct of hostilities

14. *reaffirms* the principle of distinction between civilians and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives as a cardinal principle of international humanitarian law to be strictly observed by all parties to armed conflict at all times, regardless of the motives underlying the armed conflict;
15. *reaffirms* the prohibition of attacks directed at civilians or civilian objects, the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks, the principle of proportionality in attack, the obligation to take all feasible precautions in attack as well as against the effects of attack and, to protect and spare the civilian population, and the prohibition on using human shields;
16. *reaffirms* the prohibition of acts or threats of violence, the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population;
17. *reaffirms* that the right of the parties to an armed conflict to choose methods and means of warfare is not unlimited and that it is prohibited to employ weapons, projectiles and materials and methods

of warfare of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering;

18. *calls* on all States to increase their efforts to strengthen the protection of civilians against the indiscriminate use and effects of weapons and munitions and *recognizes*, in this regard, the need to urgently address the humanitarian impact of explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions, including through rigorous application of existing rules of international humanitarian law and additional national and international actions that will minimize the harmful effects of these munitions on civilians and on assistance to victims;
19. *recalls* the obligation as expressed in Additional Protocol I (Article 36) to review the legality of new weapons, means and methods of warfare and urges all States to consider establishing specific review mechanisms to this effect;
20. *stresses* that, in light of the obligation of States to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, adequate measures to control the availability of arms and ammunition are required so that they do not end up in the hands of those who may be expected to use them in violation of international humanitarian law;

Achieving effective implementation

a. National implementation

21. *recalls* that the obligation to respect international humanitarian law cannot be fulfilled without domestic implementation of international obligations and therefore reiterates the need for States to adopt all the legislative, regulatory and practical measures that are necessary to incorporate international humanitarian law into domestic law and practice;
22. *emphasizes*, in this regard, the need to adopt such measures for the use and protection of the distinctive emblems, the repression of serious violations of international humanitarian law, the protection of cultural property, the regulation of means and methods of warfare and the protection of the rights of missing persons and their families, among others;
23. *acknowledges with satisfaction* the effective role and increasing number of national committees and other bodies involved in advising and assisting national authorities in implementing, developing and spreading knowledge of international

humanitarian law, and encourages States which have not yet established such a national committee or similar body to consider doing so;

b. Doctrine, training and education

24. *recalls* that, in order to ensure respect for international humanitarian law in the conduct of military operations, it is essential that the law be translated into measures and mechanisms, at the level both of doctrine and of procedures. It is equally important that armed forces personnel at all levels be properly trained in the application of international humanitarian law;

25. *stresses*, in this regard, the responsibility of military commanders for the training of their personnel and for the orders they give to their subordinates, and *recalls* that it is essential therefore that commanders receive training commensurate with their responsibility;

26. *recalls* the importance, to this end, of the availability within the armed forces of legal advisers to advise commanders, at the appropriate level, on the application of international humanitarian law;

27. *reaffirms* that it is equally important that the civilian population be educated about international humanitarian law and, in this regard, encourages States to intensify their efforts and, in particular, to adopt educational programmes for young people, such as the Exploring Humanitarian Law education modules, and encourages National Societies to increase their efforts to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law in all sectors of society;

c. Ending impunity

28. *recognizes* that while implementation, training and education are prerequisites for States to comply with their obligation to respect international humanitarian law, enforcement, in particular through the rigorous application of the system of individual responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law, is required to put an end to impunity and to encourage future respect;

29. *stresses*, in this regard, that it is indispensable that all States create a domestic legal framework for the investigation of crimes under international law, in particular war crimes, and for the prosecution or extradition of persons suspected of having committed such crimes;

30. *underlines* the importance of visible, predictable and effective sanctions, whether penal or disciplinary, in order to ensure respect for international humanitarian law and to deter future violations;

31. *urges* States to make further progress in promoting accountability for the commission of crimes under international law by making domestic criminal justice more effective through, *inter alia*, assistance to States in developing the capacities of their domestic courts, by improving international judicial cooperation among States, as well as between States and international and “mixed” criminal courts and tribunals, by considering becoming party to the Statute of the International Criminal Court and by providing for jurisdiction over such crimes consistent with international law;

32. *encourages* the use of fact-finding mechanisms, such as the International Fact-Finding Commission established under Article 90 of Additional Protocol I, in restoring respect for international humanitarian law;

33. *invites* the ICRC, in furtherance of its previously reported efforts, to continue its reflection and work on improving compliance with international humanitarian law, and to include, where appropriate, an update in its reporting to the next International Conference on this issue;

34. *reminds* States of the need to address victims’ rights in accordance with international law;

35. *calls upon* all members of the Conference to take effective measures to implement this resolution.

1.2.4 RESOLUTION 4: ADOPTION OF THE GUIDELINES FOR THE DOMESTIC FACILITATION AND REGULATION OF INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RELIEF AND INITIAL RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

concerned by the serious plight of all those who urgently require emergency relief and recovery assistance in the wake of disasters,

reaffirming that the fundamental concern of mankind and of the international community in disaster situations is the protection and welfare of the individual and the safeguarding of basic human rights, as stated in the Declaration of Principles for International Humanitarian Relief to the Civilian Population in Disaster Situations, adopted by the 21st International Conference of the Red Cross in 1969,

recalling that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) considers it a fundamental right of all people both to offer and receive humanitarian assistance, as stated in the Principles and Rules of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Disaster Relief as amended by the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 1995,

reiterating that relief actions are an expression of international solidarity and that the extending of relief strengthens friendly relations among peoples and thus contributes to the consolidation of world peace, as stated in Resolution 18 of the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross in 1965,

noting that the United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly highlighted the importance of humanitarian assistance to persons affected by disasters, including in Resolutions 46/182 of 1991, 43/131 of 1988, and 57/150 of 2002, and that both United Nations General Assembly Resolution 32/56 of 1977 and Resolution 6 of the 23rd International Conference of the Red Cross of 1977 adopted a set of “Measures to Expedite Emergency Relief” to facilitate international relief operations,

recalling the commitments undertaken by the international community in the Millennium Declaration of 2000 to intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters, and in the Hyogo Declaration and Framework for Action of 2005 to improve national institutional and legal frameworks and to strengthen disaster preparedness for increased resilience and effective response to disasters at all levels,

noting with appreciation the practice of many States to facilitate international disaster relief and recovery assistance when needed and the increased attention and activity of the international humanitarian community to improve the coordination and effectiveness of disaster relief and recovery assistance,

welcoming the progress that has been made in the elaboration and operation of the International Search

and Rescue Advisory Group with the support of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the pioneering efforts made by international humanitarian organizations to develop minimum quality and accountability standards and mechanisms for disaster relief and recovery assistance, such as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief of 1994 and the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response as amended in 2004,

recalling Final Goal 2.1.1 of the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent of 1999 calling upon States, where necessary, to incorporate linkages to international systems of disaster response in their national disaster-preparedness plans as well as to include clearly defined roles and responsibilities for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, including representation on appropriate national policy and coordination bodies,

recalling further Final Goal 3.2 of the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent of 2003, and its determination that improved awareness, clarification, application and development of laws, rules and principles applicable to international disaster response will assist in facilitating and improving the coordination, timeliness, quality and accountability of international disaster-response activities and can therefore make a major contribution to the protection of human dignity in situations of disaster,

noting the findings of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation), as expressed in the background document to the Conference (30IC/07/9.1), that the framework of international laws and standards on international disaster relief and recovery remains dispersed and under-utilized, that there is often a lack of harmonization between national law and international standards, and that legal barriers to effective international disaster relief and recovery assistance still persist,

recognizing that the increasing breadth and diversity of international actors involved in disaster relief and recovery has brought important opportunities but also some challenges to assisting persons in need effectively and ensuring the complementarity of international disaster relief and recovery assistance with domestic response efforts and mechanisms,

recognizing the sovereign right of affected States to seek, accept, coordinate, regulate and monitor

disaster relief and recovery assistance provided by assisting actors in their territory,

considering the crucial role of domestic law and policy in this respect, which should be further developed consistent with relevant norms and principles of international law,

1. *adopts* the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance;
2. *encourages* States to make use of the Guidelines to strengthen their national legal, policy and institutional frameworks as well as when developing, if appropriate, bilateral and regional disaster-assistance agreements, understanding that the Guidelines do not constitute binding legal obligations;
3. *emphasizes* that, with regard to Red Cross and Red Crescent disaster relief and recovery activities, the Guidelines will be read consistent with the established rules, principles and practices of the Movement, including the Statutes of the Movement as amended in 1995 and 2006, the Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief as amended in 1995, the Seville Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement of 1997, and the Supplementary Measures to Enhance the Implementation of the Seville Agreement of 2005, and will not affect any existing legal arrangements between the individual components of the Movement and concerned States;
4. *invites* States, the International Federation and National Societies to bring these Guidelines to the attention of international and regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with disaster relief and recovery assistance;
5. *invites* the International Federation and National Societies, in close collaboration with the United Nations as well as other relevant international and regional organizations, to:
 - i. disseminate and support the use of the Guidelines in strengthening national legal, policy and institutional frameworks for disaster response;
 - ii. promote the mainstreaming of the Guidelines in all relevant existing legal-development,

disaster management and risk reduction initiatives, particularly the strengthened International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) system and its regional platforms for disaster risk reduction; and

- iii. continue their research and advocacy efforts, and the development of tools and models for the improvement of legal preparedness for disasters;

6. *invites* the International Federation, in consultation with National Societies, to submit a progress report on the implementation of this resolution to the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Annex to Resolution 4

Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance

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Introduction

1. Purpose and scope

1. These Guidelines are non-binding. While it is hoped that States will make use of them to strengthen their laws, policies and/or procedures related to international disaster response, as appropriate, the Guidelines do not have a direct effect on any existing rights or obligations under domestic law.
2. They draw from many existing international instruments, including United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 of 1991 and 57/150 of 2002, the Measures to Expedite International Relief of 1977 and the Hyogo Framework for Action of 2005.
3. Their purpose is to contribute to national legal preparedness by providing guidance to States interested in improving their domestic legal, policy and institutional frameworks concerning international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance. While affirming the principal role of domestic authorities and actors, they recommend minimum legal facilities to be provided to assisting States and to assisting humanitarian organizations that are willing and able to comply with minimum standards of coordination, quality and accountability. It is hoped that the use of these Guidelines will enhance the quality and efficiency of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance in order to better serve disaster-affected communities.
4. These Guidelines are not intended to apply to situations of armed conflict or to disasters that occur during armed conflicts, or to imply changes in any rules governing relief in those contexts. They are also not intended to recommend any changes to, or affect the meaning or implementation of, any existing international law or agreements, including but not limited to:
 - a. International humanitarian, human rights and refugee law;
 - b. The legal personality and status of States, inter-governmental organizations, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);

- c. International law related to privileges and immunities;
- d. The Statutes and regulations of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) and existing legal arrangements between the individual components of the Movement and States; and
- e. Existing agreements between States or between States and assisting actors.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of these Guidelines,

1. **“Disaster”** means a serious disruption of the functioning of society, which poses a significant, widespread threat to human life, health, property or the environment, whether arising from accident, nature or human activity, whether developing suddenly or as the result of long-term processes, but excluding armed conflict.
2. **“Disaster relief”** means goods and services provided to meet the immediate needs of disaster-affected communities.
3. **“Initial recovery assistance”** means goods and services intended to restore or improve the pre-disaster living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including initiatives to increase resilience and reduce risk, provided for an initial period of time, as determined by the affected State, after the immediate needs of disaster-affected communities have been met.
4. **“Goods”** means the supplies intended to be provided to disaster-affected communities for their relief or initial recovery.
5. **“Services”** means activities (such as rescue and medical care) undertaken by disaster-relief and initial-recovery personnel to assist disaster-affected communities.
6. **“Equipment”** means physical items, other than goods, that are necessary for disaster relief or initial recovery assistance, such as vehicles and radios.
7. **“Personnel”** means the staff and volunteers providing disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.
8. **“Affected State”** means the State upon whose territory persons or property are affected by a disaster.
9. **“Assisting State”** means a State providing disaster relief or initial recovery assistance, whether through civil or military components.
10. **“Originating State”** means the State from which disaster relief and initial recovery personnel, goods and equipment begin travel to the affected State.

11. **“Transit State”** means the State through whose territorial jurisdiction disaster relief or initial recovery assistance has received permission to pass on its way to or from the affected State in connection with disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.
 12. **“Assisting humanitarian organization”** means a foreign, regional, inter-governmental or international non-profit entity whose mandate and activities are primarily focused on humanitarian relief, recovery or development.
 13. **“Eligible assisting humanitarian organization”** means an assisting humanitarian organization determined to be eligible to receive legal facilities pursuant to Part V by the originating, transit or affected State, as applicable.
 14. **“Assisting actor”** means any assisting humanitarian organization, assisting State, foreign individual, foreign private company providing charitable relief or other foreign entity responding to a disaster on the territory of the affected State or sending in-kind or cash donations.
- c. It is provided without seeking to further a particular political or religious standpoint, intervene in the internal affairs of the affected State, or obtain commercial gain from charitable assistance;
 - d. It is not used as a means to gather sensitive information of a political, economic or military nature that is irrelevant to disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.
3. To the greatest extent practicable, their disaster relief and initial recovery assistance should also be:
 - a. Responsive to the special needs, if any, of women and particularly vulnerable groups, which may include children, displaced persons, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and persons living with HIV and other debilitating illnesses;
 - b. Adequate for the needs of affected persons and consistent with any applicable international standards of quality;
 - c. Coordinated with other relevant domestic and assisting actors;
 - d. Provided and conducted in a manner that is sensitive to cultural, social and religious customs and traditions;
 - e. Carried out with adequate involvement of affected persons, including women, youth and the elderly, in their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
 - f. Provided by competent and adequately trained personnel;
 - g. Commensurate with their organizational capacities;
 - h. Built upon and conducted in a manner that strengthens local disaster risk reduction, relief and recovery capacities and reduces future vulnerabilities to disasters;
 - i. Carried out so as to minimize negative impacts on the local community, economy, job markets, development objectives and the environment; and
 - j. Provided in a transparent manner, sharing appropriate information on activities and funding.

Part I: Core responsibilities

3. Responsibilities of affected States

1. Affected States have the primary responsibility to ensure disaster risk reduction, relief and recovery assistance in their territory. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, and domestic civil society actors play a key supporting role at the domestic level.
2. If an affected State determines that a disaster situation exceeds national coping capacities, it should seek international and/or regional assistance to address the needs of affected persons.
3. Affected States have the sovereign right to coordinate, regulate and monitor disaster relief and recovery assistance provided by assisting actors on their territory, consistent with international law.

4. Responsibilities of assisting actors

1. Assisting actors and their personnel should abide by the laws of the affected State and applicable international law, coordinate with domestic authorities, and respect the human dignity of disaster-affected persons at all times.
2. Assisting actors should ensure that their disaster relief and initial recovery assistance are provided in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and in particular that:
 - a. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone;
 - b. It is provided without any adverse distinction (such as in regards to nationality, race,

ethnicity, religious beliefs, class, gender, disability, age and political opinions) to disaster-affected persons;

5. **Additional responsibilities of all States**
 1. States providing funding to other assisting actors should encourage them to act in a manner consistent with the provisions of paragraph 4.
 2. All States should actively encourage members of the public interested in contributing to international disaster relief or initial recovery

to make financial donations where possible or otherwise donate only those types of relief goods expressly requested by the affected State.

6. Responsibilities concerning diversion and the intended use of resources

1. States and assisting humanitarian organizations should cooperate to prevent unlawful diversion, misappropriation, or fraud concerning disaster relief or initial recovery goods, equipment or resources and initiate proceedings as appropriate.
2. Affected States should use funds and relief goods donated to them, and which they have accepted in relation to a disaster, in a manner consistent with the expressed intent with which they were given.

Part II: Early warning and preparedness

7. Early warning

1. In order to minimize transboundary impacts and maximize the effectiveness of any international assistance that might be required, all States should have procedures in place to facilitate the expeditious sharing of information about disasters, including emerging hazards that are likely to cause disasters, with other States and assisting humanitarian organizations as appropriate, including the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator.

8. Legal, policy and institutional frameworks

1. As an essential element of a larger disaster risk reduction programme, States should adopt comprehensive legal, policy, and institutional frameworks and planning for disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, relief and recovery which take full account of the auxiliary role of their National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society, are inclusive of domestic civil society, and empower communities to enhance their own safety and resilience. States, with the support, as appropriate, of relevant regional and international organizations, should devote adequate resources to ensure the effectiveness of these frameworks.
2. These frameworks should also adequately address the initiation, facilitation, transit and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance consistent with these Guidelines. They should allow for effective coordination of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance, taking into account the role of the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator as central focal point with States and assisting humanitarian organizations concerning

United Nations emergency relief operations. They should also clearly designate domestic governmental entities with responsibility and authority in these areas. Consideration should be given to establishing a national focal point to liaise between international and government actors at all levels.

3. Where necessary and appropriate, national governments should encourage other domestic actors with authority over areas of law or policy pertinent to international disaster relief or initial recovery assistance, such as provincial or local governments and private regulatory bodies, to take the necessary steps at their level to implement the Guidelines.

9. Regional and international support for domestic capacity

1. With a view to increasing resilience and reducing the need for international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance, the international community, including donors, regional and other relevant actors, should support developing States, domestic civil society actors and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to build their capacities to prevent, mitigate, prepare for and respond to disasters domestically.
2. The international community should also support developing States to build their capacity to adequately implement legal, policy and institutional frameworks to facilitate international relief and initial recovery assistance. This support should be provided to States in a coordinated manner by the relevant actors.

Part III: Initiation and termination of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance

10. Initiation

1. Disaster relief or initial recovery assistance should be initiated only with the consent of the affected State and, in principle, on the basis of an appeal. The affected State should decide in a timely manner whether or not to request disaster relief or initial recovery assistance and communicate its decision promptly. In order to make this decision, the affected State should promptly assess needs. Consideration should be given to undertaking joint needs assessments with the United Nations and other assisting humanitarian organizations.
2. Requests and offers for assistance should be as specific as possible as to the types and amounts of goods as well as the services and expertise available or required, respectively. Affected

States may also wish to indicate particular types of goods and services likely to be offered that are not needed.

3. Affected States should make available to assisting actors adequate information about domestic laws and regulations of particular relevance to the entry and operation of disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.

11. Initiation of military relief

Military assets should be deployed for disaster relief or initial recovery assistance only at the request or with the express consent of the affected State, after comparable civilian alternatives have been considered. Prior to any such deployment, terms and conditions (including such issues as the duration of deployment, whether they must be unarmed or may be armed, the use of their national uniforms, and mechanisms for cooperation with civilian actors) are to be agreed by the affected and assisting States.

12. Termination

When an affected State or an assisting actor wishes to terminate disaster relief or initial recovery assistance, it should provide appropriate notification. Upon such notification, the affected State and the assisting actor should consult with each other, bearing in mind the impact of such termination on disaster-affected communities.

Part IV: Eligibility for legal facilities

13. Facilities for assisting States

It is recommended that transit and affected States grant, at a minimum, the legal facilities described in Part V to assisting States with respect to their disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.

14. Facilities for assisting humanitarian organizations

1. Subject to existing international law, it is the prerogative of originating, transit and affected States to determine which assisting humanitarian organizations will be eligible to receive the legal facilities described in Part V with respect to their disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.
2. It is recommended that States establish criteria for assisting humanitarian organizations seeking eligibility for legal facilities. These criteria should include a showing by the organization of its willingness and capacity to act in accordance with the responsibilities described in paragraph 4 of these Guidelines.
3. Any additional requirements imposed on assisting humanitarian organizations should

not unduly burden the provision of appropriate disaster relief and initial recovery assistance.

4. Determination of eligibility by the State granting the facilities should be possible in advance of a disaster, or as soon as possible after its onset. Applicable procedures and mechanisms should be as simple and expeditious as possible. They should be clearly described and information about them should be made freely available. They might include the use of a national roster, bilateral agreements or reliance upon international or regional systems of accreditation, if available.
5. Retention of the legal facilities in Part V should be made dependent on ongoing compliance with the provisions of sub-section 2 of this paragraph. However, entitlement to legal facilities should not be changed arbitrarily, retroactively or without notice appropriate to the circumstances.

15. Facilities for other assisting actors

Affected States may also wish to extend, upon request, some of the legal facilities in Part V to assisting actors other than those covered by paragraphs 13 and 14, such as private companies providing charitable relief, provided this does not negatively affect operations of assisting humanitarian organizations or assisting States. Any actor receiving such facilities should be required to abide, at a minimum, by the same conditions described in paragraph 14.

Part V: Legal facilities for entry and operations

It is recommended that States provide the legal facilities described in paragraphs 16-24 to assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations. It is understood that the granting of these facilities will be subject to the interests of national security, public order, public and environmental health, and public morals of the concerned affected, originating and transit States. Measures to protect such interests should be tailored to the exigencies of the specific disaster and be consistent with the humanitarian imperative of addressing the needs of affected communities.

Where specific facilities recommended here are within the competence of authorities other than the national government, the national government should, where possible and appropriate, encourage those authorities to provide the relevant facilities to assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations.

16. Personnel

1. With regard to disaster relief and initial recovery personnel of assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations, affected States should:

- a. Grant visas and any necessary work permits, ideally without cost, renewable within their territory, for the time necessary to carry out disaster relief or initial recovery activities;
 - b. In disaster relief operations, waive or significantly expedite the provision of such visas and work permits;
 - c. Establish expedited procedures for temporary recognition of professional qualifications of foreign medical personnel, architects, and engineers, driving licences and other types of licence and certificate that are necessary for the performance of disaster relief or initial recovery functions and that have been certified as genuine by the concerned assisting State or eligible assisting humanitarian organization, for the time necessary to carry out disaster relief or initial recovery activities;
 - d. Facilitate freedom of access to and freedom of movement in and from the disaster-affected area, bearing in mind the safety of disaster relief and initial recovery personnel.
2. Upon request, originating and transit States should likewise waive or promptly issue, ideally without cost, exit or transit visas, as appropriate, for the disaster relief and initial recovery personnel of eligible assisting humanitarian organizations.
 3. Assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations should consider to what degree disaster relief and initial recovery objectives can be met through hiring local staff.

17. Goods and equipment

1. With regard to disaster relief and initial recovery goods and equipment exported or imported by, or on behalf of, assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations, originating, transit and affected States should:
 - a. Exempt them from all customs duties, taxes, tariffs and governmental fees;
 - b. Exempt them from all export, transit, and import restrictions;
 - c. Simplify and minimize documentation requirements for export, transit and import;
 - d. Permit re-exportation of any equipment or unused goods which the assisting State or assisting humanitarian organization owns and wishes to retain.
2. With regard to disaster relief goods and equipment only, originating, transit and affected States should additionally:
 - a. Waive or reduce inspection requirements; where waiver is not possible, clear relief goods and equipment rapidly and as a matter of

priority, through a pre-clearance process where feasible; and

- b. Arrange for inspection and release outside business hours and/or at a place other than a customs office, as necessary, to minimize delay, in accordance with the safety regulations of the affected State. Assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations should respect any routes and delivery points prescribed by the affected State.
3. In order to benefit from the above facilities, assisting States and assisting humanitarian organizations should, in accordance with agreed international standards, appropriately pack, classify and mark disaster relief and initial recovery goods and equipment, and include detailed manifests with each shipment. They should additionally inspect all such goods and equipment to ensure their quality, appropriateness for the needs in the affected State, and conformity with the national law of the affected State and international standards.
 4. Assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations should assume responsibility for removing or disposing of any unwanted and unused disaster relief and initial recovery goods, particularly if they may pose a threat to human health or safety, or to the environment.

18. Special goods and equipment

In addition to the facilities described in paragraph 17:

1. Affected States should grant temporary recognition to foreign registration and plates with regard to vehicles imported by assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations or on their behalf in disaster relief and initial recovery assistance.
2. Affected States should waive or expedite the granting of any applicable licences and reduce any other barriers to the use, import or export of telecommunications and information technology equipment by assisting States and assisting humanitarian organizations, or on their behalf, in disaster relief and initial recovery assistance. Without discrimination against or negative impact to domestic relief actors, affected States should also grant (or, where appropriate, encourage other domestic actors to grant) assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations priority access to bandwidth, frequencies and satellite use for telecommunications and data transfer associated with disaster relief operations.
3. Originating, transit and affected States should reduce legal and administrative barriers

to the exportation, transit, importation and re-exportation of medications and medical equipment by assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations, or on their behalf, in disaster relief and initial recovery assistance, to the extent consistent with public safety and international law. Assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations should take all reasonable steps to ensure the quality, appropriateness and safety of any such medications and equipment and in particular:

- a. Any medications they import should be approved for use in the originating and affected States;
- b. Medications they use in their own operations should be:
 - i. transported and maintained in appropriate conditions to ensure their quality and;
 - ii. guarded against misappropriation and abuse;
- c. Any medications they donate for use by others in the affected State should be:
 - i. at least 12 months from their expiry date upon arrival, unless otherwise agreed by the receiving authorities;
 - ii. transported and maintained in appropriate conditions to ensure their quality until they reach the affected State; and
 - iii. appropriately labelled in a language understood in the affected State with the International Nonproprietary Name or generic name, batch number, dosage form, strength, name of manufacturer, quantity in the container, storage conditions and expiry date.

4. Originating, transit and affected States should consider whether normal requirements regarding fumigation and prohibitions and restrictions on food imports and exports by assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations in disaster relief operations can be modified or reduced.

19. Transport

1. Originating, transit and affected States should grant, without undue delay, permission for the speedy passage of land, marine and air vehicles operated by an assisting State or eligible assisting humanitarian organization, or on its behalf, for the purpose of transporting disaster relief or initial recovery assistance and, ideally, waive applicable fees.
2. In particular, permission should be granted for overflight, landing and departure of aircraft. Such aircraft should also be authorized to operate within the territory of the affected State

as required for the delivery of assistance.

3. Any applicable exit, transit and entry visas for the operating personnel of such transport vehicles should be promptly issued.

20. Temporary domestic legal status

1. Affected States should grant relevant entities of assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations, upon entry or as soon as possible thereafter, at least a temporary authorization to legally operate on their territory so as to enjoy the rights, *inter alia*, to open bank accounts, enter into contracts and leases, acquire and dispose of property and instigate legal proceedings, for the purpose of providing disaster relief and initial recovery assistance.
2. Assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations should also be granted the right to freely bring the necessary funds and currencies in or out of the country through legal means and to obtain legal exchange rates in connection with their disaster relief or initial recovery assistance.
3. Affected States should allow assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations to legally hire and terminate the contracts of local personnel.

21. Taxation

Affected States should provide exemptions to assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations from value-added and other taxes or duties directly associated with disaster relief and initial recovery assistance.

22. Security

Affected States should take appropriate measures to address the safety and security of disaster relief and initial recovery personnel of assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations and of the premises, facilities, means of transport, equipment and goods used in connection with their disaster relief or initial recovery assistance. Assisting States and assisting humanitarian organizations should also take appropriate steps in their own planning and operations to mitigate security risks.

23. Extended hours

Affected States should endeavour to ensure, when necessary, that State-operated offices and services essential to the timely delivery of international disaster relief function outside of normal business hours.

24. Costs

1. The costs of providing international disaster relief or initial recovery assistance pursuant to these Guidelines should normally be borne by the assisting State or assisting humanitarian organization. However, assisting States may agree in advance with the affected State for the reimbursement of certain costs and fees, or for the temporary loan of equipment.
2. Affected States should consider, when it is in their power and to the extent possible under the circumstances, providing certain services at reduced or no cost to assisting States and eligible assisting humanitarian organizations, which may include:
 - a. In-country transport, including by national airlines;
 - b. Use of buildings and land for office and warehouse space; and
 - c. Use of cargo handling equipment and logistic support.
2. *supports* the efforts by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) to strengthen monitoring, and in this regard:
 - Requests the ICRC and the International Federation to appoint an independent monitor, after seeking the views of the two National Societies, who shall enjoy the institutional backing and support of the Movement;
 - Invites interested National Societies to support the work of the independent monitor in appropriate ways upon his request;
3. *encourages* the MDA and the PRCS to enhance their cooperation to achieve full implementation of the MoU consistent with the Statutes and all applicable rules and principles of the Movement;
4. *calls on* all authorities concerned to support the full implementation of the MoU;
5. *calls upon* the independent monitor to report to the International Federation and the ICRC, for appropriate follow-up, on the following two topics:
 - Progress towards the full implementation of the MoU; and
 - Steps taken to support and strengthen the monitoring of the implementation of the MoU, as well as to support cooperation between the two National Societies, by 31 May 2008;
6. *decides* to include the progress reports referred to above on the agenda of the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

1.2.5 RESOLUTION 5: FOLLOW-UP OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING OF 28 NOVEMBER 2005 BETWEEN THE PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY AND THE MAGEN DAVID ADOM IN ISRAEL

The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

recalling the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and its associated Agreement on Operational Arrangements (AOA) signed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the Magen David Adom in Israel (MDA) on 28 November 2005,

noting with concern the report on the implementation of the MoU presented to the Council of Delegates on 24 November 2007 by Mr Pär Stenbäck, the independent monitor appointed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) at the request of the signatories of the MoU,

1. *endorses* Resolution 2 adopted by the Council of Delegates on 24 November 2007 concerning the implementation of the MoU and the AOA between the PRCS and the MDA, and *expresses its full support* for the steps called for therein;

1.2.6 RESOLUTION 6: DATE AND PLACE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT IN 2011

The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

decides to hold an International Conference in 2011, the date and place of which is to be determined by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.



LISTE DES DÉLÉGUÉS LIST OF DELEGATES LISTA DE DELEGADOS

قائمة بأسماء المندوبين

2.1

MEMBRES DE LA CONFÉRENCE MEMBERS OF THE CONFÉRENCE 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 Internacional, el orden alfabético de los miembros de la Conferencia es el de los nombres de sus países en francés. Las indicaciones relativas a la composición de las delegaciones están en el idioma escogido por la propia delegación.

وفقاً للنظام الداخلي للحركة الدولية، الترتيب الأبجدي لأعضاء المؤتمر هو الترتيب الأبجدي لأسماء بلدانهم باللغة الفرنسية. وتكون كل التفاصيل ذات الصلة بتشكيل الوفود باللغة التي يختارها الوفد.

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M. Abdelaziz Abid
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Mme Selma Malika Hendel
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Mr Marcello Guerra
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Mr Federico Fadiga
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Mr Naoki Shiratsuchi
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Delegation of Japan to the Conference on
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Geneva

Mr Masayuki Sakaniwa
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission,
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Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Col. Juma Ali Mohamed Boufliha
Legal Adviser, General Secretariat for
General Security, Tripoli
Lt.Col. Abdelmagid Mohamed Belgasem
General Secretariat for General Security,
Tripoli

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- Mme Christine Goy
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- Mr Ahmad Zulkamal Shahrir
Federal Counsel, Kuala Lumpur
- Mr Abdullah Sani Baharin
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Development, Kuala Lumpur
- Ms Siti Hajjar Adnin
Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs, Kuala Lumpur
- Mr Davidson Dee Ladi
Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry
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Mission permanente, Genève
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- M. Ahmed Ould Moctar Bousseif
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Adjunto, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

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Alternativa, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

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Mr Alexandru Birca
Youth Coordinator

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Directrice de l'action sanitaire et sociale,
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Mlle Carole Lanteri
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M. Alexandre Jahlan
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Mr Batmunkh Dagva
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Head of Delegation

Ms Ivana Jelic
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Jefe de Delegación

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Embajador, Representante Permanente,
Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sr. Berardo Torres Rodríguez
Coronel, Sub Director Nacional de
Protección Civil y Administración de
Desastres, Caracas

Sr. José Luis Betancourt Márquez
Coronel, Director de Relaciones
Internacionales de la Dirección Nacional
de Protección Civil y Administración de
Desastres, Caracas

Sr. Juan Arias Palacio
Embajador, Representante Permanente
Alternativo, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sra. María Elena Dos Santos
Tercera Secretaria, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

Sr. Diego Ibarra
Tercer Secretario, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

Sra. Mariela González
Asistente Técnica, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

Sr. Leonel Lobo
Asistente Técnico, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

VIET NAM / VIET NAM / VIETNAM / فييت نام

**Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional •
الجمعية الوطنية**

Head of Delegation

Mr Tang Ngoc Tran
President

Mr Thai Van Doan
Vice-President and Secretary-General

Ms Thuy Thi Hong Luong
Deputy Director, International Relations and
Development Department.

État • State • Estado • الدولة

Head of Delegation

Mr Van Mien Vu
Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

YÉMEN / YEMEN / YEMEN / اليمن

**Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional •
الجمعية الوطنية**

Head of Delegation

Dr Mohammed Ahmed Al-Kabab
President

Mr Abbas Ali Zabarah
Secretary-General

Dr Merfat Mogalli
Assistant Secretary-General for Women's
Activities

Dr Mejali Mirfat
Member

État • State • Estado • الدولة

Head of Delegation

Mr Abdulmalik Aleryani
Ambassador, Deputy Permanent
Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Fawaz Al-Rassas
Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

ZAMBIE / ZAMBIA / ZAMBIA / زامبيا

**Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional •
الجمعية الوطنية**

Head of Delegation

Mr Kelvin Chundu
President

Mr Charles Mushitu
Secretary-General

Mr Elias Mutale
Legal Adviser

État • State • Estado • الدولة

Head of Delegation

Dr Austin Charles Job Sichinga
Permanent Secretary, Office of the Vice-
President, Lusaka

- Mr Mathias Daka
Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva
- Ms Isabel Mutinta Mattyola-Lemba
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
- Ms Patricia Sikazwe Kasapatu
State Advocate, Lusaka
- Ms Prudence Yande Mwape
Head, Research and Planning, Lusaka

ZIMBABWE / ZIMBABWE / ZIMBABUE / زمبابوي

Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional •
الجمعية الوطنية

Head of Delegation

- Mr Edmore Shamu
National President
- Ms Emma Kundishora
Secretary-General
- État • State • Estado • الدولة
- Head of Delegation
- Mr Chitsaka Chipaziwa
Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva
- Mr Enos Mafemba
Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva
- Mr Chameso Mucheka
Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL 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

- M. Jakob Kellenberger
Président
- M. Jacques Forster
Vice-Président permanent
- M. Olivier Vodoz
Vice-Président
- M. Jean Abt
Membre du Comité
- M. Jenö C.A. Staehelin
Membre du Comité
- M. Daniel Thürer
Membre du Comité
- M. Angelo Gnaedinger
Directeur général
- M. Yves Daccord
Directeur de la communication

- M. Pierre Kraehenbuehl
Directeur des opérations
- Mme Doris Pfister
Directrice des ressources et du soutien
opérationnel
- M. Philip Spoerri
Directeur du droit international et de la
coopération au sein du Mouvement
- M. Jacques Stroun
Directeur des ressources humaines
- M. Balthasar Staehelin
Directeur adjoint des opérations
- Mme Brigitte Troyon-Borgeaud
Directrice adjointe du droit international et
de la coopération au sein du Mouvement
- M. Jean-Luc Blondel
Conseiller personnel du Président
- M. Alain Aeschlimann
Chef de la Division protection
- M. Bruce Biber
Chef de la Division coopération et
coordination au sein du Mouvement
- M. Jean-Philippe Lavoyer
Chef de la Division juridique
- Mme Elizabeth Twinch
Chef de la Division assistance
- M. Eduard Abegg
Chef adjoint de la Division coopération et
coordination au sein du Mouvement
- M. Knut Doermann
Chef adjoint de la Division juridique
- M. Peter Herby
Chef de l'Unité armes
- M. Yves Petermann
Chef de l'Unité diplomatie humanitaire
- M. Florian Westphal
Chef des relations avec les médias (Porte-
parole de la délégation du CICR)

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

Head of Delegation

- Mr Juan Manuel Suárez del Toro
President
- Mr Shimelis Adugna
Vice-President
- Dr Raymond Forde
Vice-President

Mr	Tadateru Konoe Vice-President	Mr	Mike Goodhand Acting Head, Logistics Department
Prof.	René Rhinow Vice-President	Mr	Alistair Henley Head, Zone, Kuala Lumpur
Mr	Bengt Westerberg Vice-President	Mr	Marwan Jilani Head, Zone, Amman
Mr	Chrystold Chetty Chairman, Finance Commission	Mr	Frank Kennedy Head of the South Pacific Office
Dr	Raimondo Fattori Honorary Legal Adviser	Ms	Françoise Le Goff Head, Zone, Johannesburg
Mr	Markku Niskala Secretary-General	Ms	Andree Lorber-Willis Head, Administration Department
Mr	Ibrahim Osman Deputy Secretary-General	Ms	Lorraine Mangwiro Head, Human Resources Department, Acting Manager Human Resources Operations
Mr	Encho Gospodinov Director, National Society and Field Support Division	Ms	Asha Mohamed Head, Zone, Nairobi
Mr	Thomas Gurtner Director, Coordination and Programmes Division	Mr	Hugh Peterken Head, Information Systems Department
Mr	Stephen Ingles Director, Support Services	Mr	Peter Rees Head, Operations Support Department
Mr	Pierre Duplessis Special Envoy of the Secretary-General	Mr	Graham Saunders Head, Shelter Department
Mr	Mukesh Kapila Special Representative of the Secretary- General, HIV/AIDS	Mr	Alasan Senghore Head, Zone, Dakar
Mr	Jerry Talbot Special Representative, Tsunami Response	Ms	Michaela Told Acting Head, Principles and Values Department
Ms	Malika Aït-Mohamed-Parent Head, Cabinet, Office of the Secretary- General	Ms	Anitta Underlin Head, Zone, Budapest
Ms	Luntan Bayarmaa Head, Organizational Development Department	Mr	Xavier Castellanos Assistant Director, Americas Zone, Panama
Mr	Michael Davis Head, Finance Department	Ms	Yulia Gusynina Coordinator, International Conference and Council of Delegates, Cooperation and Governance Support
Mr	Bruce Eshaya-Chauvin Head, Health and Care Department	Mr	Christopher Lamb Special Adviser, International Representation
Mr	Frank Mohrhauer Head, Cooperation and Governance Support	Mr	Leon Prop Assistant Director, Europe Zone, Budapest
Mr	Mohammed Mukhier Head, Disaster Policy and Preparedness Department	Ms	Elise Baudot Legal Counsel
Mr	Martin Faller Head, Strategic Partnerships and Business Development	Mr	Santiago Gil Garcia Senior Transition Adviser, Coordination and Programmes Division
Mr	José Garcia-Lozano Head, Zone, Panama		

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

H.E. Dr Mohamed Al-Hadid
Chairman
Ms Janet Davidson
Vice-Chairwoman
H.E. Mr Philippe Cuvillier
Member
Ms Zoy Katevas De Sclabos
Member
Mr Freddy Karup Pedersen
Member
Ms Helena Korhonen
Head, Secretariat

Office of the Commissioner

H.E. Mr Stephan Husy
Commissioner of the 30th International
Conference
Mr Pascal Rapillard
Assistant to the Commissioner of the
Conference

2.3 OBSERVATEURS OBSERVERS OBSERVADORES المراقبون

**2.3.1 SOCIÉTÉS NATIONALES EN
ATTENTE DE RECONNAISSANCE
ET D'ADMISSION / NATIONAL
SOCIETIES AWAITING
RECOGNITION AND ADMISSION /
SOCIEDADES NACIONALES EN
ESPERA DE RECONOCIMIENTO Y
ADMISIÓN /**
الجمعيات الوطنية
بانتظار الاعتراف بها وقبولها

**2.3.2 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

ERITREA / RED CROSS SOCIETY OF ERITREA

Head of Delegation

Ms Alganesh Kidane
Secretary-General

TUVALU / RED CROSS SOCIETY OF TUVALU

Head of Delegation

Mr Kiatoa Ulika
Board Member

PALESTINE

Head of Delegation

H.E. Mr Mohammad Abu-Koash
Ambassador, Permanent Observer,
Permanent Observer Mission, Geneva
Mr Taissir Al-Adjouri
Counsellor, Permanent Observer, Permanent
Observer Mission, Geneva
Mr Imad Zuhairi
Counsellor, Permanent Observer, Permanent
Observer Mission, Geneva

Association Médicale Mondiale

Head of Delegation

Dr Julia Seyer
Member

CARE International

Head of Delegation

Mr Jonathan Mitchell
Director, Emergency Response

Caritas International

Chef de Délégation

Mme Francesca Merico
Membre

Mlle Floriana Polito
Assistante de programme

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (Henry Dunant)

Head of Delegation

Mr Andy Andrea
Director, Communications

Ms Flore Brannon
Communications Officer

Ms Valeri Zieba
Communications Officer

European Union – Commission of European Communities

Head of Delegation

Mr Eckart Guth
Ambassador, Head of Delegation

Mr Thierry Bechet
Minister Counsellor

Mr Kim Eling
First Secretary, Permanent Delegation

Ms Kristin Hedstrom
Desk Officer, Red Cross and International Organizations

Mr André Mollard
Attaché

Mr Bruno Hanses
Attaché

Fédération internationale Terre des Hommes

Chef de Délégation

M. Peter Brey
Vice-Président

Mme Loredana Marchetti
Chargée de projet Asie

Mme Eylah Kadjar
Coordonnatrice

Fédération mondiale des anciens combattants (FMAC)

Chef de Délégation

M. Serge Wourgaft
Président d'honneur

Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population (UNFPA)

Chef de Délégation

Mme Siri Tellier
Directrice de bureau

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Head of Delegation

Ms Sylvie Wabbes-Candotti
Agronomist, Operations Officer, Emergency Operations Service

Ms Teresa Buerkle
Information Officer

Friends World Committee for Consultation Comité Consultation (Quakers)

Head of Delegation

Mr David Atwood
Representative (Disarmament and Peace)

Ms Yvette Issar
Programme Assistant (Disarmament and Peace)

Ms Siobhan Sparkes McNamara
Programme Assistant (Human Rights and Refugees)

Ms Rachel Brett
Representative, Human Rights and Refugees Programme

Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

Head of Delegation

Prof. Marco Sassòli
President of Council

Dr Vincent Chetail
Director

Prof. Andrew Clapham
Director

Ms Louise Doswald-Beck
Professor, Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva

Ms Paola Gaeta
University Law Professor

Mr Gilles Giacca
Researcher

Ms Sharon Weill
Researcher

Mr Mamadou Hebie
Assistant Researcher

Ms Fiona Le Diraison
Assistant

Ms Katherine Del Mar
Member

Geneva Call

Chef de Délégation

- Mme Elisabeth Decrey
Présidente
- M. Martin Damary
Directeur
- M. Pascal Bongard
Directeur de programme
- M. Philippe Gazagne
Administrateur de programmes
- Mlle Gaëlle Cornuz
Membre
- Dr Jean-Damascène Gasanabo
Membre

Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)

Head of Delegation

- Ms Anne-Marie Buzatu
Member

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

Head of Delegation

- Dr Cornelio Sommaruga
President
- Dr Davide Orifici
Policy Adviser and External Relations Officer
- Ms Sheree Bailey
Specialist, Victim Assistance

Global Humanitarian Forum

Head of Delegation

- Mr Meinrad Studer
Director
- Ms Cécile Couteau
Head AI Communication AI
- Mr Martin Frick
Head, Stakeholder Relations
- Ms Isabelle Borgeaud
Communications Officer
- Mr Amaury De Bruijn
Member
- Ms Eleonora del Balzo
Member
- Ms Amna Smailbegovic
Member
- Ms Celina Schwartz
Member

Handicap International

Head of Delegation

- Mr Stanislas Brabant
Head, Policy Unit

Harvard University Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research

Head of Delegation

- Mr Claude Bruderlein
Director
- Mr Bruno Demeyere
Member
- Dr Yoram Dinstein
Member
- Mr Maarten Merkelbach
Member

HelpAge International

Head of Delegation

- Mr Richard Blewitt
Chief Executive

Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP)

Head of Delegation

- Ms Susanna Söderström
Office Manager

Humanitarian Futures Programmes

Head of Delegation

- Dr Randolph Kent
Director
- Ms Rosemary Oglesby
Programme Coordinator

International Association of Initiatives for Change

Head of Delegation

- Ms Danielle Maillefer
Director

International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Evgeny Vasiliev
Deputy Secretary-General
- Mr Stéphane Davin
Legal Adviser

International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Andreas Kleiser
Director, Policy and Cooperation

International Council of Nurses

Head of Delegation

- Ms Jill Caughley
Consultant

International Criminal Court

Head of Delegation

- Mr Hans Bevers
Legal Adviser, Office of the Prosecutor
- Ms Jennifer Khurana
Adviser, External Relations

International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission

Chef de Délégation

- H.E. Mme Christine Schraner-Burgener
Secrétaire général
- M. Ghalib Djilali
Vice-Président
- Lt Gen. Satish Nambiar
Expert
- M. Joël Floris
Assistant
- M. Reynald Veillard
Membre

International Institute of Humanitarian Law

Head of Delegation

- H.E. Dr Maurizio Moreno
President
- Prof. Michel Veuthey
Vice-President
- Dr Stefania Baldini
Secretary-General
- Mr Gianluca Beruto
Assistant to the Secretary-General
- Ms Anne Quintin
Member

International Islamic Relief Organization

Head of Delegation

- Dr Adnan Basha
Secretary-General
- Dr Majdi H. Al-Toukhi
Manager, Health Care Department
- Ms Fawzia Al Ashmawi
Representative

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Alfred Gondo
Humanitarian Affairs Officer
- Mr Sandjiman Mamder
International Officer

International Life Saving Federation (ILS)

Head of Delegation

- Dr Klaus Wilkens
Vice-President

International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Head of Delegation

- Ms Katia Mascagni
Head, International Organizations' Relations and Cooperation

International Council of Voluntary Agencies

Head of Delegation

- Mr Ed Schenkenberg
Coordinator
- Mr Myke Leahy
Information Officer
- Ms Manisha Thomas
Policy Officer

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- Ms Vanja Kullander
Intern

International Social Service

Head of Delegation

- Mr Gabriel Frossard
Secretary-General
- Ms Anna Libri
Director
- Ms Anna Rosa Loiacono
Consultant
- Ms Julie Capewell
Observer

International Society for Military Law and the Law of War

Head of Delegation

- Dr Dieter Fleck
Honorary President

Islamic Relief Worldwide

Head of Delegation

- Mr Jamal Krafess
Director
- Mr Rachid Lahlou
President
- Mr Mehdi Ben Mrad
Officer, International Affairs
- Ms Mersiha Grabus
Project Coordinator

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Head of Delegation

- Ms Helen Frary
Chief, Board and UN Relations

Ligue des États arabes

Chef de Délégation

- S.E. M. Saad Alfarargi
Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent,
Mission permanente, Genève
- M. Ali El-Fathi
Ministre plénipotentiaire
- M. Osman El Hajje
- M. Salah Aeid
- M. Hafedh Tounsi

Médecins sans frontières

Head of Delegation

- Mr Christopher Stokes
Secretary-General
- Mr Emmanuel Tronc
Coordinator, Policy and Advocacy

Ordre Souverain et Militaire de Malte

Head of Delegation

- H.E. Ms Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann
Ambassador, Permanent Observer,
Permanent Mission, Geneva
- Mr Hendrick Charles Krauskopf
Delegate
- Mr Marc De Skowronski
Minister Counsellor, Observer

Arab Organization of Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies (General Secretariat)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Abdulla Bin Mohammed Al-Hazaa
Secretary-General
- Dr Ali Najib
Legal Adviser
- Mr Galal Abdel Majeed
Administrative Director

Organisation de la Conférence islamique

Chef de Délégation

- S.E. M. Babacar Ba
Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent,
Mission permanente, Genève
- M. Mojtaba Amiri Vahid
Observateur permanent adjoint, Mission
permanente, Genève

Organisation internationale de la francophonie

Chef de Délégation

- S.E. M. Libere Bararunyeretse
Représentant permanent
- Mme Sandra Coulibaly Leroy
Représentante adjointe
- Mme Nathalie Odounlami
Assistante politique et juridique

Oxfam

Head of Delegation

- Mr Mark Prasopa-Plaizier
Conflict and Humanitarian Policy Adviser

Pan Pacific and South East Asia Women's Association (PPSEAWA)

Head of Delegation

- Ms Clarissa Starey
Representative

Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC)

Head of Delegation

- H.E. Mr Ibrahim Auf
Secretary-General
- H.E. Mr Mohammad Peyrovi
Ambassador, Assistant Secretary-General

Pax Christi International

Head of Delegation

- Ms Magda Van Damme
Observer

Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response

Head of Delegation

- Ms Eva von Oelreich
Executive Secretary

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Jean-Claude Legrand
Senior Adviser, Child Protection

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Head of Delegation

- Ms Cécile Molinier
Director, Liaison Office in Geneva
- Ms Salwa Al-Dalati
Communications Associate
- Ms Pari Zarrabi
Communications Assistant

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Hansjoerg Strohmeyer
Chief, Policy Development and Studies
Branch
- Mr Kasidis Rochanakorn
Director
- Ms Norah Niland
Chief, Office of the Director, Policy
Development Section
- Mr Ramesh Rajasingham
Head, Office

Ms	Rusu Sharon	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
	Chief, External Relations and Support Mobilization Branch	<i>Head of Delegation</i>
Mr	Fabrizio Gentiloni	Mr Daniel Endres
	Chief of Section, Emergency Preparedness	Deputy Director, Emergency and Technical Support
Ms	Emanuela Gillard	Mr Jeff Crisp
	Head, Protection of Civilians Section, Policy, Development and Studies Branch	Head, Policy Development and Evaluation Service
Mr	Dusan Zupka	Ms Christina Linner
	Deputy Chief of Section, Emergency Preparedness	Head, Inter-Organization Desk, Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service
Mr	Roy Brooke	Ms Catherine Walker
	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Acting Head, Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service
Mr	Michael Meier	Mr Mathijs Le Rutte
	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Senior Legal Officer, Protection Operations and Legal Advice Section
Mr	Takeo Murakami	Ms Carmen Aramburu
	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Senior Public Health Officer, Public Health and HIV Section
Mr	Christophe Schmachtel	Ms Maria Bances Del Rey
	Associate Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Legal Officer
Ms	Irina Zodrow	Ms Gisela Thater
	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Legal Officer
Ms	Virginie Bohl	Mr Aidan Cronin
	Programme Assistant	Associate Programme Officer, Public Health and HIV Section
	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR)	Ms Jane Janz
	<i>Head of Delegation</i>	Associate Inter-Organization Officer, Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service
Ms	Kyung-Wha Kang	Mr Tarik Kurdi
	Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights	UN Official
Mr	José Luis Gomez Del Prado	
	Chairman-Rapporteur, Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries	
Ms	Maymuchka Lauriston	
	Human Rights Officer	
Mr	Chris Mburu	
	Human Rights Officer	
Ms	Adriana Zarraluqui	
	Human Rights Officer	
Ms	Christina Meinecke-Chalev	
	Programme Officer	
Mr	Javier Burgos	
	Intern	
		United Nations Organization (UNO)
		<i>Head of Delegation</i>
		Mr Berhane Tewolde-Medhin
		Representative, ICRAC - CITRAC
		Mr Tim Caughley
		Director, Disarmament Affairs
		Mr Peter Kolarov
		Political Affairs Officer

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Matthias Burchard
Head, UNRWA Representative Office,
Geneva
- Ms Elena Mancusi
Senior Liaison Officer, UNRWA
Representative Office, Geneva
- Ms Maria Gilani
Intern

World Council of Churches

Head of Delegation

- Dr Manoj Kurian
Programme Executive, Health and Healing,
World Council of Churches

World Federation of United Nations Associations

Head of Delegation

- Dr Daphné Romy
Director
- Mr Rayane Ben Amor
Member
- Ms Anna Grigoryan
Member
- Ms Keltoum Irbah
Member
- Ms Li Yining
Member

World Food Programme (WFP)

Head of Delegation

- Dr Daly Belgasmi
Director
- Ms Ariane Waldvogel
Liaison Officer
- Ms Teresa Buerkle
Information Officer

World Health Organization (WHO)

Head of Delegation

- Dr Margaret Chan
Director-General
- Mr Joy Backory
UNAIDS Partnership Adviser

- Dr Ala Alwan
Assistant to the Director-General
- Dr Hiroki Nakatani
Assistant to the Director-General
- Dr Anders Nordstrom
Assistant to the Director-General
- Mr Alex Ross
Director
- Mr Dudley McArdle
Counsellor for the Assistant to the Director-General
- Mr Steven Solomon
Principal Legal Officer
- Mr Igor Rosov
Programme on Partnerships and UN
Reform, Office of the Director-General
- Ms Fatima Khan
External Relations Officer
- Mr Lars Tillfors
External Relations Officer
- Dr Neelam Dhingra-Kumar
Coordinator, Blood Transfusion Safety
- Mr Peter Mertens
Coordinator
- Mr Xavier Descarpentis
Coordinator
- Ms Loubna Al Atlassi
Technical Officer

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Head of Delegation

- Mr Rodolfo De Guzman
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General

World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA)

Head of Delegation

- Dr Larry Winter Roeder
Director, UN Affairs

World Vision International

Head of Delegation

- Mr Thomas Getman
Executive Director, International Relations
- Mr Phillippe Guiton
Director, Humanitarian Affairs

2.4 INVITÉS GUESTS INVITADOS

المدعوون

2.4.1 ORATEURS INVITÉS / GUEST SPEAKERS / ORADORES INVITADOS /

المتكلمون الضيوف

Cérémonie d'ouverture et panel / Opening ceremony and panel discussion/ Acto de apertura y debate en panel / حفل الافتتاح والمناقشة العامة

- H.E Ms Micheline Calmy-Rey
President of the Swiss Confederation
- Ms Lyse Doucet
Presenter and Special Correspondent, BBC
World – Panel
- Dr Seug-Soo Han
Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General
on Climate Change - Panel
- Mr Shaban Mawanda
Member, Youth Commission, Uganda Red
Cross Society – Panel
- Ms Ndioro Ndiaye
Deputy Director-General, International
Organization for Migration – Panel
- Ms Sima Samar
Chairwoman, Afghan Independent Human
Rights Commission – Panel
- Dr David Heymann
Assistant Director-General, World Health
Organization - Panel
- Mr Guy Mettan
President, Geneva Red Cross

Séances plénières / Plenary session / Sesión plenaria / الجلسات العامة

- Mr Pär Stenbäck
Monitor, Process of Implementation of the
Memorandum of Understanding between
the Magen David Adom and the Palestine
Red Crescent Society, Minister HC, Helsinki

Commissions, ateliers et événements parallèles / Commissions, workshops and side events / Comisiones, talleres y eventos paralelos /

اللجان وورش العمل والأحداث المنظمة على هامش المؤتمر

- Dr Charles Agbo
Director of Planning, research and
Forecasting, Nigerian Emergency
Management Agency - Commission C
- Mr Talal Alqdah
Director, University of Jordan
- Dr Salvano Briceño
Director, United Nations International
Strategy for Disaster Reduction –
Commission C
- Ms Barbara Epstein
Director, Community Advocacy Israel
- Mr Christopher Hedges
Policy Project Manager, United Kingdom
Border and Immigration Agency
- Ms Kyung-Wha Kang
UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human
Rights
- Mr Raymond Kendall
Former Honorary Secretary-General of
Interpol, the Senlis Council
- Mr Erkki Kourula
Judge, International Criminal Court, The
Hague
- Dr Xavier Philippe
Professeur de droit public, faculté de droit,
Université Paul Cézanne Aix-Marseille III
- Mr Emmanuel Reinert
Executive Director, the Senlis Council
- Mr Anthony Rogers
Senior Fellow, Lauterpacht Centre for
International Law
- Mr Yves Sandoz
Member of the Committee, ICRC
- Dr Hugo Slim
Member, Corporate for Crisis

- Mr Maksim Stanasic
Representative, Ministry of Human Rights
and Refugees, Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Prof. Jim Torczyner
Director, McGill Middle East Program in
Civil Society and Peace Building
- Mr Sami Zaidalkilani
McGill Middle East Program in Civil Society
and Peace Building

2.4.2 CROIX-ROUGE ET CROISSANT- ROUGE / RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT / CRUZ ROJA Y MEDIA LUNA ROJA / الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

- Mr Stephen Davey
Chairman, Joint ICRC/International
Federation Commission for National Society
Statutes
- Mr Roger Mayou
Director, International Red Cross and Red
Crescent Museum
- Mr Patrick Auderset
Project Manager, Acquisitions and
Preservation, International Red Cross and
Red Crescent Museum
- Mr Mohamed Musthafa Ahmed
Member of the Maldivian Red Crescent
Organization
- Mr Ibrahim Shafeeg
Member of the Maldivian Red Crescent
Organization

2.4.3 AUTRES INVITÉS / OTHER GUESTS / OTROS INVITADOS / ضيوف آخرون

- Mr James Cockayne
Associate, International Peace Academy
(IPA)
- Mr Paul Flynn
Member of Parliament, House of Commons
- Ms Jamila Dorner
Musician
- Mr Brooks Giger
Musician
- Prof. Otto Hieronymi
Department of International Relations,
Webster University, Geneva
- Mr Ricardo Zapata
UN-ECLAC Focal Point for Disaster
Evaluation, Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate
Centre
- Ms Liliane Zossou
HEI/PSIS
- Mr Tom Corsellis
Co-Manager, Shelter Centre
- Ms Antonella Vitale
Co-Manager, Shelter Centre
- Mr Hillel Neuer
Executive Director, UN Watch
- Mr Leon Saltiel
Director of Communications, UN Watch



2007 COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

3.1 CONVOCATION

To the Members and Observers of the
COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
Geneva, Switzerland, 23-24 November 2007

Geneva, 21 May 2007

Dear Sir or Madam,

In conformity with the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, we have the pleasure of inviting you to the next session of the Council of Delegates, which will take place at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG) **from 23 November to 24 November 2007**.¹ The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will co-host this Council of Delegates and look forward to welcoming you

in Geneva
on Friday 23 November 2007
at 9.30 a.m.
at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG)
Rue de Varembe, 15
1211 Geneva 20

Please find enclosed **the draft provisional agenda** prepared by the Standing Commission, which takes into account the comments received from National Societies in response to the preliminary consultation that was launched on 9 March 2007.

Rule 6.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement requires that observations, amendments or additions to the draft provisional agenda be received by the Standing Commission no later than 60 days before the opening of the Council i.e. at the latest by 22 September 2007.

¹ The Council follows immediately after the extraordinary session of the Governing Board (19 November 2007) and the General Assembly (20-22 November 2007) of the International Federation.

To facilitate the process of finalizing the working documents of the Council, you are requested to kindly send any comments you may have by 1 September 2007 to the

Secretariat of the Standing Commission
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
17, chemin des Crêts
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland

The working documents for the various agenda items of the Council of Delegates will be sent to you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Juan M. Suárez del Toro R.
President
International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Jakob Kellenberger
President
International Committee of the Red Cross

3.2 AGENDA

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Geneva, 23-24 November 2007

OPENING SESSION

Keynote address on the state of the Movement by the Chairman of the Standing Commission

1. ELECTIONS, AGENDA AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

- 1.1. Opening of the meeting by the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
- 1.2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretaries of the Council of Delegates
- 1.3. Adoption of the agenda for the Council

2. WORK OF THE STANDING COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

Report on the work of the Standing Commission since the 2005 Council of Delegates and on work undertaken within the Movement pursuant to the 29th International Conference
[For decision] - Draft Resolution including a renewed sharing key for funding of the Commission by the components of the Movement

3. SPECIFIC NATURE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT – A way to a privileged/unique relationship and effective partnerships between States and the components of the Movement

[For decision] – Draft Resolution to establish a toolbox on good partnerships, including those relevant to the auxiliary role of National Societies, with a view to preparing the endorsement by the International Conference of a framework for and common understanding of the auxiliary role of National Societies

4. RESTORING FAMILY LINKS

[For decision] – Draft Resolution to adopt a 10-year Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008-2018)

5. MIGRATION

[For decision] – Draft Resolution to address the need for a framework for action on the issue of migration

6. SUPPLEMENTARY MEASURES OF THE SEVILLE AGREEMENT

Report and recommendations from the group established in Resolution 8 of the 2005 Council of Delegates
[For decision] – Draft Resolution to adopt the seven recommendations of the report and ensure full implementation of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary measures

7. STRATEGY FOR THE MOVEMENT

7.1. Implementation of the Strategy for the Movement

Report by the Standing Commission on the implementation of the ten actions of the Strategy and on Action 4 regarding the review of Movement fora as carried out pursuant to Resolution 6 of the 2005 Council of Delegates

[For decision] - Draft Resolution to continue the implementation of the Strategy and:

- to remind National Societies of their commitment to examine their Statutes by 2010 (Action 3)
- to take into account the recommendations submitted by the Standing Commission on the organization of international meetings within the Movement (Action 4)
- to consider the ICRC's "Study on Operational and Commercial and other Non-operational Issues involving the Use of the Emblems" to enhance the implementation of the rules governing the use of the emblems (Action 10)

7.2. Study on operational and commercial and other non-operational issues involving the use of the emblems (Action 10)

[For information] – Study by the ICRC

7.3. Review of National Society statutes (Action 3)

[For information] – Activity report by the joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes

8. WEAPONS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Follow-up report by the ICRC on Resolution 2 of the 2005 Council of Delegates

[For decision] - Draft Resolution sponsored by a group of National Societies and the ICRC to address the humanitarian consequences resulting from the use of cluster munitions

9. REPORT ON THE EMPRESS SHÔKEN FUND

[For information] – Activity report of the Empress Shôken Fund for 2006 and the first half of 2007

10. STATUTORY TASKS OF THE 30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

The components of the Movement will be briefed on the agenda and issues of the 30th International Conference: the four Conference objectives, work in commissions and drafting committee, election of the Standing Commission, workshops and any questions raised by National Societies as members of the Conference

Commissions will take place on 23 November 2007

(3 parallel commissions addressing the same issues)

10.1. Adoption of the provisional agenda of the Conference

[For decision] - In conformity with Article 14.2 (b) of the Statutes of the Movement, the Council of Delegates will adopt the provisional agenda of the Conference

10.2 Proposed officers for the Conference: Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries-General and other officers

[For decision] - In conformity with Article 14.2 (a) of the Statutes of the Movement, the Council of Delegates will propose to the Conference the persons to fill the posts mentioned in Article 11 paragraph 3

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Evening of 23 November

Henry Dunant Medal award ceremony followed by a reception hosted by the ICRC and the International Federation

3.3

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Chairman

Mr Jakob Kellenberger (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Vice-Chairman

Ms Fatima Gailani (Afghan Red Crescent Society)

Secretaries:

Mr Jean-Luc Blondel (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Ms Yulia Gusynina (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

Commissions on preparation of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Commission 1

Chairman

Ms Elzbieta Mikos-Skusa (Polish Red Cross)

Presenters

Thomas Gurtner (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

Bruce Biber (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Commission 2

Chairman

Mr Gerald Sawyer (Bahamas Red Cross Society)

Presenters

Philip Spoerri (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Encho Gospodinov (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

Commission 3

Chairman

Mr Mohamed Assouali (Moroccan Red Crescent)

Presenters

Ibrahim Osman (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

Balthasar Staehelin (International Committee of the Red Cross)

3.4 SUMMARY RECORD

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Geneva, 23-24 November 2007

DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD

3.4.1 OPENING SESSION AND FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Friday 23 November 2007
9.35 a.m.

Opening session

Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission, delivering his keynote address to the Council of Delegates, recalled that the Council was the only forum in which National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC could come together to discuss “family issues” and analyse the challenges they faced. The International Conference, under the slogan “Together for humanity,” would provide an opportunity for the Movement to present itself as the world’s largest humanitarian organization; its millions of members and volunteers in 186 National Societies based in local communities were ideally placed to provide timely and accurate information on the situation on the ground, and were also the best possible starting point for effective preparedness and pre-emptive action.

The Conference’s new approach – to define a Movement agenda for the next 10 to 15 years – would call on the Movement’s ability to move with the times and to tackle challenges boldly. The Conference would specifically address the following topics: environmental degradation, including climate change; urban violence; international migration; and emerging and recurrent diseases and other public health concerns. It would examine the consequences of these developments from a humanitarian perspective and seek cooperation and partnerships in looking to the future.

Being clear about where vulnerabilities lie and identifying future economic, social and environmental

risks from the viewpoint of local communities were the keys to *preparedness* and *risk reduction* in the face of new challenges and essential if the Red Cross and Red Crescent were to continue to be considered a preferred partner of governments.

The Conference would provide an opportunity to highlight human vulnerability and to improve understanding of the auxiliary role. It would also enable the International Federation to table its International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) Guidelines, developed on the basis of lessons learned in providing emergency assistance in response to the 2004 Asian tsunami and other disasters. International humanitarian law continued to be at the core of the issues discussed at the International Conference, with the ICRC leading the way in that area. Given how war and conflict were evolving, it was even more important to reaffirm the relevance and applicability of international humanitarian law, and the Movement should stand firm in defending the values embedded in it.

Internal matters to be discussed ahead of the International Conference included: adoption of a comprehensive Strategy on Restoring Family Links; the Strategy for the Movement; the report on the work of the Standing Commission; implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel; and a draft resolution calling for a treaty prohibiting the use of cluster munitions. Later in the day, three parallel commissions would examine key Movement messages and how best to achieve set objectives. It was important for National Societies to take a visible and strong role in communicating those messages in the drafting committee of the International Conference.

Mr Al-Hadid expressed unease and concern that many young people were growing up in a time of conflict caused by intolerance and xenophobia. Those wishing to further extremist agendas were

planting fear and hatred in young minds; it had been a very long time since he had seen such a level of religious rhetoric intertwined with violence and armed conflict. Racial tensions had increased in countries where intolerance had previously been unacceptable. The time seemed to be ripe for the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as a truly neutral global actor in whose principles tolerance and respect for others were embedded, to set up a special forum to analyse undesirable trends and to plan how to counter them. The Movement could shape mind-sets and influence agenda through its principles and beliefs.

Mr Al-Hadid said he looked forward to an innovative and challenging Council of Delegates and International Conference.

Item 1 Elections, agenda and procedural matters

Opening of the meeting by the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission, welcomed the Movement's two new members: the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society. He paid tribute to the work of the Standing Commission Working Group on Statutory Meetings under the leadership of Ambassador Cuvillier. He sincerely hoped that, in their deliberations in the coming two days, participants would continue to honour the values of the Movement and show respect for its Fundamental Principles.

Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretaries of the Council of Delegates

Mr Kellenberger, President of the ICRC, was elected Chair of the Council of Delegates, and **Ms Gaillani**, President of the Afghan Red Crescent, was elected Vice-Chair. They were assisted by Mr Blondel of the ICRC and Dr Gusynina of the International Federation.

Dr Mikos-Skuza, Vice-President of the Polish Red Cross, **Mr Sawyer**, President of the Bahamas Red Cross Society, and **Mr Assouali**, Head of the Projects Department of the Moroccan Red Crescent, were elected chairs of the three commissions.

Adoption of the agenda of the Council of Delegates (document: CD/07/1.3)

Mr Kellenberger, Chairman of the Council of Delegates, drew attention to the provisional agenda contained in document CD/07/1.3.

The agenda was adopted.

Item 2 Work of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

(documents: CD/07/2.1 and CD/07/2.1/DR)

Report by the Chairman of the Standing Commission

Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission, illustrating his remarks with slides, provided an update on the work of the Standing Commission since the last Council of Delegates in 2005. Members of the present Commission had been elected in 2003; Mr Spoerri (ICRC) had replaced Mr Bugnion (ICRC) in 2006. In addition to the preparation of statutory meetings, the mandate of the Commission comprised: promoting harmony and coordination among the Movement's components; encouraging and furthering implementation of resolutions of the International Conference and the Council of Delegates; and examining matters of concern to the Movement as a whole. The Commission was the trustee of the International Conference. The Commission was the only permanent body representing all the components of the Movement.

In its report (CD/07/2.1), the Commission had outlined its achievements, the most significant of which had been the reaching of a comprehensive and lasting solution to the issue of the emblem, which had lain dormant on the Movement's agenda for most of the preceding 55 years. Additional Protocol III had finally been adopted at the Diplomatic Conference of States party to the Geneva Conventions in December 2005 and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society had paved the way for both National Societies to be admitted to the Movement in June 2006.

Mr Al-Hadid expressed his appreciation for the contribution of the Working Group on Statutory Meetings to the preparation of the International

Conference. National Societies would have further opportunities to discuss the Conference's themes and expected outcomes during the three parallel commissions to be held that afternoon. The Standing Commission had been pleased to note the progress made in implementing the Supplementary Measures to the Seville Agreement adopted in Seoul. The Group responsible for monitoring implementation had adopted a new reporting framework to ensure sufficient focus was maintained on critical areas. Professor Pedersen, Member of the Standing Commission, had led a small group to consider work on Action 4 of the updated Strategy for the Movement and would report on it to the Council. The coming Conference would elect the new members of the Standing Commission, which had adopted guidelines to improve geographic representation. Arabic was now a working language in all statutory meetings, and the Council and Conference would have full translation services without having to rely on voluntary contributions. Furthermore, the Commission had reviewed the principles for the financing of its work and proposed to develop a two-year plan of action on which two-year consolidated budgets would be based. The draft resolution contained in CD/07/2.1/DR requested the Standing Commission to continue its work and set out the proposed changes, including the revised financing principle. Mr Al-Hadid appealed to all to continue to support the Commission's work.

Resolution 1 was adopted by acclamation.

Towards the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements signed between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel

Oral report by Mr Pär Stenbäck, Independent Monitor

Mr Stenbäck presented his findings as independent monitor of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements signed by the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society on 28 November 2005. His written report would be distributed to National Societies. He had undertaken six missions to the region since his appointment in June 2007 and held numerous discussions with the two National Societies and with the Israeli and Palestinian authorities. Prior to his appointment, progress meetings between the two National Societies had suffered an interruption that lasted several months, but at the first meeting

held under his chairmanship in June, there had been a good spirit and a shared interest in achieving results. The Magen David Adom had been receptive to the suggestions made by the Palestine Red Crescent, and representatives of the Palestine Red Crescent had expressed trust in the will of the Magen David Adom to lobby the Israeli authorities to move ahead with implementation of the agreements. Hurdles had been identified and crucial points agreed, and much time had been spent determining where in the Israeli civil and military bureaucracies responsibility for implementation lay. Little progress had been made since the International Conference in 2006 towards substantive implementation of the agreements in terms of finding real and permanent humanitarian solutions. The Israeli Foreign Ministry had a coordination role to play and should be made aware of the permanent validity of the agreement signed by the Israeli and Palestinian authorities. Mr Stenbäck had concluded that progress would not be made without intervention at the highest political level, and some progress had been made following a visit by the Chairman of the American Red Cross in August 2007.

However, despite the undeniable efforts of the two National Societies, only limited steps had been taken towards implementation, and there had been surprising setbacks at the lower administrative levels. At his meetings with the Israeli authorities, Mr Stenbäck had argued that the Palestine Red Crescent had a good humanitarian record and should be looked upon as a bona fide institution, enjoying the same privileged status as its sister National Society, the Magen David Adom. Yet, the field reports showed that Palestine Red Crescent ambulances and staff continued to be intimidated from time to time, endangering the lives of patients. The ICRC, the Palestine Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom had worked hard to ensure that all formal requirements for the five Palestine Red Crescent ambulances stationed in East Jerusalem were fulfilled, yet they still lay idle, awaiting the final approval of the Israeli authorities. A number of implementation measures remained to be fulfilled, including ambulance access to checkpoints and a decision on the number of Palestinian ambulances allowed to transport patients between the West Bank and Jerusalem. As long as military checkpoints existed, ambulances would continue to experience delays; the authorities should pay greater attention to the balance between security and humanitarian demands. The request to increase the number of ambulances transporting patients to Jerusalem had been under consideration by the Israeli authorities for a number of months.

In accordance with the requirements of the Memorandum, the Magen David Adom had undertaken to downscale its activities in the occupied territories. It was a testament to the goodwill of the leadership of both National Societies that an understanding had been reached irrespective of any political obstacles. Transfer times for Palestinian patients being taken to Jordan for treatment were still too long, but progress continued. Issues on the emblems and ending misuse of the red crescent emblem in Israeli territory had been a focus of attention, and a decree regulating the use of the emblems was to be issued by the Palestinian authorities. The Israeli Government was to ratify Additional Protocol III shortly.

Limited progress in cooperation between the two National Societies had been recorded, and Mr Stenbäck had urged them to make a concerted effort in 2008 to build substantial cooperation models which overrode prevailing political and cultural barriers. There was genuine trust between the National Societies: the Magen David Adom had tried to fulfil its role, courageously lobbying its Government for full implementation of the Memorandum; and the Palestine Red Crescent had shown considerable patience in defending the rights and interests of vulnerable people. He appealed to the Israeli authorities to fulfil their obligations in regard to Palestine Red Crescent ambulances. Having presented his report, he looked to the International Federation's General Assembly to provide guidance on the continuation and strengthening of the implementation process.

The Chairman said that a draft resolution on this topic had been submitted by a group of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies. He then offered to read out the draft resolution after hearing the comments of National Societies, unless requested to read it at an earlier stage.

Dr Al-Khatib (Palestine Red Crescent) thanked Mr Stenbäck, the ICRC and the International Federation for their efforts to facilitate implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. A number of obstacles had been faced from the day after the International Conference, when the Israeli Government had objected to the continuation of the mandate of the Swiss monitor. The Memorandum itself was limited; it did not address the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Palestine but focused on access for the Palestine Red Crescent medical mission and the five Palestine Red Crescent ambulances in the occupied territories. In addressing restricted medical access, the Memorandum was in essence

contradicting international humanitarian law, which provided for free access of all to medical care, as foreseen in the Geneva Conventions. The difficulties encountered in deploying the ambulances amounted to a restriction of a service that had already been restricted. In 2005, one year before the signature of the Memorandum, there had been 230 violations against Palestine Red Crescent medical missions, while there had been 322 in 2006 and 475 in 2007. Four members of the Palestine Red Crescent had been killed by the Israeli army in the previous two years, 27 had been injured and four detained.

The Palestine Red Crescent recognized the role that the Magen David Adom had played in lobbying the Israeli Government to implement the operational arrangements and did not hold the National Society responsible for the actions of its Government; he looked forward to the Magen David Adom fulfilling its obligations in respect of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2008. Dr Al-Khatib urged that no further delays be brooked and that the Council of Delegates issue a resolution stating the importance of implementation and follow-up and emphasizing the role of the Magen David Adom and the need for the monitor not only to act as a facilitator but also to take an active part in the implementation process.

Dr Al Maadid (Qatar Red Crescent) said that the Memorandum of Understanding had not met all of his National Society's concerns. However, he believed that humanitarian, rather than political, concerns should prevail. Because of the failure of the Israeli authorities to authorize the use of the five Palestine Red Crescent ambulances, confidence had not been built and there was a climate of suspicion between the parties. He was prepared to contribute to resolving the problems, provided certain conditions were met, including respect for the geographical scope of each of the parties and an end to misuse of the emblem. His National Society supported the proposed draft resolution put forward. A mechanism was still required to ensure implementation of the Memorandum, and regular reports on any violations would be necessary.

Mr Albanuni (Libyan Red Crescent), paying tribute to the contribution of Mr Stenbäck, said that an agreement binding on all parties would be easier to monitor.

Ms Paulsen (Norwegian Red Cross) said that, having heard the monitor's report, she noted the efforts made by the two National Societies concerned and by many others to advance implementation of the agreement. However, it was clear that the situation remained

difficult. A monitoring mechanism was still required and, if all were agreed that implementation was a Movement issue, the next Council of Delegates should receive a progress report covering all aspects of the Memorandum of Understanding. All components of the Movement should support work to implement the provisions of the Memorandum, and the ICRC and the International Federation should be requested to continue to support its implementation. She proposed that a resolution be adopted to that effect and brought to the attention of the International Conference.

Dr Al Tae (Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates) commended the continued efforts to implement the Memorandum of Understanding. He believed that it was important to receive clear indications of events on the ground in order to make an effective assessment, and further reports would be required at upcoming meetings to gauge the progress made.

Dr Attar (Syrian Arab Red Crescent) drew attention to the suffering of the populations in the Golan and the occupied territories. He thanked the ICRC for having set up a dispensary in the Golan and for assisting in the transport of the apple harvest.

Mr Kivistö (Finnish Red Cross) supported the proposal by the Norwegian Red Cross. His National Society felt strongly that a Movement approach was the right way to continue. The monitoring accomplished thus far was part of a beneficial process, but it needed to continue. He hoped that all components of the Movement would support the work to implement the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr Vickery (Australian Red Cross) expressed admiration for the work of the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent, which was being conducted in difficult circumstances. The matter should remain within the Movement and there should be no involvement in politics, as the delegate from Qatar had said; they could not afford to compromise the excellent humanitarian work conducted by the two National Societies. His National Society supported the Norwegian Red Cross proposal as a road map for the way forward.

Ms McGowan (Canadian Red Cross) said that the Canadian Red Cross wholeheartedly supported the views put forward on behalf of the Norwegian Red Cross.

Professor Gabr (Egyptian Red Crescent), referring to the Norwegian Red Cross proposal, said that it was clear from the statements by Mr Stenbäck

and by the President of the Palestine Red Crescent that the main obstacle to implementation related to the difficulties faced by both National Societies in dealing with the Israeli authorities. Therefore, he requested that a resolution be presented for decision at the International Conference where the Israeli Government would be represented.

Dr Mbere (Botswana Red Cross) recalled that during a recent visit to the Magen David Adom in Israel she had requested a progress report on implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. She believed that National Societies should support the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent, while lobbying their own governments to express frustration at the slow pace of implementation.

Dr Yifrach (Magen David Adom in Israel) expressed support for the report given by Mr Stenbäck and appreciation for the activities of Dr Al-Khatib in a sometimes impossible environment. The Magen David Adom had done its best to lobby its Government and cooperate with the Palestinians; its ambulances were ready at the checkpoints 24 hours a day to assist the Palestinians, and the two National Societies had a common communication system so that the Magen David Adom could assist the Palestine Red Crescent within seconds when requested. He accepted that much progress still had to be made, but his National Society was doing its best to resolve matters. On the previous day, both he and Dr Al-Khatib had agreed that the monitoring should continue, a decision that the Council of Delegates was being asked to approve.

Dame Maeve Fort (British Red Cross) expressed appreciation for Mr Stenbäck's report and for the statements made by Dr Al-Khatib, Dr Yifrach and other delegates. Her delegation shared the concerns put forward on implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and, accordingly, supported the Norwegian Red Cross proposal.

Dame Maeve wished to inform the Council that her National Society had recently moved towards concluding an agreement with the UK fundraising group of the Magen David Adom as, under the 1921 rules, one fundraising National Society should not fundraise in the territory of another without the prior consent of the National Society concerned. It was important for the Friends of Magen David Adom in some 18 countries to regularize their relations with the National Societies. The British Friends of Magen David Adom had accepted the principle that they should move towards fundraising for the wider humanitarian purposes of the Movement.

Mr Stenbäck, Independent Monitor of the Memorandum of Understanding, thanked delegates for the support they had given to his report. He agreed with the statement of the Botswana Red Cross that all National Societies should show solidarity with the two National Societies concerned, as they were working under difficult circumstances and in a difficult political environment. The monitoring effort had been weakened because, despite goodwill and cooperation between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent, there were also political factors that posed real obstacles to implementation. Therefore, he appealed to National Societies to employ any measures at their disposal to strengthen future monitoring. Achieving results would depend on a skilful combination of lobbying in both the political and the humanitarian fields.

The Chairman read out the draft resolution presented by the group of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies:

“The Council of Delegates,

Having reviewed the report presented by Mr Pär Stenbäck, observer appointed by the International Committee of the Red Cross and by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to monitor the progress achieved in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom,

expresses its deep concern regarding the lack of commitment demonstrated by the Israeli authorities to the principles of international humanitarian law, particularly Resolution XI adopted by the International Conference in 1921 and the aforementioned Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Accordingly, the Council of Delegates:

- 1) acknowledges efforts undertaken by Mr Stenbäck in this regard;
- 2) requests the alleviation of the Palestinian people's suffering under the occupation due to inhuman practices and the lifting of the siege imposed on the Palestinian population;
- 3) calls upon the Magen David Adom to respect the main principles of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, show compliance with Resolution XI of 1921, which imposes on the Society to discontinue all its activities inside the Arab occupied territories and to comply with the provisions of the MoU;

- 4) appeals to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to follow up the implementation of the MoU as a key item on the agendas of both the Council of Delegates and the International Conference and to put forward a mechanism on monitoring its implementation and to submit periodic reports on this matter to both the Council of Delegates and the International Conference.”

The Chairman said that there were two proposed draft resolutions on the current agenda item: the one he had just read out and a proposal by the Norwegian Red Cross supported by the Finnish, Australian, Canadian and British Red Cross Societies. He proposed that a small drafting group be formed, composed of representatives of the National Societies of Qatar, Egypt, Norway and Canada, as well as the International Federation and the ICRC, to agree on a joint text.

It was so agreed.

Item 3 Specific nature of the Red Cross and Red Crescent – A way to a privileged/unique relationship and effective partnerships between States and the components of the Movement

(documents: CD/07/3.1, CD/07/3.1 (Annex) and CD/07/3.2)

Mr Konoe, Vice-President of the International Federation, presenting this agenda item, said that the auxiliary role was at the heart of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and, in combination with adherence to the Fundamental Principles, differentiated it from any other non-governmental organization. The auxiliary role, which implied the relationship between the National Society and the public authorities, required clarification within the Movement and discussion with governments in order to find common ground.

The issue had first been raised during the International Conference in 1999 and recorded in Goal 3.3 of the Plan of Action, which required that the International Federation, in cooperation with National Societies and the ICRC, initiate an in-depth study on the working relationship between States and National Societies. Consequently, the International Federation

had presented a study to the International Conference in 2003 and an updated report to the Council of Delegates in 2005. The ICRC had also provided further clarification on the auxiliary role in armed conflicts. The Council of Delegates had encouraged work on the matter to continue in consultation with governments.

As part of the consultative process, the International Federation and the ICRC had held expert meetings with the participation of National Societies and representatives of permanent missions in Geneva, focusing on the status and role of National Societies as auxiliaries to their respective public authorities in the humanitarian field. During the meetings, it had been stressed that only part of the activities of National Societies fell within the scope of their auxiliary role, but that all activities should be carried out in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and the mandate of the National Society concerned. States should respect the specificity of National Societies, although it should be left to States and National Societies to decide which activities should fall under their function as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

A clear distinction should be made between National Societies and other organizations, based on the former's country-wide and global volunteer networks, their access to all segments of the community at all times and their long tradition of humanitarianism. The auxiliary role was at the heart of that distinction and had a direct impact on a National Society's ability to deliver humanitarian services. Another difference between National Societies and non-governmental organizations was the way in which they were set up.

Any definition of the National Societies' auxiliary role would only be successful if it enabled the Red Cross and Red Crescent to better fulfil its mission to provide services to the vulnerable; it also needed to show States the benefits they obtained from the auxiliary character of National Societies.

Based on the discussions held, including those with a group of ambassadors in preparation for the International Conference (as outlined in the background document, CD/07/3.1 (Annex)), an updated version of the working definition had been elaborated and set out in the draft resolution, CD/07/3.2. In addition to proposing a definition of the auxiliary role, the draft resolution referred to the concept of a toolbox on good partnerships; the duty of National Societies to observe, and governments to respect, the Fundamental Principles; and the role

of the International Federation and the ICRC in National Society capacity building. The International Federation and the ICRC believed that the draft resolution represented the essence of the theme "Together for humanity" and hoped that it would be endorsed by the Council of Delegates by consensus.

Dame Maeve Fort (British Red Cross) welcomed the work done by the International Federation and the ICRC to clarify the auxiliary role. The British Red Cross endorsed the concept of a balanced relationship between National Societies and their public authorities subject to the Fundamental Principles. The auxiliary role sat uneasily with the concept of independence, which was why the definition of "independence" in the Fundamental Principles had been so carefully worded to ensure that National Societies always maintained their autonomy so that they were able at all times to act in accordance with those principles. The overriding authority of the Fundamental Principles was absolute and, accordingly, the British Red Cross wished to propose amendments to the draft resolution. First, in the fourth paragraph of the preamble, it was suggested that the phrase "to take full account of relevant" be inserted before "Movement policies," as the obligation to act in accordance with Movement policies did not have the same status as the obligation to act in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and not all Movement policies would be relevant at all times. It was further proposed that operative paragraph 5 be amended to read: "Stresses that the National Society, whilst acknowledging that its personnel and assets are provided to the medical services of the State's armed forces in accordance with Article 26 of the First 1949 Geneva Convention, and thus subject to military laws and regulations, must respect the Fundamental Principles, including that of neutrality, and at all times maintain its autonomy and ensure that it is clearly distinguishable from military and other bodies." It was also suggested that, in operative paragraph 8, the final phrase "in the strict respect for the Fundamental Principles of the Movement" be replaced by "in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement." Further, in operative paragraph 1, Dame Maeve's delegation preferred the use of the term "special" rather than "specific" to describe the partnership or, if that was not acceptable to some delegations, the use of "distinctive." The word "specific" was not, in itself, inappropriate, and her delegation would prefer to retain it if the alternative was not to have any qualifying word at all. In conclusion, the British Red Cross shared the aspirations of the International Federation and hoped that the amendments proposed would assist in achieving the balanced relationship to which they all aspired.

Mr Qureshi (Pakistan Red Crescent) said that quite a lot had happened since the original dispensation regarding the auxiliary role had been granted and a sea-change in the operating environment had occurred in the last 20 years alone. Complex disasters and conflicts had prompted the Movement to have a better understanding of the auxiliary role and to define more clearly what it meant for governments, stakeholders, the general public and the Movement. In order to be distinguishable from non-governmental organizations, the Movement had to act in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, especially those of independence, neutrality and impartiality. The Pakistan Red Crescent, as an auxiliary to its Government, was committed to playing a key role in humanitarian assistance consistent with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and had provided emergency medical services and health care in many areas of Pakistan; both the Government and the National Society were conscious of the need to build a mutually beneficial relationship, and therefore there had never been a conflict with the National Society's charter or the principles of the Movement. In the three wars since 1947, the Government of Pakistan had never called on its National Society to provide medical assistance to the armed forces. Although it would be useful to review the framework of the current Movement provisions to ensure that no future course of events distorted the character of the Movement, the governing statute of the Pakistan Red Crescent was Act 15 of 1920, as amended by the parliament of Pakistan in 1974; the law did not confer any pre-emptive powers or residual authority on the Government of Pakistan and explicitly stipulated that the managing body should be the final authority for regulating the activities of the Movement in the country. As the autonomy of the Pakistan Red Crescent had been enshrined in law, administrative arrangements to formalize it were not required and he did not therefore feel that there was a need to start negotiations with the Government on that account. There was a need to distinguish between a "supporting role" and an "auxiliary role," as the former indicated an informal arrangement, which included much of the cooperation with the Government. However, the characteristics of a balanced relationship, as set out in the documents, would provide a useful reminder to the Government for the appropriate framework in which future cooperation should function and could be adopted by the International Conference in the form of guidelines on the auxiliary role.

Ms Paulsen (Norwegian Red Cross Society) said that the auxiliary role was a defining characteristic of National Societies even though a formal definition had never been adopted. The Norwegian Red Cross

supported the proposed resolution and the definition of the auxiliary role contained therein, welcoming the emphasis in the resolution on the role of the National Society in safeguarding neutrality and independence. The access of National Societies to vulnerable groups depended on those groups' confidence in the independence of the National Society, and the auxiliary role should not weaken that confidence. National Societies should never be requested to carry out tasks that were in violation of the Fundamental Principles. Most National Societies also performed humanitarian activities outside their auxiliary role, and the auxiliary role should not compromise those tasks. The core purpose of the auxiliary role was to facilitate joint efforts of National Societies and governments to improve the situation of vulnerable people. She urged that the proposed resolution be adopted by consensus.

Ms Kumpala (Finnish Red Cross) said that there was a need for one code of good partnership and one set of commonly accepted tools to assist in building partnerships within the Movement and in fulfilling the auxiliary role. To that end, the Finnish Red Cross wished to propose a new paragraph 8 to the draft resolution as follows: "The Council of Delegates welcomes the Code of Good Partnership initiative and encourages all Movement components to further develop this Code and tools to implement it; to take part in open consultation processes that build on experiences from various partnership initiatives; and to make recommendations or submit resolutions, as appropriate, to the Council of Delegates in 2009."

Dr Khatami (Iranian Red Crescent) said that, in view of the increased role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in fulfilling basic welfare services and the fact that public authorities could not always meet the needs of vulnerable people, the role of humanitarian organizations such as National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies acting as auxiliaries to their public authorities was significant. The auxiliary role would be a key topic for the International Conference.

In his National Society's experience, cooperation and coordination between National Societies and their public authorities could enhance the quantity and quality of the services rendered to the community. The relationship could be improved if senior managers from related governmental organizations were represented in the National Society in order to become aware of its activities. Constructive interaction with the media in order to benefit from their advocacy in promoting income generation in the community was recommended. A further item could be added

to the agenda of the International Conference asking governments to renew their commitment and obligation to support their National Societies in their different humanitarian activities. The Iranian Red Crescent had enjoyed such interaction with its Government, cooperating with the Health Ministry to distribute education packs on disease prevention, and youth members had assisted in combating HIV/AIDS at the national level.

Dr Al Kabab (Yemen Red Crescent) said that National Societies played a crucial role as auxiliaries to their public authorities and therefore his National Society fully supported the report and the proposed draft resolution. The auxiliary role was all the more important in countries suffering natural and man-made disasters; the draft resolution would strengthen National Societies and enhance their performance.

Mr Gullet (Kenya Red Cross) said that, in recent years, the Kenya Red Cross had become stronger and, as a result, had worked increasingly in partnership with its Government to provide village and community health care. His National Society supported the amendments to the draft resolution put forward by the British Red Cross.

Mr Mendes (Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau) said that his country had experienced a great deal of civil and military conflict, which had made it difficult for the National Society to work with the Government. Sometimes, the public authorities had awarded the role of auxiliary to other non-governmental organizations. Contrary to the Fundamental Principles, the Government had sought to control the National Society, a situation that had been resolved thanks to the intervention of the ICRC. Therefore, his National Society welcomed the draft resolution and looked forward to its positive effect on their future work.

Dr Aslanov (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that, in some countries, National Societies were viewed by their governments as non-governmental organizations or State organizations and, therefore, a clear definition of the status of National Societies was required. National Societies should be viewed as autonomous and recognized by their governments as playing an auxiliary role. There should be a group to monitor the situation and to promote the achievements of National Societies. Within a short space of time, the National Society of Azerbaijan had achieved greater cooperation with its Government and recognition of its auxiliary role. The draft resolution would provide a very important link in the relationship with governments and improve relations

with National Societies, and it should therefore be approved by consensus.

Mr Eder (Swedish Red Cross) said that the Swedish Red Cross strongly supported the draft resolution and recognized all the good work that had been put into the consultation process. Emphasis should also be placed on developing an appropriate and effective Code for Good Partnership for the Movement, which would support National Societies in implementing the New Operating Model. The Swedish Red Cross strongly supported the amendment proposed by the Finnish Red Cross.

Ms Quezon (Philippine National Red Cross) endorsed the draft resolution and supported the amendments proposed by the British Red Cross. The Philippine National Red Cross believed that, while auxiliaries to their governments in humanitarian affairs, National Societies continued to be very strong advocates for ensuring that services were provided to the very poor.

Professor de Senarclens (Swiss Red Cross) said that the draft resolution produced as a result of consultations with National Societies was well balanced. The Swiss Red Cross also supported the concept of a toolbox that would facilitate dialogue between National Societies and their governments on the auxiliary role. Clearly defining the role of National Societies in relation to their governments would assist them in providing services to the most vulnerable. Promoting good partnership and emphasizing the importance of the neutrality of National Societies and their ability to provide quality services and to act at grassroots level was also important. In operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, his delegation preferred the “partnership” to be defined as “privileged” rather than “specific” and that the words “in conformity with the Fundamental Principles” should be qualified by the phrase “particularly those of neutrality and independence.”

Dr Cárdenas Guerrero (Colombian Red Cross) agreed with the definition of the auxiliary role as set out in the draft resolution, as it reflected the outcomes of the consultations conducted by the expert group. He believed that the resolution should be adopted in the form originally submitted to the Council.

Mr Forster (ICRC) had praise for the work that had gone into establishing the definition of the auxiliary role and supported the amendments put forward by the Finnish Red Cross and the British Red Cross. The ICRC could also agree to the wording proposed by the Swiss Red Cross, although it had believed the

word “specific” to be appropriate and would leave the International Federation to determine whether “specific,” “special,” “privileged” or “distinct” would be the most appropriate. As the basic units of the Movement, National Societies should occupy a special, protected and distinct place among the humanitarian actors in a given country; the identity of the Movement depended upon it. The definition of the auxiliary role presented in the draft resolution achieved that end, emphasizing the independent nature of National Societies, which should have the power to say “no” to their governments whenever a proposed task came into conflict with the Fundamental Principles. In situations of conflict, the independence of National Societies was essential to their obtaining access to vulnerable people. Partnerships with National Societies in such contexts allowed the ICRC’s humanitarian operations to have a greater impact than the organization could achieve on its own.

The application of the new definition of auxiliary role to National Societies working internationally also had strong implications; the State could not demand that the National Society undertake activities in another State without regard for the coordination rules of the Movement, namely, the need for the consent of the National Society in the country concerned and the requirement to work through the host National Society, the ICRC or the International Federation. By the same token, the State could not prevent the National Society from deploying its own means to provide assistance to a sister National Society in need. The right and obligation to act in a spirit of solidarity with other National Societies came from the principle of universality. The National Societies all shared a view of a Movement network that was distinct from the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, based on the predictability of its action, the reliability of its partnerships, and its overall added value for victims and vulnerable people. The working definition of the auxiliary role, to be tabled for adoption at the International Conference, was a major step forward.

Ms Krikke (Netherlands Red Cross) recalled that during the International Federation’s General Assembly, there had been a very lively workshop on Good Partnership, which had followed on from the debate at the Donor Forum in Qatar. The Netherlands Red Cross strongly supported the amendment proposed by the Finnish Red Cross.

Mr Alhadi (Bahrain Red Crescent), emphasizing that his National Society enjoyed excellent cooperation with and support from its Government, believed that the draft resolution would enhance the existing

relationship and provide support to National Societies.

Ms Babé (Spanish Red Cross) said that she was convinced of the importance of cooperation between National Societies and the value of establishing a Code of Good Partnership to assist in that area. Therefore, her National Society supported the draft resolution, with the amendment proposed by the Finnish Red Cross.

Mr Cieszkiewicz (Polish Red Cross) said that the Polish Red Cross welcomed the proposed resolution, which promoted an essential component of the identity of the Movement. Although the Polish Red Cross was well recognized in Poland by the public authorities, there were still some difficulties in understanding its auxiliary role owing sometimes to the perception of the National Society as just another non-governmental organization. It was important that not only the State, but also the public, gained a good understanding of the National Society’s role.

Mr Carr (American Red Cross), commending the report, said that his National Society supported the amendments proposed by the British Red Cross as they added necessary clarification to the draft resolution.

Ms McGowan (Canadian Red Cross) gave strong support to the draft resolution; the proposed definition of the auxiliary role provided all National Societies and States with a common basis for strengthening mutual frameworks for cooperation to benefit the most vulnerable. Her delegation supported the amendments proposed by the British, Finnish and Swiss Red Cross Societies.

Ms Leigh-Sherman (Liberia National Red Cross) said that, while maintaining their independence, National Societies, as key humanitarian actors, should be in a position to carry out their humanitarian mandate in a collaborative partnership with internal and external stakeholders. With the support and understanding of their governments, who were among their most important and reliable partners, National Societies could make a difference to vulnerable people. The roles and responsibilities of National Societies should be clearly defined and agreed upon by all, including national governments. Her delegation supported adoption of the draft resolution with the proposed amendments.

Mr Osman (International Federation) said that the International Federation could accept the amendments proposed, with the exception of the

replacement of the word “specific” in operative paragraph 1, as it was a description that had been arrived at after extensive consultation and had been agreed to be the word most easily translated into all the working languages.

Resolution 3, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Item 4 Restoring Family Links

(documents: CD/07/4.1 and CD/07/4.1/DR)

Mr Vodoz, Vice-President of the ICRC, following a short video presentation, introduced the Restoring Family Links Strategy and the accompanying draft resolution. He explained that the ICRC had a tradition of meeting new humanitarian challenges since the late 1870s, when it had begun taking information on prisoners of war, during the Spanish Civil War, when it had transmitted news on behalf of civilians, and, more recently, during disasters such as the South Asian tsunami, when it had reunited families and established Family Links websites for victims.

Restoring family links (RFL) was a key element of the ICRC’s humanitarian mission and formed a vital part of its action and partnership with National Societies. Family separation was as important an issue as the disasters and conflicts that made the news, and it called for immediate intervention. In 2006, the ICRC and its partner National Societies had exchanged more than 630,000 Red Cross messages between separated family members, established the whereabouts of some 11,500 people and reunited more than 1,000 children with their families. More than 120,000 names of people being sought by relatives had been published on the ICRC’s Family Links website.

The complex environment in which humanitarian work was being undertaken created significant challenges in the field of restoring family links. However, the ICRC was convinced that all components of the Movement should improve their action and commitment with respect to restoring family links. The ICRC, which had the lead role for the Movement in this area, had engaged with National Societies and the International Federation in an open consultation process to develop a strategy that focused on needs, was oriented towards the victims of conflicts, disasters or other humanitarian crises, and was based concretely on action. The Strategy

outlined three objectives: to improve capacity and performance in restoring family links; to enhance coordination and cooperation within the Movement; and to strengthen support for restoring family links. It was now time to put the Strategy into effect.

Dr Hassan (Somali Red Crescent) said that restoring family links had particular significance within Somalia, where his National Society had been delivering assistance to the local population, with the support of the ICRC, for over 30 years. Despite the difficult and often unpredictable security constraints facing staff and volunteers in the field, the National Society had been able to operate in many parts of the country. Restoring family links transcended all social, cultural and political affiliations. Despite advances made in telecommunications, there was an important space for restoring family links activities, as many people in Somalia lived in isolated rural places where there was no mobile phone coverage. The traditional nomadic way of life still caused separations, and over one million Somalis lived abroad, of whom 350,000 were refugees in neighbouring countries. Such diverse circumstances required creative and adaptive ways of restoring family links, from the hand delivery of Red Cross messages to the ICRC’s Family Links website. The importance of the Movement working together was illustrated by the fact that family members were living in different countries, necessitating the assistance of the ICRC and National Societies in the Movement network.

The Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008–2018) was important because it went to the heart of the issue: it addressed the family links needs of victims of conflict or disasters, which were just as important as food or security; it covered all situations of humanitarian action, from conflicts to natural disasters and the mass movement of populations; and it called for the identification of individual family links needs through collective action. For all those reasons, restoring family links represented the true nature of the humanitarian network and demanded that the Movement work together and use its resources to plan, prepare and anticipate the needs of separated families. In order to ensure that restoring family links was not simply a virtual concept, but a strong humanitarian service for vulnerable people, the network would be measured by the capacities and performance of each contributor: it was up to them all to take their obligations seriously.

Dr Wan-Sang Han (Republic of Korea National Red Cross) said that his National Society was grateful for the comprehensive strategy drawn up by the ICRC. Even in a modern age of global

communications, many people were unable to contact their relatives; separation of families had been one of the heartbreaking humanitarian challenges in a divided Korea for the past 60 years. Since the joint declaration issued at the summit held on 15 June 2007 between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, some 4,000 families had been allowed to meet each other. The figure was greater than in previous years but still did not cover the desperate needs of many families who were unable to meet more than once; the family links strategy in the Republic of Korea was intended to facilitate the continuous linking up of separated family members. A family reunion centre was being built jointly by the National Societies of the two countries at Mt Geumgang and was due to open in spring 2008. He reaffirmed the strong commitment of his National Society to restoring family links and fully supported the draft resolution.

Professor Agarwal (Indian Red Cross) said that, following the 2004 South Asian tsunami, the restoring family links departments of National Societies in the affected countries of Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand and India had come together, along with other components of the Movement, at a conference held in Bangkok to analyse the lessons learned in the context of the disaster response. In India, six post-tsunami restoring family links projects had been elaborated, which aimed to strengthen the family links network nationwide and build capacity. Implementation of post-tsunami projects was already focusing on the strategic objectives of the Restoring Family Links Strategy (2008–2018), and a study had been conducted nationwide in connection with Strategic Objective 1 on improving family links capacity and performance, linking restoring family links needs with natural disasters and migration: there were more than five million foreign migrants living in India, more than 30 million Indians living abroad and 42 million internal migrants. Work had already begun on restoring family links guidelines, and a nationwide restoring family links training strategy was being rolled out. Work had also begun on Strategic Objective 2 on enhancing Movement coordination, and the first regional meeting on the topic had been held in Colombo in June 2007, at which experiences and best practices had been shared. Bilateral contacts had also been maintained. Regarding Strategic Objective 3, restoring family links had been included in training at all levels, from volunteers to disaster preparedness and management graduates. The Indian Red Cross used its website to disseminate restoring family links services in 10 different languages in order to reach as many different sections of the population as possible.

Mr Kongsini (Thai Red Cross) supported the draft resolution and the adoption of the new 10-year Strategy. Restoring family links was a key activity that covered conflict situations, disasters and migration. The new Strategy was comprehensive and its three Strategic Objectives covered all the pertinent issues. All National Societies, including his own, had had the opportunity to participate in the consultation process, which had included meetings to determine the regional issues for the Strategy. He was pleased to see that operative paragraph 8 of the proposed resolution dealt with the implementation process and with developing indicators to measure success.

Mr Eder (Swedish Red Cross) said that his National Society also wished to express its appreciation to the ICRC for the process chosen to develop the Restoring Family Links Strategy; an advisory group representing National Societies from different parts of the world and the International Federation had proved to be a successful method. The Strategy would be a useful tool for the components of the Movement to improve their restoring family links services by working together and would help National Societies to respond to requests received from asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants seeking the whereabouts of their loved ones. The Swedish Red Cross pledged its support for the draft resolution.

Baroness Donata Schenck zu Schweinsberg (German Red Cross) said that the German Red Cross welcomed the Restoring Family Links Strategy, which was challenging and ambitious; it was very important that the Movement adopted a new strategy, as instances of family and community separation requiring a humanitarian solution were multiplying. National Societies should have well-functioning tracing services in order to meet the growing needs. The proposed strategy depended to a large extent on the strength and knowledge of individual National Societies located in areas affected by armed conflict or natural or man-made disasters. The Movement should be able to respond effectively and efficiently by mobilizing its resources to restore family links. The draft Strategy set out in detail the role of the Movement's components, had been well thought through and encompassed the aspects that were vital to a well-functioning, modern tracing network. The three strategic objectives provided the necessary detailed guidelines for implementing the new Strategy. National Societies had a responsibility to build, maintain and strengthen family links networks, but could only do so if the proper financial foundations had been laid. The German Red Cross expressed its unconditional support for the Strategy and its long-term vision for restoring family links.

Mr Konoe (Japanese Red Cross) said that tracing services were one of the 11 objectives included in the Statutes of the Japanese Red Cross. His National Society had been engaged in restoring family links activities in both peacetime and war: following World War II, the Japanese Red Cross had repatriated 30,000 Japanese citizens from countries with which Japan had no diplomatic relations and, between 1959 and 1984, the National Society, in partnership with the ICRC, had repatriated some 90,000 citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, after confirming that they wished to return of their own free will. The majority of the more than 200 tracing cases handled by the Japanese Red Cross each year came from family members living in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Japanese Red Cross also organized international tracing services during natural disasters: after the Kobe earthquake in 1995, the Japanese Red Cross had carried out tracing services for over 1,340 people from 10 different countries resident in Japan, and a civil protection law passed in 2004 had entrusted the National Society with a mandate to perform tracing services for foreign nationals in the event of an armed attack. Tracing services were no longer the exclusive concern of the ICRC but involved all components of the Movement. As a result of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, tens of thousands of people were still missing, and families were living with the sadness and pain of family links broken for more than six decades. In today's unpredictable world, implementing the Restoring Family Links Strategy by building a global tracing network for the next 10 years would have not only practical value, but also a high symbolic value in spreading the Movement's humanitarian principles and those of international humanitarian law.

Mr Eshraghi (Iranian Red Crescent) said that his National Society was grateful for the work accomplished as it would have a positive impact on restoring family links activities in the future. He paid tribute to the memory of all the missing people in the world. The Iranian Red Crescent had a long history of restoring family links activities, more recently during the Eight Years War and following tragic earthquakes, including the one in Bam. In his National Society's experience, one of the most significant challenges in implementing the Strategy would be reaching the unregistered places to which the ICRC and National Societies did not have access. Establishing mechanisms, in cooperation with governments, to clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing persons was urgently needed. Sharing information between National Societies was essential in that respect. The Strategy recognized the National Societies as the

focal points for cooperation and saw the prevention of disappearance as a duty of National Societies. The Iranian Red Crescent was willing to share its experience with all interested National Societies.

Dr Al Karbouli (Iraqi Red Crescent) thanked the ICRC for the work it had accomplished; the regional consultations which had taken place demonstrated the high level of coordination between the ICRC and National Societies. Iraq had experienced three devastating wars in recent years, resulting in extensive loss of life and tens of thousands of missing persons. His National Society was cooperating with the ICRC in the many efforts under way to restore family links in Iraq, including the tracing of Red Crescent staff who had gone missing while performing their restoring family links work on behalf of people in detention centres. In the region of Falluja, the National Society had worked with the ICRC to restore links by establishing mobile phone contact; it had been a pleasure to hear the joy in family members' voices when they realized that their loved ones were still alive.

Mr Adugna (International Federation) said that the International Federation welcomed the initiative and leadership shown by the ICRC in promoting the importance of protecting and restoring family links. The essential human right of retaining links to one's family was of increasing importance to the International Federation and its National Societies at a time when the world was witnessing a greater number of natural disasters. In each disaster, there was a risk of family members becoming separated and, as the Bangladesh Red Crescent had illustrated one week previously following Cyclone Sidr, the National Society played a critical role in the evacuation of thousands of families. Two weeks earlier, the Mexican Red Cross had received over 50,000 registrations on its family links website following flooding in Tabasco and Chiapas. Thus far in 2007, National Societies had carried out some 440 operations in response to disasters, each one of which carried the risk of family members becoming separated; it would be beneficial to build capacity in restoring family links by ensuring that frontline Red Cross and Red Crescent responders understood how to mitigate the potential for family separation and how to respond once families had become separated. The need to restore contact with family members was often even more vital than that for food or shelter.

The International Federation had already introduced modules on restoring family links in its training of disaster response teams, and its international disaster response teams were increasingly supporting family

links activities, enjoying excellent cooperation on the ground with the ICRC. The International Federation welcomed the Restoring Family Links Strategy for the Movement, was committed to making it effective at the operational level and urged the Council of Delegates to support it.

Mr Carlton (Australian Red Cross Society) paid tribute to the work of those in the Red Cross and Red Crescent involved in restoring family links activities and endorsed the Strategy, which was the result of consultation with the whole Movement. Restoring family links had been one of the original activities of the Movement and continued to be a core task to the present day. However, it had been worrying to see that the global mapping exercise conducted by the ICRC had revealed that many National Societies had lost knowledge of the task and saw restoring family links as an ICRC activity alone. The development of the proposed Strategy was timely, reminding members of the Movement of their responsibilities, and provided a way to increase the knowledge and skills of all partners. He supported the draft resolution, requesting that an amendment be made specifically to include the responsibilities of National Societies in restoring family links. The Australian Red Cross had been proud to be part of the development of the Strategy and was committed to its implementation in cooperation with the ICRC, the International Federation, National Societies and governments. As the delegate of the Iranian Red Crescent had pointed out, there was a clear role for governments to play in assisting National Societies to restore family links, although many governments failed to do so or, indeed, sought to obstruct the process. He called on National Societies to encourage their governments to sign joint pledges with them in support of the Strategy.

Dr Kopetzky (Austrian Red Cross) said that the Austrian Red Cross welcomed and fully supported the Restoring Family Links Strategy. The Strategy was highly ambitious but, with joint efforts, the Strategic Objectives could be achieved. Strengthening the Movement's capacity to restore family links was a most necessary goal, in view of the very large numbers of people separated from their families and with no news of them. The Austrian Red Cross was fully committed to implementing the actions recommended in the Strategic Objectives. It had increased its outreach activities, established a volunteer tracing network, and developed cooperation with counselling and community organizations. While the role of the ICRC should be acknowledged, whether the ambitious objectives of the Strategy were reached would largely depend on the role of the National Societies;

therefore, he fully supported the amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the Australian Red Cross.

Mr Couillard (Canadian Red Cross) said that the Canadian Red Cross congratulated the ICRC on the Restoring Family Links Strategy and was grateful for the consultative approach adopted in drawing up the document. His National Society welcomed the initiative; the strength of the Movement and its global network was intricately linked to the capacity of each of its components, and the Strategy and its implementation plan coincided with the efforts of the Canadian Red Cross to strengthen its own programme to restore family links. Migration was often a cause of family separation and was a particularly strong phenomenon in Canada, where one person in every five had been born outside the country. Recognizing the particular vulnerability of migrants, the Canadian Red Cross had included them in its own restoring family links policy. He urged all National Societies to support adoption of the draft resolution and the Strategy.

Dr Al Kabab (Yemen Red Crescent) said that the Restoring Family Links Strategy embodied the most noble of the Movement's principles and was one of the reasons for which the Movement had been founded. The Yemen Red Crescent thanked all those who had been involved in elaborating the Strategy. Yemen was a country both of origin and of destination for migrants, and there were significant migration flows in the country. His National Society would work closely with the Somali Red Crescent and the ICRC to implement the Strategy and urged all other National Societies to support the draft resolution.

H.R.H. Princess Margriet (Netherlands Red Cross) said that the Netherlands Red Cross aligned itself with the many previous speakers in their appreciation of the content of the Restoring Family Links Strategy and the process of drawing it up. Her National Society wished to acknowledge the work done by National Societies in the field of restoring family links and to highlight the unique role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Family Links Network. However, as outlined in the Strategy, it was vital to further build and strengthen the Network. Only when all components of the Movement acted together and were willing to fulfil their respective responsibilities could they respond effectively and efficiently to existing restoring family links needs. Implementation of the Strategy should therefore be considered as a commitment of the Movement as a whole, in which partnerships were important. The Strategy's vision underlined the need for a restoring family links response not only

in situations of conflict but also to assist vulnerable migrants. Her National Society, like the Australian Red Cross, wished to include more emphasis on the specific responsibilities of National Societies in the draft resolution and, consequently, proposed that, in preambular paragraph 3, the words “and the specific responsibilities of National Societies in restoring family links” be added after “coordinator and technical adviser to National Societies and governments.”

Dr Usichenko (Ukrainian Red Cross) said that restoring family links remained a relevant activity in Ukraine, where the National Society’s tracking and tracing services received many requests from vulnerable people such as migrants. Having monitored the needs of those requesting the service, the Ukrainian Red Cross believed that the ICRC’s Central Tracing Agency should adapt its services to include people not caught up in armed conflicts. His National Society’s tracing system, with the support of the ICRC, had been used to help the country’s irregular migrants. The endorsement of the Strategy by National Societies offered hope that they would have a long-term vision of how to resolve key issues in restoring family links. The Ukrainian Red Cross was ready to share its experience and to support the global network. The Strategy would help National Societies to adapt to the new challenges confronting tracing systems. His National Society supported the draft resolution.

Dr Makhtoum (Sudanese Red Crescent) confirmed his National Society’s commitment to the Restoring Family Links Strategy. The conflicts in Sudan had fuelled migration, and families had been scattered throughout the territory as well as abroad: hence the need for family links services. A Restoring Family Links Strategy would strengthen the services provided by the Sudanese Red Crescent and enhance its stability. He thanked the ICRC for the support it had given in that regard. The International Movement could not fulfil the responsibility alone; it needed to strengthen its relationships with governments and non-governmental organizations and work in partnership with them. However, some organizations sought to undermine the Movement’s objectives and, in a recent case, a non-governmental organization had attempted to remove children from a country without the consent of the families or of the government concerned: such actions should be condemned.

Mr Rakhimov (Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan) said that the Strategy was timely and important because it reflected a unified approach to restoring family links that could be applied by the Movement as a whole and would help National Societies to develop a consistent approach. The National Society

of Uzbekistan reaffirmed its commitment to the extremely important humanitarian objective of restoring family links; it would develop its activities to achieve that end. However, the work required enhanced partnerships with the ICRC and the International Federation. Some National Societies had enormous experience in restoring family links and collecting data in emergency situations, which could be shared. The Restoring Family Links Strategy would improve the quality of work in the Movement at local and international levels.

Mr Alhadi (Bahrain Red Crescent Society) said that his National Society supported the Strategy, which it considered to be important in enabling the International Movement to fulfil the objective of restoring family links, which was at the heart of its humanitarian mission. The Bahrain Red Crescent would do everything in its power to implement the Strategy.

Ms Kabore (Burkinabé Red Cross), speaking on behalf of the National Societies of Burkina Faso, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Niger and Senegal, supported the establishment of a Restoring Family Links Strategy. She thanked the ICRC for the initiative and for the expeditious and inclusive manner in which the consultation process had been carried out, as it had allowed National Societies to take ownership of the policy. She thanked the ICRC for its continuing support. A global policy was best suited to achieve the objective of restoring family links and therefore the National Societies she represented supported implementation of the Strategy.

Dame Maeve Fort (British Red Cross) thanked the ICRC for developing the Strategy and recognized that National Societies must assume responsibility for its success and for the necessary increased capacity in the field. The restoration of family links was a historical and distinctive feature of the Movement. The British Red Cross expressed its sympathy for and solidarity with those National Societies most affected in modern times.

Ms Diallo (Red Cross Society of Guinea) firmly supported the resolution. Thanks to the support of the ICRC, the Red Cross of Guinea had developed restoring family links capacities. Restoring family links was a service provided effectively by 500 volunteers in all the communities. She asked the International Federation and the ICRC to increase their support to other National Societies with the potential to be even more effective in that field.

Ms Fromageau (French Red Cross) thanked the ICRC for its work on the Restoring Family Links Strategy, which would add a great deal of value to the work of the Movement. It was important that all National Societies carry out a consistent review when implementing the Strategy, as it would serve to maximize the efficiency of operations. The French Red Cross supported the amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the Netherlands Red Cross.

Mr Ndifo (Nigerian Red Cross) commended the ICRC for its work in developing a strategy that would be applicable on a Movement-wide basis. Each National Society had a responsibility in the restoration of family links, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent was seen as a sign of hope by those looking for their loved ones. It would be important for National Societies to integrate restoring family links into their programme planning for response to emergency and non-emergency situations. Restoring family links was a cross-cutting issue and should be taken seriously by all National Societies. Every component of the Movement had a role to play in restoring family links in a coordinated and structured manner, even in peacetime. Relevant government agencies should be encouraged to support the Restoring Family Links Strategy; his National Society endorsed the draft resolution.

Dr Stoimenova (Bulgarian Red Cross) said that her National Society highly appreciated the work of the ICRC in preparing the Restoring Family Links Strategy and the implementation plan. All components of the Movement should take responsibility for strengthening their services to make them more efficient and effective and build capacity: it would be a challenge for many National Societies. The Bulgarian Red Cross was committed to cooperating and coordinating with and learning from its fellow members in the Movement. Her National Society supported the adoption of the draft resolution because, as a global network, the Movement would achieve better results in alleviating suffering, including in situations of migration and disaster.

Mr Richard (Uganda Red Cross) said that there had been significant population displacements in Uganda since 1967, including the internal displacement of some 1.8 million people in the north of the country for the past 21 years. Uganda had seen considerable emigration and had received refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Congo and Somalia. The Uganda Red Cross had been providing restoring family links services, which it offered in cooperation with the ICRC, since 1993, including in prisons. His National Society supported the draft resolution.

Mr Gordon (Philippine National Red Cross) said that tracing services were the hallmark of the Movement, started by Henry Dunant at the Battle of Solferino when he had begun talking to the wounded and taking letters to deliver to their families; he commended the ICRC for having reinitiated that important function. His National Society had been involved in restoring family links for some time, having worked to make contact with Philippine nationals who had become separated from their families during World War II, and it currently cooperated with the National Societies of Lebanon, Syria and others in tracing many migrants from the Philippines. There were many stories of families having been successfully reunited after long periods of separation. Speaking as a member of the International Federation's Governing Board, he was appreciative of the ICRC's efforts to include the International Federation in the consultation process. He strongly supported the Strategy and the draft resolution.

Resolution 4, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.

3.4.2 HENRY DUNANT MEDAL AWARD CEREMONY

*Friday 23 November 2007
6.30 p.m.*

Ms Davidson, Vice-Chair of the Standing Commission, introducing the item, said that every two years the Standing Commission recognized members of the Movement for exceptional service and contributions, particularly in the international field. The Standing Commission selected the recipients of the Henry Dunant Medal, the highest honour the Movement could bestow on one of its members, based on nominations from National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation. The idea for such a medal had been initiated by the Council of Delegates on the 100th anniversary of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 1963 and, thanks to the generosity of the Australian Red Cross, the Henry Dunant Medal had been formally established by the International Conference in Vienna in 1965. The aim of the Medal was to reward outstanding service and acts of great devotion to the cause of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Individuals selected to receive the award had distinguished themselves, either by their long and outstanding service to the ideals of the Movement or because they had acted

with exceptional courage and devotion. Four such individuals were to be honoured that evening.

Hon. James Joseph Carlton

The first Medal was awarded to **James Joseph Carlton**, who had joined the Australian Red Cross in 1994 as Secretary-General after a long and successful career in public life. He had started his career in the private sector as a management consultant and then became involved in political life, being elected to the Australian parliament in 1977; he had been Minister of Health from 1982 to 1983. He had worked for the Australian National Commission for UNESCO and been a member of many important committees and councils. As Secretary-General of the Australian Red Cross, he had used his experience to make the National Society a strong and unified organization in the interests of serving the public, creating a truly national presence and defying resistance in pursuing the establishment of the Australian Red Cross blood service. Mr Carlton had brought significant constitutional changes to the National Society by empowering the national executive and delegating responsibilities to volunteers to conduct operations in accordance with national policy. He promoted international humanitarian law and the role of the Movement in international humanitarian action both among the public and the public authorities. He had called for further funding support from his Government for the ICRC, the International Federation and his National Society's international operations. During his tenure, Mr Carlton had strengthened cooperation between his National Society and other components of the Movement. He had assisted in the establishment of an HIV/AIDS peer education project in China and provided financial support for Afghan Red Crescent activities. He regularly visited field activities, sometimes in dangerous conflict zones, and had participated in many Movement working groups. He had held important functions in major Movement fora. Mr Carlton was highly respected for his visionary leadership and clarity of thought. His genuine commitment and engagement were strongly valued by all who had worked with him. He was diplomatic, yet determined in achieving his goals. He had strong interpersonal skills and was committed to the principles of the Movement. After his retirement in 2000, he remained an active supporter of the Australian Red Cross, regularly assisting in the National Society's work, providing greatly valued advice and experience. For his personal commitment, for his important contribution to the development of humanitarian activities and for his work in promoting the Movement's Fundamental Principles and ideals, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent had unanimously agreed to award to the

Honourable James Joseph Carlton the Henry Dunant Medal, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's highest distinction.

Amid applause, the Hon. James Joseph Carlton received the Henry Dunant Medal from Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission.

Christoph Hensch

Ms Davidson, Vice-Chair of the Standing Commission, said that the second recipient, **Christoph Hensch**, had come to work for the ICRC in 1989, embarking on a series of difficult missions in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Croatia, Sri Lanka, Somalia and the Russian Federation. In each situation, he displayed absolute commitment, unwavering professionalism, great openness to dialogue and profound respect for others. His humanitarian motivation and his desire to help people affected by conflict enabled him to overcome obstacles and persuade parties who were often difficult to deal with or uncooperative. Despite the difficulties and dangers which he so often faced in the course of his activities, Mr Hensch strove unfailingly to facilitate the ICRC's work on behalf of civilians and other victims of conflict in the countries to which he was assigned.

In late 1996, Mr Hensch had been one of those responsible for running the Red Cross hospital in the Chechen town of Novye Atagi. Threats hung over the ICRC staff there, Chechnya was isolated and there were problems communicating with the outside world, but neither the perilous security situation nor the isolation discouraged Mr Hensch or the doctors, nurses, sanitation engineers and interpreters working with him, many of whom had been seconded by National Societies and who had made it possible to dispense vital medical care to sick and injured people who would otherwise have had no one to turn to. The hospital had been set up by the Norwegian Red Cross and had treated 321 patients in the space of three months, and the staff had carried out over 600 surgical operations and 1,700 outpatient consultations. In the night between 16 and 17 December 1996, the hospital had been attacked and six expatriate staff members murdered. In 1997, the Council of Delegates had honoured their memory by awarding each one the Henry Dunant Medal. Christoph Hensch had been seriously injured, surviving only thanks to his calm and self-control: one of the attackers had fired at him at point blank range and he had fallen down, lain still and was left for dead. Despite his traumatic ordeal, Mr Hensch was determined to continue working for the Red Cross and the victims of war, and in 2001 he had embarked on a new mission as head of the ICRC's sub-delegation in Iran, where

he put his intense humanitarian motivation to work, relieving the suffering of those affected by the war in neighbouring Afghanistan. Mr Hensch had since left the ICRC to begin a new life in New Zealand. However, he remained in touch with the ICRC, which he had helped in its efforts to draw lessons on how to aid people in overcoming trauma similar to that which he had suffered. For his outstanding humanitarian work, both before and after the Novye Atagi tragedy, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent had unanimously agreed to award to Mr Christoph Hensch the Henry Dunant Medal, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's highest distinction.

Amid applause, Mr Christoph Hensch received the Henry Dunant Medal from Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission.

Alexander Dumba Ika

Ms Davidson, Vice-Chair of the Standing Commission, said that the next recipient, **Alexander Dumba Ika**, had first entered the service of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aged 16, as a volunteer of the Red Cross Society of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He had quickly set himself apart through his motivation, willingness to help and abiding commitment. His modesty and complete dedication to the humanitarian cause and his eagerness to spread knowledge of and promote respect for the Fundamental Principles resulted in his being given ever greater responsibility. He had been placed in charge of a team of volunteers and later became head of the tracing service of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the province of Ituri in the north-east of the country. He had been particularly thorough in his tracing activities; despite the difficult environment in which he had had to work, his efforts had resulted in the reunification of hundreds of unaccompanied children with their families.

Mr Dumba Ika had later joined the ICRC in Bunia where, in the service of humanitarian endeavour, he had demonstrated not only his motivation and reliability, but also the unfailing strength of his convictions. His new responsibilities had taken him across vast expanses of the country for long periods of time in a high-risk environment. On foot or on bicycle, he had attempted to deliver messages in the remotest areas, often in dangerous circumstances. He had been unwavering in his dedication to unaccompanied children, often working on his own initiative since the Bunia sub-delegation was so isolated that he often had to run it by himself. In 1998, as the crisis in his country reached its peak, he risked his life protecting the sub-delegation and its property so that conflict

victims would continue to receive aid. Thanks to his efforts, a humanitarian presence had been maintained in the midst of a conflict situation with all of the symbolic significance that had entailed. Owing to his brave commitment to the humanitarian cause, his uprightness and his integrity, he had been especially respected by the local community and trusted by one and all. In 1999, when conflict had broken out in Ituri, following the example of Henry Dunant, he had anticipated the consequences and had persuaded the ICRC to launch a large-scale protection and assistance operation, benefiting tens of thousands of people in the context of a conflict which, at that time, was still "forgotten." In 2001, after a tragedy in which six of his colleagues had been killed, Mr Dumba Ika became the *de facto* head of the Bunia sub-delegation, in which capacity he handled negotiations with the local civilian and military authorities in tragic and dangerous circumstances posing a direct threat to himself. Despite the danger, he had carried on with his work until the sub-delegation was evacuated and closed. For his commitment to humanitarian ideals, his courage and his dedication in the service of the Movement, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent had unanimously agreed to award to Mr Alexander Dumba Ika the Henry Dunant Medal, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's highest distinction.

Amid applause, Mr Alexander Dumba Ika received the Henry Dunant Medal from Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission.

Josiane Gabel

Ms Davidson, Vice-Chair of the Standing Commission, said that the fourth recipient, **Josiane Gabel**, had joined the French Red Cross in her twenties and had remained an active member ever since. As a nurse and then a first-aid instructor, Ms Gabel had contributed enormously to her own National Society and to sister National Societies in the area of health and beyond. Ms Gabel had gone to the Congo in 1962 as a provincial commissioner of the Congo Red Cross cadets, setting up first-aid training in Kwilu province and training volunteers as well as management. For a year and a half, she had travelled across dangerous zones carrying out first-aid operations, often putting her own life at great risk. She planned the operations herself, with support from outside partners, and, thanks to her much-needed services, lives had been saved. In addition to alleviating suffering caused by war, Ms Gabel strove to promote the Geneva Conventions among civilian and military officials, especially during a rebellion from 1964 to 1965. As a person of determination,

courage and rare persuasive power, Ms Gabel had been fully devoted to helping the most vulnerable. She had also founded an orphanage for children and victims of war in Congo in 1964.

In the 1970s, Ms Gabel had worked in Chad as a Red Cross delegate and had organized first-aid courses. In 1973, she had set up clinics and helped relief workers to combat famine. Ms Gabel had advocated founding a National Society in Chad with the then President and the Minister of Health. She had helped to set up the Chad Red Cross and had become the national first-aid director. In 1975, she had led first-aid operations for the victims of the coup d'état in the Chadian capital and had ensured the protection of the wounded and of prisoners. Ms Gabel had been a symbol of unwavering belief in humanitarian action, displaying personal warmth and genuine goodness. While undertaking her tasks, she had raised eight children, four of them adopted. She had brought comfort to a great many who had suffered. Although Ms Gabel was well past retirement age, she still pursued her Red Cross activities with great energy, skill and devotion as Vice-President of a local delegation in France, contributing especially in the areas of health and social action. For her personal commitment, for her important contribution to the development of humanitarian activities and for her work in promoting the Movement's Fundamental Principles and ideals, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent had unanimously agreed to award to Ms Josiane Gabel the Henry Dunant Medal, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's highest distinction.

Amid applause, Ms Josiane Gabel received the Henry Dunant Medal from Mr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission.

Ms Gabel, speaking on behalf of her fellow recipients and expressing her thanks to the Standing Commission, said that each of the recipients was conscious of the honour bestowed on them. Yet it should never be forgotten that the award had been inspired by the common cause of all those present to serve suffering people inspired by the vision, ideals and commitment of Henry Dunant. She and her fellow recipients had tried, in a modest fashion, to embody that commitment in the field. Any action to benefit humanity required focus, determination and enthusiasm. The Movement worldwide had tried to follow the commitment of its founder and provide a framework for humanitarian action. All those present should express their gratitude to the Movement, which had taught them so much and asked so much of them in serving the noble cause of preserving

human dignity and coming to the assistance of people in distress. Sadly, such work was not yet finished, but, whatever the future brought, they would all continue to work as long as they were able to do so. Albert Schweitzer had spoken of showing genuine humanity to others, and the future of the world depended upon it. Finally, the scientist Albert Einstein had said that only a life lived for others was a life worth living. She believed that a life devoted to others carried within it its own reward, whatever the suffering and renunciation involved; there was no more exciting and rewarding undertaking on earth.

The award ceremony closed at 7 p.m.

3.4.3 SECOND PLENARY MEETING

*Saturday 24 November 2007
8 a.m.*

Item 5 Migration

*(documents: CD/07/5.1 and
CD/07/5.1/DR)*

Mr Nordby, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the International Federation for Migration and Displacement, said that he was privileged to summarize the vibrant debate on migration, to which 33 National Societies had contributed, and the subsequent important decisions taken by the General Assembly of the International Federation. The discussions had shown that migration was a topic of great concern to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in all parts of the world. National Societies were providing indispensable humanitarian services to people made vulnerable by the migratory process. Many National Societies were working in difficult environments and were increasingly challenged by the extreme vulnerability of migrants and displaced people. It had become even more difficult in situations where legislation sought to deter humanitarian actors from assisting the marginalized and vulnerable and, in some cases, even criminalizing assistance to migrants who did not have the proper documentation. The Red Cross and Red Crescent fully acknowledged States' right to decide their migration policies. The debate had nevertheless underlined that the Red Cross and Red Crescent always provided humanitarian assistance and protection based on vulnerability and needs regardless of legal status or categories. The Movement had a humanitarian commitment and duty to meet the needs of all vulnerable people without restrictions;

as one colleague had put it: “We have to give people back their dignity.”

Particular attention had been paid to the Red Cross and Red Crescent’s special responsibility to advocate for humane and safe treatment of migrants, which included addressing the root causes that could lead to or enhance vulnerability and reminding governments of their responsibilities under international humanitarian law, refugee law, human rights law and national law applicable to refugees and internally displaced persons. As a locally based organization, the Red Cross and Red Crescent could play a fundamental role in promoting integration, non-discrimination and respect for diversity and should demonstrate an open and inclusive approach in its dealings with the community.

Cross-border migration was acknowledged to be a complex phenomenon, involving countries of origin, transit and destination, and greater cooperation was needed in networking and knowledge sharing between National Societies and all components of the Movement, including with the ICRC, which had an important mandate and skills in the areas of protection, restoring family links and detention. National Societies wanted the International Federation to provide leadership in this area and had requested the Governing Board to establish a Reference Group to develop a migration policy that would be adopted in 2008 and report back to the Council of Delegates in 2009. In their capacity as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, some National Societies were engaged in a dialogue with their public authorities to clarify their respective roles in addressing the humanitarian consequences of migration. The various components of the Movement, in conformity with their respective mandates, were requested to cooperate in the development of advocacy strategies addressing the humanitarian consequences of migration. The policy should provide additional guidance and advice to the components of the Movement, taking into account the following four main areas in which National Societies were developing activities: humanitarian assistance; protection; integration/reintegration; and advocacy. The policy should also be accompanied by an implementation strategy and a plan of action. Several National Societies had wished the policy to encompass all categories of migrant, including refugees and displaced persons. Recommendations made at the General Assembly would be forwarded to the Reference Group for further consideration.

The topic of migration had been placed on the agenda of the Council of Delegates in order to further explore how the Movement could cooperate to prevent and

alleviate the suffering of migrants and their families. Mr Nordby looked forward to creative and constructive cooperation between the Movement’s components and to enhancing the response and the solutions to the humanitarian consequences of migration. The draft resolution contained in document CD/07/5.1/DR was based on the discussions held at the General Assembly. He proposed to amend paragraph 8 by replacing the word “assistance” with “services” and deleting the final phrase so that it ended “National Societies will be in a position to base their services strictly on vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs and maintain their independence and impartiality at all times”; a reference to debate on the political, economic and security aspects of migration was unnecessary and could be a source of confusion and contradiction.

Mr Cochrane (British Red Cross) said that his National Society fully supported the draft resolution on international migration and welcomed the proposed closer cooperation between the components of the Movement in addressing the needs of vulnerable migrants. He agreed that it was important for the Movement to seek access to vulnerable migrants, regardless of their status, because the concern was with their vulnerability and not the fact that they were migrants. The Movement should work with others to address the challenges faced by some National Societies, which were unable to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants because of legal restrictions, as that was unacceptable from a humanitarian point of view. Given the contentious nature of irregular migration in many countries, the British Red Cross strongly supported a coordinated approach to advocacy and appreciated the emphasis in the resolution on the humanitarian consequences of migration, which would avoid the components of the Movement being drawn into any discussion on the political, economic and security aspects of the issue. While it was for governments to determine the status of migrants it was important, for humanitarian reasons, to enable those individuals to be brought back into the system. The British Red Cross looked forward to the development and implementation of guidelines for National Societies working with migrants in detention, since those individuals were often some of the most vulnerable.

Mr Forster (ICRC) said that international migration had a positive impact for many migrants and for their countries of origin and destination, which benefited from their valuable contributions. However, migration also had a dark side, and the General Assembly debate had shown that an increasing number of migrants were becoming vulnerable groups as defined by the Movement’s mission statement. In previous

Movement resolutions, a clear distinction had been drawn between migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, and the ICRC believed that it was important to maintain those distinctions, just as it was essential to uphold the protection afforded to certain categories by international law. The ICRC welcomed the commitment of National Societies and the International Federation to prevent and alleviate the plight of migrants; the Movement should respond to the challenge of migration using its skills in accordance with the mandates of its components and with the Fundamental Principles and by employing a contextualized approach that took into account the problems in the country concerned.

The ICRC was seeking to gain a more detailed understanding of the specific needs of migrants in armed conflicts and other situations of violence in order to determine whether they were being met, in particular with regard to the restoration of family links and other protection issues, including detention. In those and other emergency situations, such as natural disasters, the ICRC actively strove to restore family links, either by direct action or through its support to the concerned National Society in its capacity as coordinator and technical adviser for the Family Links Network. Several National Societies were already involved in a wide range of activities for refugees, asylum seekers, and both regular and irregular migrants, including awareness raising, advocacy, emergency and social welfare assistance, health care and legal counselling. Restoring family links, a core Red Cross and Red Crescent activity, provided a particularly important service for detained migrants, its purpose being to relieve the mental anguish and suffering that was caused by loss of contact with their families. Given the sharp rise in the number of detained migrants in recent years, National Societies had launched programmes to address needs in prisons or immigration detention centres; strong autonomy was a key element in responding to the challenges they faced in so doing. There would be times when National Societies would have to report inadequate conditions of detention or treatment to the authorities and interact with them; they would also have to build capacities in the long run, in a sensitive environment and with due consideration to the sensitivities of other organizations and specialized agencies. The ICRC was already sharing its expertise in the field of detention with National Societies able and willing to assist migrants in places where the ICRC did not seek to be operational, and it was committed to developing guidelines for National Societies assisting migrants in detention. The priority of the ICRC was to ensure a consistent approach to detention-related issues within the Movement, with the ICRC and National Societies

playing complementary roles. The ICRC supported the draft resolution on international migration and stood ready to contribute to the development of the policy and, given the policy implications for the whole Movement, looked forward to discussion of the policy at the Council of Delegates in 2009.

Mr Balea (Spanish Red Cross) endorsed the draft resolution on international migration and supported the role played by the components of the Movement in looking after vulnerable migrants. The Spanish Red Cross provided assistance to some 230,000 migrants a year, who often arrived in situations of extreme vulnerability, having undertaken perilous journeys and risked their lives to reach Spain. Services provided by the Spanish Red Cross included emergency humanitarian assistance, first aid, food, protection, legal and social counselling, social integration, restoring family links and combating racism.

Mr Eder (Swedish Red Cross) said that the Red Cross and Red Crescent was committed to acting according to the humanitarian imperative to alleviate and to prevent human suffering through service delivery and through advocacy, as set out in Strategy 2010. Such action might require the Red Cross and Red Crescent also to address the causes of vulnerability and, even though it did not engage in political controversies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent's advocacy work had implications at the policy and legislative levels. Many National Societies, including his own, were in constant dialogue with their governments regarding the situation of vulnerable groups, including migrants, and sought to influence policy in order to minimize the vulnerability of migrants. The Swedish Red Cross was committed to reminding its Government of its obligations under international law; dilemmas regarding humanitarian action could be posed by government policies, and it was the duty of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to try to influence those policies if they had negative humanitarian effects. Such a position had been underpinned by the interventions of many National Societies at the General Assembly. The draft resolution should be consistent with the decision of the General Assembly on migration and the rules adopted by the Council of Delegates on the auxiliary role. The Swedish Red Cross endorsed the draft resolution with the proposed amendments to paragraph 8.

Dr Salmon (Jamaica Red Cross) wholeheartedly supported the proposed resolution; Jamaica, and indeed the whole Caribbean region, was significantly affected by migration, as countries both of origin and of destination. The comprehensive background report and draft resolution covered all components

of the Movement and addressed their different needs. He suggested that it would be helpful to regroup the 11 paragraphs of the resolution into five categories, according to their subject matter.

Ms Rammekwa (Botswana Red Cross) said that migration had caused a trend of xenophobia towards migrants that affected all communities on all continents. It was the responsibility of the Movement to take a leadership role in tackling such undesirable trends and to place them high on the list of strategic priorities, as they could have disastrous humanitarian consequences.

Ms Steward (South African Red Cross) fully supported the draft resolution as it gave emphasis to the work already undertaken by the South African Red Cross in assisting migrants. Because of its humanitarian focus, her National Society did not respond according to the legal definition of the categories of migrant, asylum seeker or refugee, but according to their vulnerability. She hoped that presenting the resolution to governments would facilitate their acceptance of and support for the humanitarian mandate of the Red Cross Red and Crescent. Her National Society agreed to the proposed change to paragraph 8.

Mr Fadiga (Italian Red Cross) said that it was important to address the humanitarian consequences of migration Movement-wide, and the Italian Red Cross therefore supported the proposal to develop a policy. He supported the remarks of the British Red Cross that migrants should be assisted on the basis of their vulnerability and believed that a culture of humanitarian solidarity should be fostered among citizens and governments. The Italian Red Cross, acting as auxiliary to its Government, advocated for migrants to ensure their human dignity as well as for respect for human rights. It had proposed a joint training course with the police and other authorities involved in migration. The Italian Red Cross was the only humanitarian organization authorized to enter all migrant detention centres in Italy and it assisted migrants throughout the country, whatever their status. Mr Fadiga's National Society therefore lent its full support to the proposed resolution.

Dr Hassan (Somali Red Crescent) supported the draft resolution and the proposal to amend paragraph 8. In the interests of conformity, the word "assistance" in paragraphs 7 and 11 of the draft resolution might also be changed to "services."

Mr Majewsky (American Red Cross) said that meeting the humanitarian needs of migrants was

a pressing issue for National Societies around the globe, including his own. The American Red Cross had long-held policies concerning the treatment of undocumented migrants, and, in the provision of disaster services, the National Society would "neither request nor require proof of citizenship status when providing shelter or financial assistance." Furthermore, if a client's citizenship status were revealed, it would not be recorded on any Red Cross document. As the National Society in a receiving State for many migrants, the American Red Cross had met the challenges in reaching them by partnering with organizations specializing in assistance to migrants, as well as with the Mexican Red Cross. For those reasons, the American Red Cross was proud to support the draft resolution with the proposed amendments.

Mr Dokianos (Hellenic Red Cross) fully supported the draft resolution and efforts to produce a clear policy and guidelines on detention centres and on services provided by National Societies. Within the framework of the European Union Equal Community Initiative, as managing organization, the Hellenic Red Cross had run a Mobile Unit of Acute Intervention for the previous four years, in cooperation with ministries, the United Nations and NGOs. The unit had visited entry points in Greece, offering material help and social, legal and medical services. The National Society also offered a help line for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in seven different languages and negotiated with the Greek authorities to gain access to detained migrants.

Mr Kimbisa (Tanzania Red Cross) said that Tanzania was receiving an influx of migrants from the Horn of Africa, particularly from Somalia and Ethiopia, who were transiting through the country. Some of the migrants had been arrested and had been found to be very ill. The Tanzanian Red Cross currently lacked the policies and capacities necessary to deal with the consequences of such migration; therefore, he supported the draft resolution and the proposed guidelines as they would enable his National Society to respond more effectively.

Mr Nordby, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the International Federation for Migration and Displacement, thanked all participants for their contribution to the debate on migration and said that he looked forward to working with them on that important cause.

Resolution 5, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Item 2 (continued)
Work of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Towards the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements signed between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel (continued) (*document: CD/07/2.2/DR*)

The Chairman recalled that a working group had been formed to review the two draft resolutions on the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society, which had been submitted respectively by the Group of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies and by the Norwegian delegation. The working group had completed its task and the resulting text of the new draft resolution was presented to the Council of Delegates for adoption.

Resolution 2, as presented by the working group, was adopted by acclamation.

Item 6 Supplementary Measures of the Seville Agreement
(documents: CD/07/6.1 and CD/07/6.1/DR)

Dr Forde, Chairman of the Resolution 8 Group on implementation of the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures, presented the Group's report. The first task of the Group, which had been established in accordance with Resolution 8 of the 2005 Council of Delegates, had been to develop a monitoring and reporting framework to assess: whether the Agreement and the Measures were known and applied; what actions were being taken to ensure that the host National Society was either the lead agency or the primary partner in an emergency situation; and the extent to which cooperation and coordination had been improved to deliver better services to beneficiaries. The Group's second task had been to consult National Societies on cooperation and coordination issues. The Group had been requested to make recommendations and to report back to the Council of Delegates.

The Group had focused on core cooperation and coordination activities, especially in emergencies, and an extensive consultation process had taken place

in regional and sub-regional meetings and through Movement networks. A Movement-wide monitoring tool had been developed and a training initiative had been set up in parallel and rolled out by the ICRC and the International Federation.

The Resolution 8 Group had found that the focus on training had led to a better understanding of how to work within the framework of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures; it had resulted in improved coordination, and thus better services had been provided to beneficiaries. The Group had also found that the Movement needed to be better prepared and to carry out joint risk assessments and contingency planning to make sure that National Societies were recognized as being "first on the ground and first to act." There was also a need for strong and trustful working relationships between the components of the Movement before a disaster struck, and these were being facilitated through regular coordination meetings at country level and negotiation processes that clarified working relationships. The report and draft resolution being presented to the Council of Delegates (CD/07/6.1 and CD/07/6.1/DR) highlighted the responsibility of the Movement's components to people affected by disasters and emergencies. To that end, the Group recommended that awareness raising and training efforts involving National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation Secretariat should continue and the capacities of all of them to work in partnership enhanced. There should also be a strengthening of preparedness measures through coordination meetings at country level, the conclusion of memoranda of understanding and contingency planning. Coordination systems should focus on specific needs and be adapted to specific contexts, which required learning more effectively from the practical experiences of National Societies. Although the Group had completed its mandate, it recommended that the monitoring process be continued by the ICRC and the International Federation. National Societies should be kept regularly informed of the progress made in implementing the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures.

Mr Qureshi (Pakistan Red Crescent) said that the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures provided a sound conceptual basis for cooperation and the organization of international operations between different components of the Movement. However, the concept needed to be tested in the light of experience, such as that gained in the major disasters that had severely tested organizational capabilities. After the earthquake in Pakistan, 43 National Societies had provided assistance and 13 of them had worked in the disaster area. The International Federation and the

ICRC provided resources for relief and rehabilitation, and the efficiency of relief operations in Pakistan had been recognized the world over. However, the coordination mechanism between the host National Society and the foreign National Societies had not functioned effectively; five National Societies had not even informed the Pakistan Red Crescent of their arrival, and some National Societies had not consulted before handing over relief supplies to outside agencies, thus weakening the impact of the Movement. Although most of the foreign National Societies had attended a coordination meeting organized by the Pakistan Red Crescent at a later stage, the tardy nature of the coordination had been far from ideal. Some National Societies had promised substantial supplies of relief materials to the Pakistan Red Crescent and then handed them over to other agencies.

The participating National Societies had carried out excellent work, for which the Pakistan Red Crescent was grateful: nevertheless the arrangements described were not those envisaged under the Seville Agreement and therefore Mr Qureshi recommended that the Supplementary Measures incorporate provisions whereby foreign National Societies participating in an international relief operation should first establish contact with the host National Society and keep it in the picture regarding their operations. In addition, any delivery of relief supplies to agencies other than Movement partners should be done with the agreement of the host National Society. Finally, all operational plans should be coordinated with the host National Society.

The identity of the lead agency and the mechanism of coordination were also important: during the earthquake, the Pakistan Red Crescent had set up a coordination committee with the participation of the International Federation and the ICRC, which had proved to be very effective in planning and monitoring relief activities. A similar arrangement had been set up with the International Federation to assist 2.5 million people affected by devastating floods in the south of Pakistan. It appeared that enabling the host National Society to become lead agency at the national level, whether formally or informally, was the best route, with resource mobilization at the international level remaining the domain of the International Federation and the ICRC.

Mr Khatib (Iranian Red Crescent) recalled that his National Society had hosted a meeting of representatives from the Middle East and North Africa region in the Resolution 8 Group consultations and had discussed establishing country-level

memoranda of understanding setting out the roles and responsibilities allocated under the Seville Agreement. Participating National Societies should take part in an established coordination mechanism in countries, and the host National Society should establish coordination with other organizations; regulations concerning the use of the emblem should be known and applied. Regular workshops and training sessions should be held for the personnel of National Societies and other external partners, such as non-governmental organizations and ministries. There should also be contingency planning and practical exercises to improve capacity to provide services to affected people.

Ms Krikke (Netherlands Red Cross) commended the report and said that the recommendations made in the resolution were valuable and timely. Partnership was an important cross-cutting theme, which had also been dealt with under the Code for Good Partnership. She endorsed the emphasis which the Resolution 8 Group had placed on contingency planning, as assessing resources and examining strengths and weaknesses of all Movement partners were essential for all good operations. Situations where National Societies emerged weaker as a result of large-scale operations should be avoided. There was certainly little formal contingency planning experience in the Movement and therefore she urged the International Federation and the ICRC to work together in that area. A Movement approach to capacity building should include preparedness measures and contingency planning.

Sheikh Al Dahdah (Lebanese Red Cross) said that, following events in Lebanon in 2006, the Seville Agreement had been of practical relevance when operating in the field. However, he supported the views expressed on behalf of the Pakistan Red Crescent, as it was the experience of his National Society that there had been instances where the host National Society's priorities had not been respected and some activities had been undertaken by National Societies without informing the Lebanese Red Cross. There had been inefficient distribution of aid, and some people had worked without protection. As the delegate of the Iranian Red Crescent had suggested, there had also been the problem of inappropriate use of the emblem. A greater degree of trust should be created between all members of the Movement and the National Society taking the lead agency role.

Mr Niskala (International Federation) said that the adoption of the Seville Agreement in 1997 had considerably improved cooperation within the Movement, bringing inspiration through its preamble

and clarity to the roles of Movement partners in international activities. The Supplementary Measures had further clarified the roles by emphasizing the involvement of National Societies as either lead agency or primary partner during international operations.

A lot had been done during the previous two years to promote understanding of the Supplementary Measures and to learning from their use in field operations. Discussions during regional and other meetings had focused on how components of the Movement could work together in practice, identifying different challenges and lessons learned, which had been reflected in the report of the Resolution 8 Group. In order to further implementation of the Supplementary Measures, the International Federation would continue to build the capacities of National Societies in disaster and crisis management, and it was in the process of developing a disaster management policy. Such activities would support National Societies in taking the role of lead agency or primary partner. Contingency planning for disaster and crisis preparedness was essential; the International Federation was developing guidance and training for National Societies in that area and welcomed the involvement of the ICRC in the country-level planning processes. The ICRC and the International Federation had a responsibility to ensure coordination of Movement partners at country level; the International Federation would continue to take the lead role in international development support to National Societies and would contribute to building capacities and partnership skills, including building trustful partnerships, for all of the Movement's components.

Disaster management, capacity building, and coordination through partnerships and alliances were part of the International Federation's new operating model, and the International Federation therefore welcomed the conclusions of the report and supported adoption of the draft resolution. The International Federation would continue to cooperate with the ICRC in implementing the Seville Agreement and to report on progress made.

Dr Cárdenas Guerrero (Colombian Red Cross) said that the Seville Agreement should be implemented at the national level and therefore emphasis should be placed on good coordination at national level, paying particular attention to the life and future of the host National Society. Together, the components of the Movement should build collective will based on trust, good example, transparency and results. Capacity building would be essential to strengthen National

Societies so that they could better accomplish their tasks; training and contingency planning would be key elements for implementation. Components of the Movement should work as equals and in a complementary way to fulfil their mission.

Dr Camara (Red Cross Society of Guinea) said that his National Society had implemented the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures, enabling it to carry out refugee assistance programmes in the south of the country and to respond to major crises with the support of the International Federation and, especially, the ICRC. His delegation endorsed the draft resolution.

Mr Gullet (Kenya Red Cross), supporting the draft resolution, said that, although arrangements on the ground did not always reflect the Seville Agreement, relations worked well where there was a clear understanding that the National Society was fundamentally responsible and the lead agency in its own country. In Kenya, there was harmony between the three components of the Movement and a clear understanding and respect, even though there was no formal, written memorandum of understanding. The Government of Kenya had appointed the National Society as the lead agency in all disasters. Challenges for the Movement were the need for building the capacities of National Societies and furthering their developments and the need to avoid duplication of resources.

Mr Monterrosa (Salvadorean Red Cross) said that the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures were very important in defining the lead agency and the primary partner in times of disaster. Turning to the draft resolution, he requested that the language in paragraph 3 make clear that implementation of the points listed was obligatory. Furthermore, the reference in all languages should be to "affected people" and not to "victims."

Ms Steward (South African Red Cross) wished to emphasize the importance of the correct implementation of paragraphs 3.c and 3.d of the draft resolution. She expressed support for the resolution as it would assist National Societies in scaling up capacity in preparation for dealing with the major disasters faced by all as a result of climate change.

Ms Quezon (Philippine National Red Cross) said that coordination began with respect for and understanding of each component of the Movement. The Philippine National Red Cross held regular tripartite meetings, where face-to-face sharing of information and reviewing of what had been achieved

took place. Ms Quezon's National Society also had a weekly radio programme devoted to disseminating the principles of international humanitarian law and the Seville Agreement in order to broaden the information base of everyone in the National Society.

Dr Forde, Chairman of the Resolution 8 Group set up to monitor implementation of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures, said that he had been truly sorry to learn of the problems encountered by the Pakistan Red Crescent. He believed that the experience of the National Society was reflected in the background report, and its recommendations could be linked to section 3.f. of the draft resolution, which stated that National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC would ensure that best practices were documented and shared.

Resolution 6, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Item 7 Strategy for the Movement

7.1 Implementation of the Strategy for the Movement (*document: CD/07/7.1*)

7.2 Study on operational and commercial and other non-operational issues involving the use of the emblems (Action 10) (*documents: CD/07/7.2.1 and CD/07/7.2.2*)

7.3 Review of National Society statutes (Action 3) (*document: CD/07/7.3*)

Professor Pedersen, Member of the Standing Commission, illustrating his remarks with slides and introducing item 7.1 on Implementation of the Strategy for the Movement, said that the first Strategy for the Movement had been approved by the Council of Delegates in 2001 and updated in 2005. The aims of the Strategy were to improve the relationship and encourage better coordination between the components of the Movement and to ensure better use of knowledge and expertise, increased speed of response, coordinated mobilization and efficient Movement functioning.

The updated Strategy built on the 2001 Strategy, took note of new external developments and trends, and took into account completed actions. The former 17 Actions had been reduced to 10, and the lead role and actions to be taken by National Societies were more

clearly specified. The overall aim of the Strategy, which was to build a dynamic and strategic thinking process within the Movement, remained unchanged, as did the three objectives: to strengthen the components; to improve effectiveness and efficiency and increase cooperation and coherence; and to improve the image and visibility of the Movement's components among governments and other partners.

A full report on implementation since 2005 was included in the report CD/07/7.1, which had been drawn up following a process of consultation with National Societies. On Action 1, "capacity building," there had been a slight improvement in coordination, although one-fifth of all National Societies still had no disaster preparedness plan and it was felt that there was a need for a common Movement-wide concept on capacity building. On Action 2, "leadership training," feedback from National Societies, on the usefulness of leadership courses organized by the International Federation and the ICRC, had been positive. However, it was a continuing trend that, although more than half of all volunteers and staff were women, they were not given sufficient opportunity to participate in governance and management and the situation was similar for the youth and for minorities. On Action 3, "integrity," more than one-third of all National Societies had experienced problems in the field and only 39 National Societies had so far revised their statutes in accordance with the minimum requirements set forth in the document, *Guidance for National Societies Statutes*, although others were in the process of doing so. On Action 6, "improved emergency response," more than two-thirds of all National Societies found it to be the Strategy's most important objective, and coordination had been improved through the use of better tools and external cooperation.

At the 2005 Council of Delegates, the Standing Commission had been asked to review existing fora to reduce unnecessary complexities and improve their effectiveness in line with Action 4. Work had been planned in two phases, the first of which would involve looking at short-term action for bringing about immediate improvements. For the first phase, 18 recommendations had been drawn up grouped under three main headings. These were: to improve the efficiency and continuity of meetings (meetings should have a clear role, purpose and mandate, have defined criteria for success, have a focused agenda, establish which items were for discussion and which for decision, make better use of modern technology, seek consensus as the ideal, and consider voting only in the event of deadlock); improve follow-up (the components responsible should define how

to monitor and report on decisions taken, use a simple format for language and decisions that was not too formalistic, and produce an immediate short summary report for fresh feedback); and better participatory advance planning (the ICRC and the Standing Commission should be visible and participate more in regional conferences and meetings, informal and thematic networks should also be involved, regional conferences should be used to help prepare global meetings and to adapt global decisions to regional contexts, and participatory planning should be anchored in the National Societies of the regions).

The longer-term elements were to be reviewed in time for the 2011 International Conference, and it had been suggested that the incoming Standing Commission should work on defining the issues to be analysed and consult with National Societies on: the content, frequency and mandates of meetings; the outcomes of meetings in terms of strategies, priorities and cost-effectiveness; and the desirability and feasibility of closer articulation of the General Assembly and the Council of Delegates.

In conclusion, work on implementation was well under way and there were programmes on all Actions. However, capacity building required further efforts and a Movement-wide approach. National Societies needed to do more work on the revision of their statutes before the 2010 deadline. National Societies' ownership of the Strategy could be improved, but a lot of progress had been made. The draft resolution urged implementation of the 10 Actions and urged National Societies to examine and update their statutes; it invited all Movement components to take into account the recommendations in Action 4 and requested that the Standing Commission continue to work on it. It also invited components to use the recommendations of the Study prepared by the ICRC on operational and commercial and other non-operational issues involving the use of the emblems (hereafter the Emblem Study) and to provide feedback to the ICRC on their use. Finally, it requested that the ICRC continue work on the Emblem Study with feedback from National Societies and States.

Mr Spoerri (ICRC), starting with a short explanation of the red cross/red crescent/red crystal emblems (hereafter the emblem), said that the emblem was the symbol of independent, neutral and impartial humanitarian action undertaken by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to prevent and alleviate human suffering in times of crisis. The emblem represented the core identity and spirit of the Movement; it signified protection conferred by

international humanitarian law and a link with the Movement. It was crucial to reaffirm the validity of the existing rules governing the use of the emblem and the importance of respect for them. The Emblem Study submitted for information to the Council of Delegates aimed to: assist in the concrete application of rules governing the use of the emblem; guarantee the protective value of the emblem, which was instrumental in gaining access to people in need of assistance; and strengthen the identity of the Movement as an independent humanitarian actor. While Movement components needed to reinforce their visibility in order to obtain support to assist victims, they should not do so in ways that eroded the protective value of the emblem and its symbolic power.

The Emblem Study had been requested of the ICRC in Action 10 of the updated Strategy. The ICRC had identified the most frequently recurring and difficult questions on the use of the emblem and developed recommendations for each of these questions. The Study had been drafted in consultation with National Societies and the International Federation. It addressed 44 issues covering three areas: operational issues on the use of the emblem; commercial and non-operational issues; and the roles and responsibilities of actors in the repression of emblem misuse. The draft resolution on the Strategy for the Movement asked National Societies to use the Emblem Study in their activities, to ensure protection for the emblem and to provide feedback to the ICRC so that further refinements could be made to the Study.

Dr Cárdenas Guerrero (Colombian Red Cross) said that although the text of the draft resolution included all the fundamental aspects related to strategy, it would be more meaningful if it included, at the end, a reference to the vulnerable people whom the Movement sought to care for as well as to the need to improve links with the community.

Ms Krikke (Netherlands Red Cross) said that she was pleased that the current report on implementation of the Strategy for the Movement had observed that work on all 10 Actions was well under way and that positive developments could be seen. However, the report also noted that there was a perception in the Movement that the Strategy was primarily a framework for the ICRC and the International Federation and that National Societies' ownership of the Strategy should therefore be reinforced. She hoped that such measures would be developed swiftly and requested that feedback on progress be given at the next Council of Delegates. The Strategy should be introduced and debated at regional meetings and

other fora in order to ensure that it remained a lively instrument in their collective actions. In respect of Action 4, the recommendations for the short term deserved full support and should be implemented in future meetings. Regarding the long term, much remained to be done; Ms Krikke's National Society urged the incoming Standing Commission to take up the challenge as a matter of urgency and to involve National Societies in that work. The enhanced participation of National Societies would increase their level of ownership of the Strategy.

The Netherlands Red Cross welcomed the work completed on the Emblem Study and urged the ICRC to continue its work in close consultation with National Societies and the International Federation. It would be helpful to receive a more practical tool providing guidance on the outcome of the Study. It was to be hoped that all would embrace a common approach to the protection and use of the emblem in a transparent, user-friendly way.

Mr Sebunnya (Uganda Red Cross) supported most of the recommendations contained in the report on implementation of the Strategy for the Movement. He wished to draw attention, in particular, to the need to build capacity, as some National Societies did not have the capacity to implement the Strategy. His National Society had experienced difficulties in respect of abuse of the emblem, in response to which it had notified the Minister for Justice, and a law had subsequently been passed regulating use of the red cross emblem; he recommended that national governments be apprised when problems occurred.

Mr Westerberg (International Federation) said that the International Federation shared the satisfaction expressed by the Standing Commission that work was under way on all of the 10 Actions in the Strategy for the Movement, and also the wish for even more cooperation across the Movement with regard to capacity building. Addressing the protection of the integrity of National Societies, which was a statutory function of the International Federation, remained a high priority for the organization, and the International Federation had just amended its Constitution in order to strengthen its role in that regard. In its introduction, the report on implementation of the Strategy noted that there seemed to be a perception among National Societies that the Strategy was primarily for the two Geneva-based institutions. It should be noted that the International Federation itself had introduced a comprehensive set of organizational changes. It appreciated the work done in the area of Action 4 and the related recommendations, in particular that on the involvement of National Societies in the

preparation, discussions and follow-up of meetings, which could help to foster greater participation. The idea of fostering National Society networks was good but would require further thinking, given that the ability to participate in them would be a function of size and resources: better use of technology might avoid the risk that only wealthy National Societies, which were the least in need of support, would be able to participate.

Turning specifically to Action 3 and speaking on behalf of both the International Federation and the ICRC on that topic, Mr Westerberg said that a solid legal base, including statutes, laws and decrees, was crucial for National Societies to be able to perform their mandate efficiently and in accordance with the Fundamental Principles. Objective 1 of Action 3 had requested National Societies to examine their statutes and revise them where necessary by 2010 so that they complied with the minimum requirements set out in the document, *Guidance for National Societies Statutes*. Previous resolutions had also required National Societies to submit their legal texts to the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes (hereafter the Joint Statutes Commission) before adoption, and the International Federation's Constitution requested National Societies to submit any amendments to their legal texts to the Secretary-General. There was also an intimate link between the legal base of National Societies and their role as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. A healthy relationship between a National Society and the public authorities was considered a prerequisite for developing a sound legal base and, in turn, a sound legal base was crucial to develop and strengthen such a relationship.

The report of the Joint Statutes Commission contained many positive elements and showed that there had been substantive dialogue with many National Societies. The ICRC and the International Federation congratulated those National Societies with which dialogue had been established and encouraged those who had not already done so to contact the Joint Statutes Commission with their draft legal texts in order to meet the 2010 objective. Some 40 National Societies had fulfilled their obligation to put their statutes in conformity with the *Guidance* document, but more than 100 had yet to do so. The situation was somewhat urgent and it was to be hoped that all National Societies would take action by the time of the next Council of Delegates in 2009; the ICRC, the International Federation and the Joint Statutes Commission remained at the disposal of all National Societies to discuss the issue further.

Ms Cabero (Spanish Red Cross) said that the ICRC's Emblem Study would be useful, practical and of great help in defending the symbols used by National Societies. It dealt with fields in which protection should be extended, such as Internet use. However, the Spanish Red Cross wished to highlight the problem of emblem use in peace-time. There were difficulties that had arisen as a result of supranational jurisdictions in their territory. National Societies in European Union member countries had had their capacity to control the exclusive use of the symbol reduced because it needed to be dealt with on a community basis, which was a lengthy and costly process. That question therefore required further study.

Dame Maeve Fort (British Red Cross) welcomed the report on the Strategy for the Movement. Considerable work had gone into producing the Emblem Study, which should prove helpful in interpreting existing legislation. Her National Society was pleased that the ICRC was inviting feedback on the content and use of the Study both from the Movement's components and from States, and she looked forward to taking part in providing that feedback. Nothing should be done that would compromise the protective emblem or that would tarnish its prestige or reduce respect for it. However, there were changing circumstances and, in particular, the need to raise resources without which the Movement would not be able to undertake much of its humanitarian work. There was a need to actively increase knowledge of the emblem and its protective power and to promote the National Society and its work; the question was how to use the emblem to promote that work while retaining the integrity of the emblem and the Red Cross and Red Crescent name. Finding the answer to that question required dialogue between experts in, among other things, international humanitarian law, operations, marketing and communication. The ICRC might consider the issue further; the British Red Cross wished to hear the views of other National Societies on the matter.

Mr Carr (American Red Cross) welcomed the report on the Strategy for the Movement. The ICRC's Emblem Study would be a useful addition to the Movement's guidance documents. His National Society agreed with the comments of the British Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross on the Emblem Study. The Study was a good starting point for continuing discussions within the Movement on how best to safeguard the integrity of the emblem while promoting the work of National Societies and raising the resources essential to maintaining their humanitarian activities.

Mr Egah (Togolese Red Cross) said that his National Society, with the help of the ICRC, had worked to ensure that the emblem was understood by the public at large, the police and the armed forces and had thereby stemmed misuse of the emblem, which had been widespread in 2003. Further campaigns in 2007, in which volunteers had pinpointed cases of abuse, had been very successful.

Mr Mbako (Cameroon Red Cross), commenting on Action 1 of the Strategy for the Movement, said that capacity building, especially in the area of disaster response, was essential for all African National Societies. A dramatic air crash had occurred in Cameroon some months previously and, although the National Society had been in the front line of the rescue effort, it had not had the necessary equipment to act alone; fortunately, it had received equipment from the ICRC and the International Federation, which were both present in the country. It would be helpful for Mr Mbako's National Society to keep a stock of equipment; its staff and volunteers were already relatively well trained. Regarding Action 2, he believed that leadership training would be useful if it were carried out within each country or region.

The Government of Cameroon had passed a law to protect the emblem in 1997 as, until that time, it had been widely used by medical centres, dispensaries and even traditional healers. As the misuse had been due to ignorance, a campaign of training and information had been launched for the benefit of the public and the authorities. The ICRC had been active in that area and had helped to prepare volunteers to disseminate the information.

Mr Vickery (Australian Red Cross), referring to Action 3, said that the Australian Red Cross would be reviewing its charter and rules in 2008, a task it had planned to complete once the changes had been made to the Constitution of the International Federation. Although his National Society recognized that the proper use of the emblem was paramount, ways should be found to enable it to be used commercially for the benefit of the National Society when cooperating with outside organizations. There was a need for more clarity on the size of the symbol used in various locations. He urged National Societies to provide feedback to the ICRC on use of the emblem, commercially and otherwise, in light of the Study produced.

Mr Couillard (Canadian Red Cross) said that the protective nature and role of the emblem were not to be questioned. However, as pointed out by the British Red Cross and others, the emblem did have

an indicative role in operations, marketing and communication, and in emerging media; further reflection on how to find a balance between them would be helpful. His National Society would welcome tools and practical mechanisms to assist it in pursuing and monitoring blatant misuse of the emblem, and sharing best practices and case studies would be useful for all National Societies.

Ms Paulsen (Norwegian Red Cross) agreed with the British Red Cross and others who had spoken of the need for more work to be done on the communication and fundraising aspects of the Emblem Study. Her National Society supported the suggestion that further dialogue be engaged in by the ICRC, the International Federation and National Societies.

Mr Zettergren (Swedish Red Cross) supported the views expressed by the British Red Cross and others in regard to the use of the emblem, as the Swedish Red Cross used the emblem with accompanying wording to promote its work. There should be further consideration of how to maintain the integrity of the emblem while seeking financial support with not only legal but also marketing and communication experts.

Mr Konoe (Japanese Red Cross) said that the Japanese Red Cross shared the concerns raised by the British Red Cross and others pertaining to the use of the emblem. National Societies were obliged to adhere strictly to the provisions of the Geneva Conventions with regard to the use of the emblem for protective purposes; there was a law in Japan prohibiting abuse of the red cross emblem. However, when considering the use of the emblem for indicative purposes and its practical application, particularly when pursuing closer partnership with the corporate sector, closer consultation with National Societies would be required before finalizing the Emblem Study, which they would all use as guidelines. The red cross and red crescent were the most widely recognized symbols throughout the world and they should be used wisely and in accordance with the Movement's Fundamental Principles, while taking into account changing circumstances and in particular the competition from other bodies that were also appealing for resources and promoting their identities.

Ms Quezon (Philippine National Red Cross) said that the Philippine National Red Cross had dealt with the emblem issue by using the media as a partner, and private corporations had expressed interest in fundraising using the emblem in the proper way. There should be further exploration of how to use the emblem not as a problem but as an opportunity.

Mr Dokianos (Hellenic Red Cross), referring to the emblem issue, said that it was very important for every National Society to strengthen its position in times of peace and war; currently, there were too many cases of violations and misuse of the emblem, both intentional and unintentional. Companies frequently asked to use the emblem for commercial purposes with the excuse that the National Society derived economic benefit from it. A detailed study with guidelines and instructions would therefore be useful in determining the limits to which National Societies could go in balancing the best protection of the emblem with recognition of the National Society.

Dr Garcia de Meerhoff (Uruguayan Red Cross) said that the report on the Strategy for the Movement was thought provoking and useful. The Uruguayan Red Cross had revised its statutes in 2002 and would revise them once more in the period from 2007 to 2010. There was a law in Uruguay to prevent misuse of the emblem and those contravening the law were fined by the Ministry of Defence.

Mr Diarra (Mali Red Cross) welcomed the work completed on the protection of the emblem. In Mali, the Government had recently passed a law to protect the emblem, which had provided an opportunity for widespread dissemination of information on the emblem and on the Movement. The Movement might use sub-regional bodies to promote the adoption of laws to prevent misuse of the emblem.

Professor Pedersen, Member of the Standing Commission, responding to the comments made, thanked delegations for their observations. The purpose of the Strategy for the Movement was to improve cooperation and coordination and to tackle unity and integrity issues in order to work effectively and efficiently to provide better services to people in vulnerable communities. In that regard, he agreed with the proposal of the Colombian Red Cross to change the wording in the draft resolution. Capacity building had surfaced as a major issue since the Strategy had first been drawn up in 2001, and it was important for the issue to be kept on the agenda; consideration should be given to developing a Movement-wide format for capacity building. The International Federation had raised the issue of ensuring equal access to networks for all National Societies and that would be an area to take up in the future. The comments raised on the Emblem Study were useful and provided good support to the ICRC in continuing its work.

Resolution 7, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Item 8 Weapons and international humanitarian law

(documents: CD/07/8.1 and CD/07/8.1/DR-REV1)

Ms Troyon, Deputy Director for International Law and Cooperation within the Movement at the ICRC, presenting the implementation report on Resolution 2 of the 2005 Council of Delegates, said that the resolution had committed the components of the Movement to addressing a range of issues in the period 2005–2007. Weapons also constituted one of the four pillars of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted by the 28th International Conference.

The report on weapons and international humanitarian law (CD/07/8.1) summarized the main developments since 2005, as well as future opportunities and challenges. Progress had continued since 2005 towards reducing the impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war. The year 2007 marked the 10th anniversary of the Ottawa Convention prohibiting anti-personnel mines and, at the 8th meeting of States Parties, which had ended on 23 November 2007, 155 States Parties had taken stock of the treaty's remarkable achievements and the challenges that lay ahead. A key issue on the agenda had been the upcoming 10-year deadlines for completing mine clearance, which for 27 States would occur in 2009 and 2010. Although a significant number of States might seek extensions to complete mine clearance, it was crucial to the success of the Convention that the process was managed in a way that maintained credibility and created maximum pressure for completion before the deadline or within a realistic extension period. Responding to the long-term needs of the growing number of mine victims around the world was another continuing challenge. Among other things, it would necessitate that States Parties with large numbers of mine victims put in place comprehensive national plans for achieving tangible improvements in the services available to mine victims and other persons with disabilities. Increased efforts would be needed in the coming years to ensure that all of the Ottawa Convention's objectives were achieved.

Of equal concern to the Movement were the vast amounts of other explosive munitions that were regularly left behind after hostilities ended; the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons had entered into force in November 2006, establishing the first agreed framework to reduce the post-conflict threat to civilians from all forms of unexploded and abandoned explosive ordnance. So far, 35 States had ratified the treaty. At the first meeting of the

States party to the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War on 5 November 2007, States had adopted several measures to promote the Protocol's practical implementation. Future work of the States Parties would include enhancing assistance to countries already contaminated by explosive remnants of war from past armed conflicts. Promoting adherence to and implementation of the new treaty should be a priority for the Movement in the period ahead.

At the same time, the Movement should continue and, if possible, increase the operational activities it had committed itself to undertake as part of the Movement Strategy on Landmines, which had been adopted in 1999 and extended to explosive remnants of war in 2003. Those activities included support for the care and rehabilitation of victims and efforts to reduce the impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war on the civilian population. Since 2005, the ICRC had developed an innovative framework aimed at expanding the scope and effectiveness of the Movement's activities to reduce the humanitarian consequences of weapon contamination. The ICRC was now able to respond in emergencies by carrying out clearance, emergency awareness and data gathering in conjunction with protection and assistance activities. The capacities of National Societies were also being strengthened with, among other measures, innovative risk-reduction approaches, such as the provision of safe alternative livelihoods through micro-credit schemes. The auxiliary role of National Societies to national mine action authorities was central to ensuring sustainable long-term engagement in that area.

Civilians were still paying a heavy price for the continued lack of adequate controls on the transfer and availability of weapons, a problem that needed to be addressed with greater urgency. The 2006 Review Conference on the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms had not strengthened global efforts to reduce the unregulated availability of small arms. However, implementation of the existing Programme of Action should continue, and ensuring that the agreements on small arms control set up at regional and sub-regional levels were signed and ratified should be a priority.

In 2008, discussions would also start within the United Nations on an international arms trade treaty that would cover all conventional weapons; the ICRC had expressed its support for the new instrument and emphasized that it should include a requirement not to authorize the transfer of arms that were likely to be used to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law. Governments should

be encouraged to support such a treaty. Stricter controls on the availability of arms were essential to reduce their widespread misuse. However, additional efforts were needed to prevent armed violence at community level: National Societies could make an important contribution to violence prevention, including through promoting humanitarian values, respect for diversity, and tolerance.

There was also an urgent need to ensure that the rapid advances in life sciences and biotechnology were not misused for hostile purposes. In 2002, the ICRC's Appeal on Biotechnology, Weapons and Humanity called on governments, the scientific community and industry to take a range of preventive actions. Since then, governments and others had increasingly recognized that the only way to prevent scientific advances from being used for poisoning and the deliberate spread of disease was through a multidisciplinary response involving all relevant actors. At the Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention in 2006, States had reaffirmed their commitment to the objectives of the treaty and had agreed on a series of expert meetings that would focus on developing preventive measures. The Movement could continue to promote a "culture of responsibility" in relation to new developments in life sciences, as well as specific measures such as promoting the adoption of national legislation to implement the Biological Weapons Convention.

The ICRC and National Societies had an important role to play in encouraging all States to establish national procedures to assess the legality of new weapons and means or methods of warfare. Even though it was an obligation for States party to Additional Protocol I, and though all States had an interest in ensuring the legality of new weapons, only a handful of States had established such procedures. Legal reviews of new weapons were especially important in light of the current rapid development of weapons technology, and greater efforts should be made to put them in place.

The promotion of adequate controls on weapons on the basis of international humanitarian law was fundamental to protecting civilians from their indiscriminate use and effects and combatants from unnecessary suffering. The efforts of the Movement to promote new rules in that area, including on anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war, were making a real difference on the ground.

The draft resolution to be considered by the Council of Delegates (CD/07/8.1/DR-REV1) called for action to address the problem of cluster munitions, which

had caused a consistent pattern of civilian deaths and injuries for several decades. The human cost of the weapons continued to grow with every new conflict and could have future humanitarian consequences exceeding those caused by anti-personnel mines. There was an urgent need to negotiate a new international humanitarian law treaty that would prohibit inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions. The ICRC fully supported the draft resolution.

Mr Nordby (Norwegian Red Cross), introducing the draft resolution on international humanitarian law and cluster munitions, said that the ICRC's report had highlighted the growing international momentum to address the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions as one of the most significant developments since the last Council of Delegates in 2005. Cluster munitions, launched by aircraft, artillery or missiles, scattered large numbers of explosive submunitions over very large areas. Some models contained several hundred individual submunitions and they could be released over several thousand square metres. In addition, as they were free-falling, incorrect use, wind and other factors could cause them to strike outside of the target area, and the use of the weapons made it difficult to distinguish between military targets and civilians; thus they posed an immediate danger to civilians during attacks. Furthermore, as cluster munitions were often used in large numbers and many failed to explode, vast areas had been contaminated by tens of thousands, and sometimes by millions, of unexploded cluster munitions. In some countries, millions of such weapons remained unexploded and were a serious danger to anyone coming into contact with them. Unexploded cluster munitions put lives and livelihoods at risk for years, and even decades, after a conflict had ended. The humanitarian impact of cluster munitions had been demonstrated in most of the conflicts in which they had been used, including in Serbia, Kosovo, Iraq, Lebanon and Afghanistan; the National Societies of those countries were all sponsoring the draft resolution. Many National Societies had become active in opposing the use of cluster munitions after the ICRC report on cluster munitions in Kosovo in 2000. In 2005, the Council of Delegates had called on States to eliminate the use of cluster munitions that were inaccurate or had a high failure rate.

The Norwegian Red Cross had campaigned against the use of cluster munitions in 2005 and 2006 and, with others, had convinced the Norwegian Government to introduce a moratorium on their use. Other States had also recognized the urgency of the problem and had adopted moratoria or were reviewing their policies on cluster munitions. In

February 2007, the Norwegian Government had initiated the Oslo Process to prohibit, by 2008, cluster munitions that caused unacceptable harm to civilians. The process was now supported by more than 80 States. In addition, States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons had agreed to start negotiating a proposal in 2008 to address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions. Given the growing number of countries affected by cluster munitions, it was time to act. A workshop on cluster munitions, hosted jointly by the Afghan Red Crescent and the Australian Red Cross, would be held during the International Conference. The draft resolution called on all components of the Movement to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and to encourage governments to take further national measures and to support strict new international humanitarian rules on cluster munitions. Governments were also called upon to prevent the foreseeable suffering caused to civilians by cluster munitions. The draft resolution had been drawn up and was sponsored by the Norwegian Red Cross with the ICRC and the National Societies of Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Netherlands, Serbia, Somalia and Sweden. He urged the Council of Delegates to adopt the resolution.

Mr Walizada (Afghan Red Crescent) said that the devastating consequences of cluster munitions on civilian populations had been demonstrated in most conflicts in which they had been used. Although Afghanistan had never used or possessed cluster munitions, the Afghan people had first-hand experience of their devastating consequences; the Afghan Red Crescent worked in communities affected by cluster munitions and other explosives and witnessed the terrible effects of the weapons every day. Since 1979, approximately 100,000 Afghans had been injured by mines, unexploded cluster bomblets and other explosives. For the past 15 years, cluster munitions had been used in successive armed conflicts in Afghanistan; thousands of cluster bombs, containing many hundreds of thousands of bomblets had been scattered all over the country. At least 10 provinces had been contaminated with unexploded bomblets, which would continue to threaten lives and limbs until they had been cleared. Cluster bomblets also posed a direct threat to civilians during the attacks owing to their inaccuracy and, although they were dropped over areas where fighters had gathered, they were often close to civilian areas, which resulted in civilians being killed or injured during the attacks. Eighty-nine per cent of the victims of cluster munitions in Afghanistan were civilians and 43 per cent were children. The use of cluster

munitions had resulted in high numbers of civilian casualties both because of their inaccuracy at the time of use and because of the high numbers of unexploded bomblets. There was therefore a need for international legal restrictions on inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions and for greater post-conflict assistance for survivors. The principle of humanity underlined the need to prevent and to alleviate human suffering wherever it might be found; the draft resolution sent a strong message to the international community to prevent the foreseeable suffering that cluster munitions caused to civilians. He urged the Council of Delegates to adopt the resolution.

Dr Mikos-Skuza (Polish Red Cross) said that the Polish Red Cross supported the adoption of the draft resolution and was concerned at the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions, particularly for civilian populations during and after armed conflicts. Implementation for the Polish Red Cross would not be easy in its national context, particularly with regard to ending the transfer of inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions and eliminating them from national stockpiles. Nevertheless, the Polish Red Cross had experience in convincing its Government of the importance of international humanitarian law relating to weapons and would continue its efforts in respect of cluster munitions.

Ms Schärfe (Danish Red Cross) welcomed the efforts of the Norwegian Red Cross, the ICRC and others to establish an international treaty that prohibited the use of cluster munitions that caused unacceptable harm to civilians. Cluster munitions had huge humanitarian and socio-economic consequences for the civilian population and did not distinguish between military and civilian targets. Many more civilians than soldiers were maimed and killed by cluster munitions. All cluster munitions had severe and long-term consequences for the civilian population and therefore violated the standards of international humanitarian law; hence, the Danish Red Cross wished to support the resolution.

Ms Mihaylova (Bulgarian Red Cross) supported the draft resolution and endorsed the comments of previous speakers on the severe humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions for the civilian population during and after conflicts. There would be important work to do with governments which, as the Polish Red Cross had pointed out, might not be easy. However, the Bulgarian Red Cross would do its best to convince its Government to end the transfer of munitions and to promote adherence to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

Ms Krikke (Netherlands Red Cross) said that her National Society had conducted a large fundraising and awareness-raising campaign on landmines in cooperation with the Belgian Red Cross in December 2006, through which more than five million euros had been raised for the ICRC's 2007 appeals. Although it was up to States to conclude a credible, international instrument on cluster munitions, the Movement had an important role to play at both national and international levels. In the Netherlands, the issue of cluster munitions had been suspended due to domestic and international pressure; that important first step had proved that the Movement could have a combined impact. The Netherlands Red Cross encouraged the Council to adopt the draft resolution.

Sheikh Al Dahdah (Lebanese Red Cross) recalled that his National Society and the Norwegian Red Cross had co-hosted a meeting in Tyre, southern Lebanon, an area severely affected by cluster munitions, which had been attended by 15 National Societies. The purposes of the meeting were: to discuss the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions on the civilian population; to inform participants of ongoing efforts to solve the problem; and to examine how National Societies might contribute to those efforts. Cluster munitions had had a devastating effect on the civilian population in Lebanon and in other parts of the world. The National Societies present at the meeting had agreed on several concrete initiatives, including seeking to prohibit cluster munitions causing unacceptable harm to civilians.

The use of cluster munitions in southern Lebanon in July and August 2006 had left populated areas severely contaminated with unexploded submunitions that continued to kill and injure civilians and impeded efforts to rebuild lives and livelihoods in the wake of the conflict. Since the ceasefire in August 2006, 191 people had been injured and 30 had been killed by submunitions; many of these were children. It had been estimated that as many as one million unexploded submunitions might still be present in Lebanon. In many affected areas, farmers had not been able to harvest their crops. Therefore, his National Society supported the draft resolution.

Mr Osman (International Federation) recalled that the Ottawa Convention had been concluded 10 years previously and said that the victim assistance provisions in the treaty were of particular relevance to National Societies. There had been an increase in the number of National Societies able to provide national services and to participate in victim assistance programmes. The International

Federation hoped that assistance would continue to be provided generously and in ways that helped to build the relevant capacities of National Societies of mine-affected countries. The United Nations had adopted a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities which, when it entered into force, might affect the treatment of people with disabilities in mine-affected countries. It would be advisable for National Societies in mine-affected countries to make use of their auxiliary role to see that due attention was paid to the needs of mine victims.

The International Federation would continue to bring the concerns of National Societies to the relevant international fora, in consultation with the ICRC, as the views of National Societies could have a special impact on governments in the decision-making process. The International Federation supported the adoption of the draft resolution.

Dr Makhtoum (Sudanese Red Crescent) said that civilians had suffered for 21 years as a result of the war being waged in Sudan. Despite the peace agreement signed in 2005, many unexploded ordnance and small arms remained, hindering the efforts of civilians to lead peaceful lives. The Sudanese Red Crescent was grateful for the help Sudan had received to remove unexploded ordnance. He requested the Council of Delegates to adopt the draft resolution.

Mr Balea (Spanish Red Cross) congratulated the National Societies and the ICRC for the excellent work done. While endorsing the draft resolution, the Spanish Red Cross wished to remove the reference to "inaccurate and unreliable" cluster munitions.

Mr Diarra (Mali Red Cross Society) supported the draft resolution; the Economic Community of West African States had recently adopted a convention on the subject, which Mali had ratified. Mali was part of a group of civil society organizations which would promote awareness of the convention, and the draft resolution would serve to strengthen its position.

Mr Monterrosa (Salvadorean Red Cross) supported the views of those National Societies that had drawn attention to the difficulties inherent in encouraging their governments to subscribe to the terms of the draft resolution. A good number of governments had yet to sign the Ottawa Convention. The resolution should be presented at the International Conference in order to encourage governments to accept it.

Mr Carlton (Australian Red Cross) said that the Australian Red Cross supported adoption of the draft resolution in its present form as the use of the

phrase “inaccurate and unreliable” cluster munitions provided a touchstone of international humanitarian law principles to guide States in their negotiations. The resolution sent a strong message to the Movement in its current form.

Mr Al-Hazza (Secretariat of the Arab Organization of Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, welcomed the draft resolution, which concentrated on the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions. However, given their harmful effects, it would be preferable to call upon the international community to prohibit all cluster munitions.

Mr Nordby (Norwegian Red Cross), referring to the Spanish proposal to amend the draft resolution, recommended caution in altering the wording. The draft resolution was already strong and it would be preferable to retain the wording proposed.

Resolution 8 was adopted by acclamation.

Item 9 Report on the Empress Shôken Fund (document: CD/07/9.1)

The Chairman drew attention to the activity report of the Joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund for 2006 and the first half of 2007; the Council of Delegates was requested to review the report and to submit it to the Japanese imperial family through the Japanese Red Cross. As noted in the report, an appropriate regional distribution of funds and activities had been maintained.

Item 10 Statutory tasks related to the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

10.1 Adoption of the provisional agenda of the Conference (document: CD/07/10.1-REV1)

Resolution 9 was adopted by acclamation

10.2 Proposed officers for the Conference: Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries-General and other officers (document: CD/07/10.2-DR)

Resolution 10 was adopted by acclamation.

Date and venue of the next Council of Delegates

The Chairman invited delegates to note that the International Federation had decided to hold its next General Assembly in Kenya in 2009; he asked whether the Council of Delegates should also be held in Kenya immediately after the General Assembly.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

3.5

LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Item 1 Elections, agenda and procedural matters

- Provisional agenda of the 2007 Council of Delegates (CD/07/1.3)

- The Restoring Family Links Strategy (and implementation plan) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008-2018) *Strategy prepared by the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC in consultation with National Societies and the International Federation*

Item 2 Work of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

- Report of the Standing Commission to the 2007 Council of Delegates (CD/07/2.1) *Document prepared by the Standing Commission*

Item 5 Migration

- Background report on international migration (CD/07/5.1) *Document prepared by the International Federation in consultation with the ICRC*

Item 3 Specific nature of the Red Cross and Red Crescent – a way to a privileged/unique relationship and effective partnerships between States and the components of the Movement

- Background report on the specific nature of the 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 (CD/07/3.1) *Document prepared by the International Federation in consultation with the ICRC and National Societies*

Item 6 Supplementary measures of the Seville Agreement

- Report on the implementation of the Seville Agreement (CD/07/6.1) *Document prepared by the Council of Delegates Resolution 8 Group on Implementation of the Seville Agreement*

Item 4 Restoring family links

- Report on The Restoring Family Links Strategy (and implementation plan) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008-2018) (CD/07/4.1) *Document prepared by the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC.*

Item 7 Strategy for the Movement

- Report on the Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (CD/07/7.1) *Document prepared by the Standing Commission in consultation with the ICRC and the International Federation*
- Study on operational and commercial and other non-operational issues involving the use of the emblems
 - Short version (CD/07/7.2.1)
 - Full text (CD/07/7.2.2)*Documents prepared by the ICRC in consultation with the International Federation and National Societies*

- Report of the joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes (CD/07/7.3)

Document prepared by the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes

Item 8 Weapons and international humanitarian law

- Report on weapons and international humanitarian law - implementation of Resolution 2 of the 2005 Council of Delegates (CD/07/8.1)

Report prepared by the ICRC and draft resolution sponsored by the Norwegian Red Cross, the Australian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross Society, the Danish Red Cross, the Lebanese Red Cross Society, the Netherlands Red Cross, the Red Cross of Serbia, the Swedish Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross

Item 9 Report on the Empress Shôken Fund

- Report on the joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund (CD/07/9.1),

Document prepared by the Joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund

Item 10 Statutory tasks related to the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

- Provisional agenda and programme of the 30th International Conference (CD/07/10.1)

- Proposal of persons to fill posts at the 30th International Conference (CD/07/10.2)



30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

4.1 CONVOCATION

of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
Geneva, Switzerland, 26-30 November 2007

Geneva, 21 May 2007

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has determined the place and date of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. It will be held in Geneva from 26 to 30 November 2007. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as co-hosts of this International Conference look forward to welcoming you

in Geneva
on Monday 26 November 2007
at 3 p.m.
at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG)
Rue de Varembe, 15
1211 Geneva 20

The draft provisional agenda, prepared by the Standing Commission, is enclosed. **“Together for humanity”** is the slogan of this Conference, highlighting the need for collaborative action and partnerships between the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, States and other stakeholders in addressing humanitarian challenges and the needs of the most vulnerable people. In addition, please find also enclosed the following documents:

- a **discussion paper** with background information on the draft provisional agenda, theme, objectives, structure and expected results of the Conference;
- a preliminary **list of workshops** to supplement the official proceedings of the Conference by providing informal opportunities for discussions on humanitarian issues related to the Conference theme and objectives. The list will be finalized in September 2007 after possible feedback and observations from the members of the Conference;

- the **guidelines for pledging** inviting participants to undertake voluntary specific humanitarian commitments for the period 2008-2011 in the form of pledges made either independently or jointly with other members and/or observers;
- the **guiding principles** applicable to the **election of the Standing Commission**;
- the **Statutes and Rules of Procedure** of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (new edition);
- an information note on the **registration of participants** in the Conference.

This convocation is addressed to all the members of the International Conference, who, pursuant to Article 9 of the Statutes of the 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 party to the Geneva Conventions.

In accordance with Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement, this convocation is also addressed to the observers invited to attend the Conference.

Rule 6.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement requires that the Standing Commission receive observations, amendments or additions to the provisional agenda no later than 60 days before the opening of the Conference i.e. at the latest by 25 September 2007. To facilitate the process of finalizing the working documents of the Conference, you are requested to kindly send any comments you may have **by 1 September 2007** to the

Secretariat of the Standing Commission
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
17, chemin des Crêts
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland

The Standing Commission welcomes Ambassador Stephan Husy as Commissioner of the Conference. The Government of Switzerland has offered his services to the Standing Commission and the co-hosts to assist in the preparations for the Conference.

Please accept, Sir or Madam, the assurance of our highest consideration.

Juan M. Suárez del Toro R.
President
International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Jakob Kellenberger
President
International Committee of the Red Cross

4.2 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

Monday 26 November 2007

3 p.m. – 6.50 p.m.

OPENING CEREMONY

Welcoming addresses

- Chairman of the Standing Commission
- President of the Swiss Confederation

Reading of the Fundamental Principles

1. Opening of the Conference

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, Secretary-General, two Assistant Secretaries-General and other officers of the Conference and establishment of the Conference's subsidiary bodies (Commissions, Drafting Committee)

3. Conference agenda and programme

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. Collaborative action and partnerships to address humanitarian challenges Panel discussion (not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

- *Environmental degradation, including climate change*
Panelist 1: **Dr Han Seung-Soo**, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Climate Change
- *International migration*
Panelist 2: **Ms Ndioro Ndiaye**, Deputy Director-General of the International Organization for Migration
- *Violence in urban settings*
Panelist 3: **Dr Sima Samar**, Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)
- *Emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges*
Panelist 4: **Dr David Heymann**, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization
- *Voice of the Red Cross and Red Crescent youth on partnerships and humanitarian challenges*
Panelist 5: **Mr Shaban Mawanda**, Member of the Youth Commission, Uganda Red Cross Society
Panel discussion facilitated by **Ms Lyse Doucet**, presenter and special correspondent, BBC World

6.50 p.m. – 9 p.m.

RECEPTION

(not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

- Welcoming address by the authorities of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and of the City of Geneva
Reception hosted by the Swiss Federal Council and the authorities of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and of the City of Geneva

Tuesday 27 November 2007

9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

2.30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

(6 p.m. – 9 p.m.)

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

3. Conference programme (continued)

- Workshops, side events, pledges
- Procedure for electing the members of the Standing Commission

5. Collaborative action and partnerships to address humanitarian challenges (continued)

- Summary of the panel's presentations
- General debate on partnerships to address the humanitarian consequences of:
 - environmental degradation, including climate change
 - international migration
 - violence in urban settings
 - emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges

6 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Meet the candidates for election to the Standing Commission

(not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

2.30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Wednesday 28 November 2007

9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

COMMISSIONS (debate in parallel: Commissions A and B)

Commission A: **The specific nature of the 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**

- introduction
- discussion

Commission B: **Reaffirmation and implementation of international humanitarian law: Preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict**

- introduction
- discussion

2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

COMMISSIONS (debate in parallel: Commissions A and C)

Commission A: **The specific nature of the 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 (continued)**

- introduction
- discussion

Commission C: **Strengthening the legal framework for international response to disasters**

- introduction
- discussion

6.15 p.m. – 8 p.m.

WORKSHOPS *(please refer to the separate programme of workshops)*
(not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
and
2.30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Thursday 29 November 2007

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

WORKSHOPS (please refer to the separate programme of workshops)
(not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

- 6. Election of the members of the Standing Commission**
 - roll call
 - launch of the election
- 5. Collaborative action and partnerships to address humanitarian challenges (continued)**
 - Report on the general debate
- 7. The specific nature of the 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**
 - Report on the work of Commission A
- 8. Reaffirmation and implementation of international humanitarian law: Preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict**
 - Report on the work of Commission B
- 9. Strengthening the legal framework for international response to disasters**
 - Report on the work of Commission C
- 10. Follow-up to previous conferences**
 - 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: Implementation of the Declaration and Agenda for Humanitarian Action and of the pledges
 - 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: Follow-up to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding of 28 November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel
- 6. Standing Commission election (continued): Proclamation of results or continuation of election in the evening on Thursday 29 November or in the morning on Friday 30 November (9 a.m.)**

9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

and

2.30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Friday 30 November 2007

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

FOURTH AND FINAL PLENARY MEETING

- 11. Overview of workshops**
- 12. Overview of the pledges made at the 30th International Conference**
- 13. Report of the Drafting Committee**
- 14. Adoption of the resolutions of the Conference**
- 15. Closing ceremony**

PROGRAMME OF WORKSHOPS AND SIDE EVENTS

Monday 26 November 2007 (10 a.m. – 12 p.m.)

- Side event: “IHL and War Reporting / Safety of Media Staff” (*round-table*)
Organizers: International Committee of the Red Cross

Tuesday 27 November 2007 (1 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.)

- Side event: “Protecting civilians in air warfare: Development of a manual on IHL applicable to air and missile warfare”
Organizers: Government of Switzerland and Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research, Harvard University
- Side event: “Presentation of the Rule of Law in Armed Conflicts and the new Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights” (*information meeting*)
Organizers: The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights
- Side event: “International humanitarian law and gender”
Organizers: Government of Sweden
- Side event: Launching of a book: *Killing Civilians: Method, Madness and Morality in War*
Organizers: Government of Canada and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- Side event: “Enhancing respect for international humanitarian law: Exploring sanctions and the work of national IHL committees”
Organizers: International Committee of the Red Cross

Tuesday 27 November 2007 (1.15 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.)

- Side event: “Human development and climate change”
Organizers: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Wednesday 28 November 2007 (1 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.)

- Side event: “Engaging armed non-State actors to respect international humanitarian law”
Organizers: Geneva Call
- Side event: “Assisting survivors of explosive remnants of war”
Organizers: Permanent Missions to the United Nations at Geneva of Austria and New Zealand
- Side event: “Fact-finding as a means to better implement international humanitarian law: Current issues”
Organizers: International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission
- Side event: “Red Cross/Red Crescent and civil society: Together for peace building”
Organizers: Jordan National Red Crescent and McGill University

Wednesday 28 November 2007 (6.15 p.m. – 8 p.m.)

- **Workshop:** “Benefits of government and National Society collaboration”
Organizers: Canadian Red Cross and Government of Canada
- **Workshop:** “10 years after the anti-personnel mine ban: Addressing the human cost of landmines, explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions”
Organizers: Norwegian Red Cross, Afghan Red Crescent and Australian Red Cross
- **Side event:** “Partnership for health: The role of civil society”
Organizers: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Thursday 29 November (9 a.m. – 10.45 a.m.)

- **Workshop:** “Restoring Family Links – a partnership between States and National Societies”
Organizers: Australian Red Cross
Co-organizers: German Red Cross, British Red Cross, American Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross
- **Workshop:** “Addressing armed violence reduction as a humanitarian and development issue”
Organizers: Governments of Switzerland, Canada and Brazil on behalf of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development
- **Workshop:** “The notion of ‘Direct participation in hostilities’ under IHL”
Organizers: International Committee of the Red Cross
- **Workshop:** “Neutral independent humanitarian action: Contemporary challenges and thoughts on efficient humanitarian action in the context of modern armed conflicts”
Organizers: Finnish Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross and Danish Red Cross, in cooperation with the Afghan Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross
Co-organizers : Swedish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross

Thursday 29 November (11.15 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

- **Workshop:** “Promoting respect for IHL among private military and security companies in conflict situations: Challenges and prospects”
Organizers: Government of Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross
- **Workshop:** “Humanitarian and public health consequences of substance abuse”
Organizers: Italian Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- **Workshop:** “Promoting respect for diversity and non-discrimination”
Organizers: Netherlands Red Cross
Co-organizers: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Red Cross European Union Office
- **Workshop:** “Addressing the humanitarian consequences of climate change”
Organizers : Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

4.3 CONFERENCE OFFICIALS

4.3.1 CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CONFERENCE

Chairwoman of the Conference

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams (Red Cross – South Africa)

Vice-Chairmen of the Conference

Ambassador Boudewijn J. Van Eenennaam (Netherlands)

Ambassador Juan Martabit (Chile)

Mr Abdul Rahman Attar (Red Crescent – Syrian Arab Republic)

Ms Anne-Marie Huber-Hotz (Red Cross – Switzerland)

Rapporteur of the Conference

Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki (Japan)

Secretary-General of the Conference

Ambassador Stephan Husy (Switzerland)

Assistant Secretaries-General

Mr Frank Mohrhauer (International Federation)

Mr Bruce Biber (ICRC)

Vice-Chairwoman

Ambassador Mabel Gómez Oliver (Mexico)

Rapporteur

Mr Jeffrey Chan Wah Teck (Red Cross – Singapore)

Commission C

Chairman

Dr Raymond Forde (Red Cross – Barbados)

Rapporteur

Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü (Turkey)

Drafting Committee

Chairman

Ambassador Masood Khan (Pakistan)

Vice-Chairmen of the Drafting Committee

Mr Ian Courtenay (Red Cross – Belize)

Mr Abbas Gullet (Red Cross – Kenya)

Ambassador Valery Loshchinin (Russian Federation)

4.3.2 CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CONFERENCE'S SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Commission A

Chairwoman

Ms Jane McGowan (Red Cross – Canada)

Vice-Chairman

Ambassador Makarim Wibisono (Indonesia)

Rapporteur

Dr Muctarr A.S Jalloh (Red Cross – Sierra Leone)

Commission B

Chairman

Ambassador Nicholas Thorne (United Kingdom)

4.3.3 BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Chairwoman of the Conference

Mr Mohammed Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission

Mr Juan Manuel Suárez del Toro, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Mr Jakob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

Ms Jane McGowan, Chairwoman of Commission A

Ambassador Nicholas Thorne, Chairman of Commission B

Dr Raymond Forde, Chairman of Commission C

Ambassador Masood Khan, Chairman of the Drafting Committee

Ambassador Stephan Husy, Secretary-General of the 30th International Conference

4.4 OPENING CEREMONY

Monday 26 November 2007
(3 p.m.)

4.4.2 WELCOMING ADDRESS BY MR MOHAMMED AL-HADID, CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

4.4.1 OPENING SHOW

**Mr Guy Mettan, President of the Geneva branch
of the Swiss Red Cross**

(Original English)

I would like to wish you all a warm welcome to Geneva for this opening ceremony of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. It is indeed a great pleasure and honour for me to be here with you today. As the President of the local Red Cross, this is quite an impressive sight for me: my colleagues from 186 National Societies joining their governments to participate in the important discussions planned for this week. I am also pleased to see volunteers from the Geneva Red Cross everywhere in the conference centre assisting you all in your daily work. Without any further delay I would now like to introduce the opening show. You will see for the next twelve minutes a very impressive and very innovative performance by a local artistic company called Exos. This creation is meant to represent what we are able to do both individually and collectively. Please enjoy the performance.

Exos show

Thank you to Exos. I think this show was a perfect symbol of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement because it showed how we, as human beings and as a movement, can address and face all the challenges we may come across in our lives. Coming together, working together, that is what this Conference is all about. I would now invite His Excellency Dr Mohammed Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission, to take the floor.

(Original English)

Good evening, everybody. Madam President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr President of the ICRC, Mr President of the International Federation, leaders of National Societies, your Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, guests and observers, colleagues and friends, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Standing Commission to this 30th International Conference. I am delighted to see so many of you here. This Conference is of particular value and importance at this time when we see so much suffering in a polarized, troubled world. Our challenge, in line with the theme of “Together for humanity,” will be to enhance our cooperation and partnerships so as to reinforce the high humanitarian ideals of Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement.

With my experience in this great movement, I am convinced that we are – let us say it – we are the largest humanitarian organization in the world. We are best positioned, with the best potential to offer real expertise to partners and collaborators. Billions of members and volunteers in our 186 National Societies ensure that we have timely and accurate information that reflects the realities on the ground in local communities. This is the best possible starting point for effective preparedness, which must be based on sound knowledge of the facts and the reality on the ground. To be fully effective and to continue to be our governments’ preferred partner, we must ensure that our local capacities are relevant and that we are able to respond to needs. We must reliably assess the vulnerabilities and anticipate the risks – economic, social or environmental – that arise from changes in climate. In comparison to the attention that scientific analysis gives the environmental and economic implications of global warming, human vulnerability is still largely neglected. As we consider forming new partnerships to address the potential humanitarian consequences of climate change, this Conference offers a golden opportunity to highlight

this crucial issue. “Together for humanity” is not just a slogan; it is a serious challenge for all of us.

To be able to deal with what lies ahead, we need to be prepared to fulfil our mission in a changing world. Nothing makes better sense than increased preparedness, which allows us to act effectively without wasting scarce resources. Closely linked to preparedness is disaster risk reduction. The International Federation’s experiences at the local community level show that a variety of best practice initiatives are already being implemented with positive results.

Experienced sailors know that in dangerous shallow waters, someone must be up on the main mast to keep a look out ahead. That simple watchman’s role has, time and again, proven to be vitally important. As the global lookout for humanity forewarned, as we already are by the predictions of trends ahead, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent wishes to sound a global warning. We are sailing head on towards hazards that disproportionately threaten, as is so often the case, the most vulnerable, the poorest of the poor.

Of the risks we see from our lookout position, the largest by far is that caused by climate change. We must not argue about the relative merits of this or that scientific prediction. We will not gain anything from participating in the blame game. We must focus on the simple truth that change is happening and it will inevitably carry humanitarian consequences.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement focuses solely on human vulnerability as the outcome of climate change and global warming. This is our sphere of excellence, the area where we can do most. We must ensure that human vulnerability is considered with the same urgency and importance as other consequences in this debate.

We can draw on hard facts: increases in the number of natural disasters, increases in the magnitude of disasters, in new geographical areas being hit by serious catastrophes and new recurring patterns of disaster. These facts are interlinked and related directly to climate change.

Water plays a central role in these disasters and even as parts of the world brace themselves for too much rain, other parts experience extreme drought. During 2007, we have witnessed the power of extreme weather. The Asian monsoon rains appeared as a destructive force, washing away crops and top soil, causing landslides, inundating villages and cities, destroying infrastructure and leaving behind contaminated

water sources and scenes of utter devastation. At one point, half of Bangladesh was under water. There, again, we witnessed the devastating force of nature.

The Chinese Academy of Sciences has warned of signs that the sources of the Yangtze and Yellow rivers may be drying up. Glaciers are disappearing in the Himalayas. Waterways originating in that mountain range are currently feeding more than one-third of the human race.

We know that rising temperatures increase evaporation from oceans, lakes, rivers and also directly from the soil. All this evaporation will result in increased rainfall in large parts of the globe while drought will be the predominant feature in other parts. Rainfall patterns will change. For example, Africa, north of the Equator, will become drier, all the way up to the southern part of Europe. Northern Europe will see more rain. Detailed and reliable predictions of changes in various parts of the world have been made. They are known, largely undisputed, and we should take them into account in our planning.

Changes in evaporation and rainfall will not be a blessing. We have already seen an increase in floods, landslides and storms. We will see worsening droughts in large areas with increased risks of wild fires and heat waves. Inevitably, we will see more disasters caused by changing weather patterns and many of them will hit countries that have previously only played a role in helping the less fortunate to deal with such disasters elsewhere. The increasing occurrence of disasters in new areas on our traditional disaster maps will underline the need for better preparedness and increased local capacities to respond.

Dealing with slow onset disasters is very much Red Cross and Red Crescent territory. Some of the lands carrying the largest concentrations of human beings will be rendered unable to provide sustenance for their people. A decrease in the agricultural capacity of Mother Earth and an increase in the global population paint a grim picture of global inequality, imbalance, hunger and conflict. People will be forced to leave areas that can no longer support them. They will, like so many before them, head for cities where they will often end up in the slums. The poorest will pay the heaviest price in terms of human suffering.

Urban slums have, traditionally, not been high on the Red Cross and Red Crescent agenda. This needs to change because urban slums are growing faster than any other form of human habitation. Increasingly, the global poor are exchanging the misery of rural unhappiness for the hopelessness of urban slums,

which are often the first to be affected by epidemics, floods, landslides, violence, drugs, or simply a total lack of public services.

Why are the poor the first to die? Because they often have no choice but to live in the wrong places, without protection from harsh environmental conditions and at the mercy of overcrowding and poverty. These voiceless poor are not a priority on the agendas of politicians and planners. So, their plight too often goes unnoticed.

Such circumstances lead to humanitarian problems, which the Red Cross and Red Crescent deal with.

Population movements are a major issue on today's global agenda. People move for the very same reasons they have moved throughout history: to flee conflicts, persecution or unemployment, to seek a better future for themselves and their children. Migration does not always imply gloomy or sad stories. In most cases it has a positive impact on the host communities. It is beneficial to the migrants themselves and to their families back home. However, there are also negative experiences, which concern us as a movement. For instance, when children become victims of greed and exploitation. We deeply deplore this phenomenon, where children are treated as merchandise and are, sometimes, traded for spare parts and even sent into prostitution.

Migration is influenced by both push and pull effects. The inequality of the world has created pull effects, leading to an exodus of people from developing countries who are seeking employment in the wealthy post-industrial service economies of the northern hemisphere. The consequences of climate change create an irrevocable push effect, forcing people to migrate because they simply cannot sustain life where they are. Again, the humanitarian consequences of migration involve problems that the Red Cross and Red Crescent deal with, without judgment or discrimination.

Another dimension of this phenomenon is the difficulties that even the largest economies of the world face in rebuilding after major disasters. It took less than a day for Hurricane Katrina to wreak havoc on people, property and on the landscape, but it will take years to rebuild. Two years after Katrina, only half of the pre-disaster population of New Orleans has been able to return. If a country with such abundant resources has difficulty in coping, what can we expect from nations with fewer resources?

It will take years to rebuild in the wake of the recent wild fires in Greece or those in southern California.

One single large-scale disaster can set back a whole nation's development for years. Buildings can be built quickly, but restoring the livelihoods or the psyche of people, devastated by Nature's wrath, takes much longer. We must redirect our thinking from compensating for damage to a mindset where we first strive to alleviate the worst effects of disasters and prevent damage.

This is what the Red Cross and the Red Crescent are advocating.

The global geography of illness and health is being affected too. Soaring temperatures allow certain types of bacteria and viruses to gain additional ground. Mosquitoes spreading malaria and dengue fever are finding new places to flourish as median temperatures increase.

Red Cross and Red Crescent experience in preventing and fighting disease is invaluable.

In parallel with such extreme developments, national and local needs for Red Cross and Red Crescent involvement are growing. In many countries, the future brings calls for greater contributions in terms of time, money and volunteers from our National Societies. This, in turn, may affect the international work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in at least two ways:

First, a requirement for additional Red Cross and Red Crescent resources to meet growing national needs may restrict the capacities of some traditional donor National Societies to fund bilateral or multilateral programmes with their partner National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC.

Second, we are still experiencing an era of benevolence with relatively easy access to resources for the support of worthy causes. Given the prospect of future potential worst-case scenarios, we must prepare ourselves for the possibility of a depression hitting humanitarian funding. This further underlines the need to invest in better local capacity on both sides of the North/South divide.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent offer a ready framework to deal with this issue.

Last but not least, we face rising concerns that our youth are growing up in a generation of conflict. At the very core of many conflicts today we find intolerance or xenophobia, or both. People who wish to further extreme agendas plant fear and hatred in young minds, with fearful results.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is the neutral global actor that has tolerance and respect for others permanently embedded in its DNA. We have, time and again, proven through the actions of our people that we respect, and we live by, our principles. It is time for us to think how we can take this characteristic of who we are and turn it into even more effective programmes and activities that could be the first steps towards healing those who have lost their way and turned to hatred as a way of life.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, friends, anything worth doing is worth doing well; and I believe the strong value base and the proven track record of our movement will continue to be of the utmost importance when we, as partners, move “Together for humanity.”

It will require time, and conscious and coordinated efforts, but it will bring results. As an African proverb says, “If you want to go quickly, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.” We want to go far and we want to go together to help the most vulnerable people in this world. I thank you very much.

4.4.3 ADDRESS BY MS MICHELINE CALMY-REY, PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION

(Original French)

Your Highnesses, Ministers, Madam Chancellor of the Swiss Confederation, Mr President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, distinguished representatives of the National Societies, ladies and gentlemen, allow me first of all to tell you how pleased I am to be present among you at the opening ceremony of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and what a great honour it is for me to address you on this occasion.

Ladies and gentlemen, only 16 National Societies and nine governments attended the first Conference of the Red Cross in 1867. Today, 140 years later, the representatives of no fewer than 186 National Societies and 194 governments are assembled in this hall. No further proof is needed of the fact that the humanitarian principles initially championed by only a handful of visionaries are now universally espoused.

It is up to all of us gathered here today to ensure that this translates into continued and redoubled efforts to come to the aid of the most vulnerable members of society. Indeed, such efforts constitute the very backbone of the Movement's action.

This is the 10th Conference of the Movement to take place in Geneva, the birthplace of the Conventions by that name and of the Movement itself. Geneva hosts the headquarters of the ICRC and of the International Federation and is a renowned centre for humanitarian dialogue. The spirit of Geneva – the humanist and progressive spirit characteristic of this city – will, I am confident, inspire us throughout this week's meetings. Switzerland's humanitarian commitment owes much of its strength and influence to the country's close ties with the Movement. These ties are as strong today as they ever were. In its capacity as High Contracting Party and Depositary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, Switzerland is committed to steadfastly promoting international humanitarian law and its concrete implementation and to supporting all of the Movement's components.

In today's world, characterized in particular by the proliferation of armed groups and by growing humanitarian challenges, the Movement has a crucial, unique and complementary role to play. With a view to safeguarding human dignity, it works on all continents in accordance with universal principles that transcend particular interests. Each of its components has a clear identity and mandate. The relevance of its action derives from, among other things, its ability to implement programmes that respond first and foremost to the beneficiaries' needs in the areas of protection and assistance. Its closeness to vulnerable people is an asset for the present and future positioning of the Movement in these times of uncertainty.

Given today's unpredictable and unstable environment, it is essential for States to take an integrated approach to security. Only through concerted action in the areas of emergency preparedness, sustainable development, public international law – and international humanitarian law in particular – peace-building and conflict-prevention will it be possible to avert, or at the very least to limit, the suffering that war and disasters visit on civilian populations. The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development of June 2006, adopted so far by 69 States, provides an excellent illustration of this approach. Recognizing the fact that armed violence dims our prospects for sustainable development, the signatories have agreed to step up their efforts to include violence-reduction and conflict-prevention in their development and crisis-management strategies.

Ladies and gentlemen, whether in armed conflicts or in disasters, National Society volunteers are often the first to arrive on the scene and the last to leave. I would like to take this opportunity to thank and to express my profound respect for all the National Society staff who support these volunteers and mobilize their energy. My thanks also go out to the staff of the International Federation and the ICRC for the unflagging efforts they deploy in the field. I wish moreover to pay a special tribute here to the men and women who have lost their lives while striving to help those more vulnerable than themselves. The best way to honour their memory is to carry on their work without fail. Such sacrifice makes us all the more aware of the increasing dangers that humanitarian organizations face in times of war and crisis. In these circumstances, it is indispensable to strengthen our capacity for managing the risks to which aid workers are exposed and enhancing their security. Switzerland has been working to that end for several years now.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am firmly convinced of the importance and relevance of the seven Fundamental Principles that underpin your action. Four years ago, at the 28th International Conference, I stressed Switzerland's determination to strengthen the principle of universality by bringing to a successful conclusion the process leading to the adoption of Protocol III additional to the Geneva Conventions. Thanks to our joint efforts during the Diplomatic Conference in December 2005 and the 29th International Conference in June 2006, which resulted in the adoption of Additional Protocol III and the amendment of the Movement's Statutes, we reached a global and lasting solution to the question of the emblems. This step forward boosted my country's resolve to pursue a constructive humanitarian policy based on the letter and spirit of the Geneva Conventions. I consequently call on all States that have not yet done so to ratify or adhere to Additional Protocol III without delay and to comply with all of its provisions in good faith and in accordance with its object and purpose.

Switzerland has, from the very beginning, supported the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements signed by the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent in 2005. I have taken note of the report presented by the monitor, Mr Pär Stenback. Some progress has been made and I welcome the excellent cooperation between the two Societies and the outstanding efforts undertaken by the Magen David Adom. Much nevertheless remains to be done and I call on the Israeli Government to

take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that further headway is made.

Ladies and gentlemen, this week we must avoid falling into the trap of defending vested interests. I am convinced that we shall do constructive work and in so doing live up to the slogan of this Conference: "Together for humanity."

"Together for humanity" – the slogan of the 30th Conference urges us to strengthen and develop partnerships and working relationships among the many organizations involved in humanitarian endeavour: governments, the components of the Movement, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations. Each has its role to play and we should seek to complement one another's skills.

Indeed, without the will to seek out appropriate partnerships, we shall not be in a position to respond effectively to the challenges that demand humanitarian action, and particularly the consequences of climate change, international migration, violence and emerging and recurrent diseases. We welcome the fact that these issues are being addressed in the present forum, as the members of this Conference are all concerned – individually and collectively – by their consequences. Nevertheless, we must satisfy ourselves that the partnerships we enter into will really allow us to achieve sustainable and high-quality results.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the valuable contributions made by National Societies in their role as auxiliaries to the public authorities. It is now up to us to clarify this role and to come to an agreement on an indicative definition.

Ladies and gentlemen, our shared approach must be based on international humanitarian law. The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is the ideal forum for reaffirming the applicability and continuing relevance of this body of law and discussing the challenges inherent in today's armed conflicts. These challenges are legion and I shall not attempt to list them exhaustively, but allow me nevertheless to mention some of those that the humanitarian policy of the Swiss Confederation is particularly active in addressing.

The proliferation of armed groups constitutes one of the major obstacles to greater respect for international humanitarian law. In this connection, the question of implementation of this law by non-State armed groups that are bound by it is more pertinent than ever today. We must be bold and innovative here, and any initiative that seeks to take us in that direction is welcome.

The problems associated with non-State armed groups are compounded by more and more frequent use of the services of private military and security companies by parties to conflicts for the performance of security-related tasks and military-type activities. The legal questions raised by this development call for clarification. Switzerland has made diplomatic efforts in this area with a view to improving compliance with public international law by States with regard to the activities of private military and security companies operating in conflict zones. In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, Switzerland has launched an initiative that aims to remind all parties concerned of their obligations as enshrined in international humanitarian law and human rights instruments. What is more, the process seeks to identify and clarify best practices, model rules and other appropriate measures to help States to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

Not only the type of parties involved in conflicts but also the methods and means of warfare give rise to questions and uncertainties. Switzerland is making an active contribution to initiatives designed to clarify the existing rules of international humanitarian law in the fields of air and missile warfare and cyber-warfare. Switzerland is also supporting the process the ICRC is conducting with a view to clarifying the practical significance of the concept of direct participation in hostilities. Above all, we are seeking practical solutions that can be implemented by those concerned. For example, the project on air and missile warfare will culminate in a manual containing the existing rules in this area accompanied by explanatory commentaries.

International humanitarian law needs not only to be made clearer but also to be applied. It was to this end that the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission was set up on the basis of Article 90 of Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions. It is not a tribunal but a body of independent experts that performs inquiries and good offices. So far, 70 States across all continents have deposited a declaration of recognition. I encourage all the other parties to Additional Protocol I to do likewise and, where appropriate, to call upon the Commission's services.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I wish you every success in your proceedings over the coming days. I am convinced that the results of the 30th International Conference will live up to our expectations and those of the millions of victims for whom we can make a difference.

Mr Guy Mettan, President of the Geneva branch of the Swiss Red Cross

(Original English)

The Statutes of the Movement state in Article 11 that all participants in the International Conference shall respect the Fundamental Principles and that all documents presented shall conform to these principles. To remind us of these seven Fundamental Principles, I would now call on volunteers who will be reading the principles in the four official languages of the Conference.

4.4.4 READING OF THE MOVEMENT'S FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES BY VOLUNTEERS FROM THE GENEVA BRANCH OF THE SWISS RED CROSS

HUMANITY

(Original English)

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

(Original English)

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

(Original French)

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

(Original Arabic)

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

(Original Spanish)

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

UNITY

(Original Spanish)

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

(Original Arabic)

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.



4.5 FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Monday 26 November 2007

(4 p.m.)

4.5.1 OPENING OF THE FIRST PLENARY MEETING BY MR MOHAMMED AL-HADID, CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

(Original English)

On behalf of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, once again, I welcome you to this 30th International Conference. As called for by Rule 15.2 in the Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent shall open the first plenary meeting.

It is my great pleasure to warmly welcome all the delegations from National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, from the States party to the Geneva Conventions and from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. I also welcome all observers, in particular the National Societies awaiting recognition and admission. We are all joined together in this hall under the theme of “Together for humanity.”

I want to extend a special welcome to our host country and to the Swiss Government, with deep appreciation for the support it has rendered to the Movement in organizing this Conference.

Humanity is the first of the Fundamental Principles and at the core of the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in everything it stands for and everything it does. Deeply rooted in the central message of our Movement’s mission, it is our prime source of power. It is also the foremost driving force in our motivation to work for this Movement in various capacities, whether as volunteers, activists, members and staff, or as leaders on local, national, regional and international levels, and it will guide us in our deliberations during the coming days.

With these words, I declare the 30th International Conference open and propose that we proceed with item 2 on the agenda, which is the election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary-General and other officers of the Conference.

4.5.2 ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES-GENERAL AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE CONFERENCE

**Mr Mohammed Al-Hadid, Chairman
of the Standing Commission**

(Original English)

Pursuant to Rule 15, paragraph 3 of the Movement’s Rules of Procedure, we now proceed to the election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries-General, and officers of the Plenary Commissions and the Drafting Committee, from the list proposed by the Council of Delegates. I have received from Dr Jakob Kellenberger, the Chair of the Council of Delegates, Resolution CD 2007/9, which has also been distributed to you this afternoon. It was adopted by the Council on 24 November and proposes the list of persons to be elected officers of this Conference.

Some nominations were communicated to National Societies and Permanent Missions in Geneva in Standing Commission Newsletter number 13 in October this year. The full list comprises the adopted formal proposal of the Council. I assume we can consider the persons proposed by the Council to be elected officers of this 30th Conference. I put this to you.

Thank you.

Besides the plenary, three different Commissions and a Drafting Committee will be established. The Chair will give you more information on these subsidiary bodies.

It is also my pleasure to invite Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams to take over the chairmanship of this Conference. I also invite the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretaries-General to come and take their places here on the podium. I wish Mandisa and her team much wisdom and success in leading the deliberations of this Conference.

4.5.3 CONFERENCE AGENDA AND PROGRAMME, AND PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTING RESOLUTIONS

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Madam President of the Swiss Confederation, Excellencies, leaders of National Societies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, I would like to thank you for the confidence and trust that you have bestowed upon me by asking me to chair this Conference. I am humbled by the task and would like to assure you that I shall carry it out to the best of my skills and knowledge, fully respecting the Principles and Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Our agenda for the coming days, which has been adopted by the Council of Delegates, is very ambitious. Under the theme of “Together for humanity,” the overall aim of this Conference is to focus on partnerships between States and the components of the Movement, notably and in particular with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. These partnerships should draw on the definition of the auxiliary role as we here understand it, and on which hopefully we all agree too. Further, we are asked to examine the humanitarian consequences of some of the most topical developments of our times. In doing so, we should seek to set an agenda for the Movement, for all of us here, for the next ten to fifteen years, focusing on our mission of alleviating human suffering wherever and in whatever form it may be found. We are also asked to analyze the challenges to international humanitarian law, or IHL as we know it, in today’s world and to affirm our commitment to implement existing IHL and show continued respect for it. It is also our objective to adopt the non-binding guidelines for improved disaster response and to implement these in our respective national contexts.

I would now like to go into an explanation of the structure of the Conference and to share some very practical matters.

The items and objectives of the Conference agenda will be discussed in the plenary and in the Commissions.

Tomorrow’s **plenary** will be devoted to the general debate on humanitarian challenges and the partnerships needed to address them, which will be introduced later this afternoon by a panel. Each delegation wishing to speak in this plenary debate should register, if it has not yet done so, at the desk outside this room on our left. This is also where the provisional speakers’ list will be displayed today at 6.45 p.m. We will close the list tomorrow at 11 a.m. Please transmit a written version of your statement to the same desk in order to facilitate the task of our interpreters.

As we expect a high number of speakers, I have shortened the interventions, using the rights given to the Chairman in Rule 18.2. Each speaker will have the floor for a maximum of three minutes; the exceptions will be interventions on behalf of a group or at Head of State or ministerial level, which will be given five minutes. Please note that, for the Conference Report, the full text of the interventions may be handed in to the Conference Secretariat. On a personal note, I would like to appeal to you to exclude any congratulatory statements to the Chair, in the interests of time as well as of preserving substance.

I particularly encourage National Societies to participate in the debate because this is a conference of the Movement. In accordance with past practice, this invitation includes observer National Societies awaiting recognition and admission. I will also give the floor to other observers if time allows and with the agreement of the Conference, as per Rule 9.3.

After tomorrow’s general debate, the next plenary session will convene on Thursday, at 2 p.m., since Wednesday will be devoted to the Commissions. Thursday’s plenary meeting will start with the election of members of the Standing Commission, for which we will need a roll call. Kindly be here on Thursday at 2 p.m. sharp for this roll call. After the launch of the elections, we will focus on the results of the general debate, the work of the Commissions and the follow-up to previous Conferences.

The final plenary meeting will be on Friday morning: a review of the workshops and a report on the pledges will be presented. The Drafting Committee will also

report on its work, after which it will be time for the Conference to adopt the Final Resolutions.

Wednesday is **Commission** day. The Commissions are open to all Conference participants. Commission A will be in session all day and will focus on the specific nature of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and on the National Societies' role as auxiliaries. Commission B will deal with international humanitarian law on Wednesday morning and, finally, Commission C will debate the legal frameworks for international disaster response on Wednesday afternoon. The main topics in the Commissions will be introduced before the debate. There is no speakers' list for the Commissions and the time allotted to speakers will be in the hands of the Commission chairs.

The **Drafting Committee** will finalize the documents to be adopted by the Conference. It is open to all Conference members and will start its work tomorrow at 10 a.m. in Rooms 3 and 4, and continue all day on Wednesday and Thursday.

Regarding the **Bureau of the Conference**, I would like you to note that, according to Rule 16.1 in the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau includes the Chairman of the Conference, the Chairman of the Standing Commission, the heads of the delegations from the ICRC and the International Federation, the Chairman of the plenary commissions including the Drafting Committee, and the Secretary-General of the Conference. In addition, it is my intention to involve the vice-chairs of the Conference in the work of the Bureau. I would also like to exercise the right to invite any other person or persons from any of the delegations present here for consultation, in the interest of achieving the objectives of this Conference.

The **media** are invited to the opening ceremony and to follow the general debate tomorrow. The Bureau may consider additional requests for media access to other meetings on a case-by-case basis, with the exception of the Drafting Committee, which will remain off-limits to the media. A daily bulletin will be posted on the websites of the Conference.

Simultaneous **interpretation** will be provided in the working languages – Arabic, English, French and Spanish – at the plenary meetings and in the Commissions and the Drafting Committee. All working documents will be translated and distributed in these languages. In addition, Russian interpretation will be provided.

Information on the daily programme, workshops, side events and other organizational matters will

be on the screens in various parts of the conference centre as well as in the daily bulletin.

Allow me to remind you that the Conference must endeavour to approve its Resolutions and other outcomes by consensus, in keeping with the Movement's Rules of Procedure and with long-standing Movement Conference traditions. Here, reference is made to article 11.7 of the Statutes.

I would also like to remind everyone that statements by delegations shall ensure strict compliance with the Fundamental Principles. No delegate or delegation should therefore engage in political, racial, religious or ideological controversy, as stated in article 11.4 of the Statutes. During the next few days, I hope we will stay focused on the objectives that we aim to achieve in the interest of the vulnerable people of the world whose eyes and expectations are turned on us.

Thank you for your attention to these important housekeeping matters. I would now like to give the floor to the Chairman of the Council of Delegates, Dr Jakob Kellenberger, who will inform us about the decisions taken by the Council of Delegates.

Mr Jakob Kellenberger, Chairman of the Council of Delegates

(Original English)

Madam Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, last week's Council of Delegates adopted various resolutions relevant for this Conference. Each delegation has received a complete set of the resolutions adopted. Some of them deserve special attention. The Council adopted the agenda of the International Conference in a slightly revised version, following a decision taken by the Standing Commission at its last session. I draw your attention to the new wording of agenda item 10. The adopted agenda has been circulated today.

The Council examined the progress made in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on operational arrangements signed by the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society and adopted a resolution you will find in the collection of Council Resolutions.

I draw your attention to three other topics to be discussed during the Conference as well.

First, the Council of Delegates adopted a strategy regarding the restoration of family links. The

implementation of this strategy requires the understanding and support of governments.

Second, the Council of Delegates engaged in a preliminary discussion on the subject of international migration, with a view to responding to its humanitarian consequences.

Third and last, the Council dedicated some time to examining the specific role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. This has resulted in a revision of the draft resolution on National Societies as auxiliaries which is now being tabled. One of the three Commissions of this Conference will deepen this issue.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

I would like you to stay with us at the podium because I will soon be calling you to address us in your capacity as the President of the ICRC.

But before that, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make the announcement that I have received a draft resolution regarding the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. I will circulate this resolution to the Conference, and after our consultation with the Bureau we will let you know how this proposal is going to be dealt with before it is transmitted to the Drafting Committee.

**4.5.4 KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
MR JAKOB KELLENBERGER,
PRESIDENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS**

(Original English)

Madam Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, as humanitarians and as partners in humanitarian work, we join together in the Conference that is opening today to seek ways of better protecting and assisting victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence, of providing them with a certain measure of security and of safeguarding their dignity. These are the areas in which the International Committee of the Red Cross has a particular commitment and wants

to make its own contribution. But the ICRC is also concerned about other issues that this Conference will raise and is eager to make itself useful in these areas as well.

To say that the topics dealt with at the panel discussions are complex is no idle pronouncement. Their complexity requires diverse and, in some cases multidisciplinary, measures. The approach of the Movement's components is clear: they endeavour to make communities less vulnerable to these humanitarian problems and to help them to cope with the consequences of such problems; they do this by putting to best use the contributions of each component, complementing the efforts of others so as to avert or alleviate suffering. The motto of this Conference, "Together for humanity," here acquires its full meaning. Given the global challenges we face, good cooperation among all participants, including States, is indispensable to face them successfully. Addressing the challenges also requires financial means and, therefore, solidarity proportionate to the resources of each member of the international community.

Among these topics, there is one that is not completely new but appears for the first time in a prominent way on the agenda of a meeting of the International Conference: the issue of international migration. Tomorrow's debate should enable us to better distinguish its various forms. It is, after all, impossible to put into a single category the many kinds of people wanting or needing to move from one country to another, or indeed even the needs of these people. Migrants do, however, have certain things in common, such as their suffering, their separation from family members, the difficulty of adapting to a new environment and the want of security on many different levels. Not infrequently, the people concerned receive insufficient protection even though many rules of human rights law and refugee law are applicable. It is important, then, to see to it that the rules are enforced, with humanity and creativity, and to aid migrants in difficulty, whatever their legal status, especially when they are deprived of their liberty.

Protecting and assisting people displaced within their own countries as a result of armed conflict is a special concern of the ICRC. To quote the slogan used by the ICRC in its campaign in Colombia, displacement is "not just about leaving home – it's about losing everything." In Colombia, Somalia, Sudan and Chad, in Sri Lanka, Nepal, the Philippines, Lebanon and Yemen, to give just some examples, the ICRC provides needed aid for displaced people,

often in areas where other organizations do not venture for security reasons. It is useful to recall that the aim of much of international humanitarian law is to protect the civilian population, which clearly includes displaced people in conflict situations. There is no void in the law in this area. Furthermore, if international humanitarian law were complied with, the civilian population would be protected and spared; there would then be less reason, or none at all, for them to leave their homes as a consequence of armed conflict. The ICRC therefore attempts to tackle the problem at its source by doing everything it can to head off displacement, in particular by aiding resident populations, including in areas that are difficult to reach. Whenever security conditions allow, the return of displaced people to their villages and communities should be supported. In this area as in others, the priority, in legal and political terms, is to be determined, and to take the necessary steps, to bring about full compliance with international humanitarian law.

Population movements involve the splitting up of families, which is a matter of acute humanitarian concern and one of the most tragic consequences of armed conflict and many other disastrous situations. Respect for family unity is part of respect for human dignity. A person's well-being depends to a large extent on the ability to maintain links with close relatives or at least to stay informed about what has happened to them. The ICRC will step up its efforts to help people who are without news of their loved ones. A few years ago, it launched a worldwide initiative aiming to boost the capacity of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to restore family links. The strategy it developed for that purpose has just been adopted by the Council of Delegates. In the coming years, the ICRC will implement this strategy both by reinforcing its own operational capacity in the various tasks involved in restoring family links and by supporting that of the National Societies. It also hopes to be able to count on support from governments, which have important responsibilities in this area.

The ICRC's work is focused on all those adversely afflicted by armed conflict, including, in addition to dispersed families, those remaining in areas where hostilities rage on, and detainees of all kinds. The ICRC is also carrying on with its efforts to meet the special needs, of assistance and protection, of women affected by war. These are but a few of its worldwide activities, with which you are well acquainted. Many of these activities are carried out in partnership with the National Societies of the countries plagued by armed conflict.

The ICRC is already very active in the area of health, in preventive and curative services, for instance. Nevertheless it intends in coming years to boost its capacity to provide high-quality health services in general and medical care in particular. To complement its existing skills in emergency situations like surgery, the ICRC will deepen its understanding of health-care systems, epidemiological analysis and basic care, and its knowledge of public health matters in prisons and of hospital management.

The ICRC's involvement and commitment extend beyond its protection and assistance activities. It is also seeking to rally States to ensure respect for international humanitarian law by imposing greater control over arms exports, and to ban the use of certain particularly cruel weapons such as anti-personnel mines and inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions. The ICRC is very concerned about the high number of civilians wounded or killed after hostilities have ended and about the indiscriminate effects of cluster munitions, in particular when they are used against military objectives in areas where there is a concentration of civilians. I therefore consider it vital and urgent to adopt an international treaty prohibiting the use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions and providing for victim assistance and the clearance of unexploded cluster munitions.

Unfortunately, the discussions at the annual meeting of the States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which has just ended, did not result in a sufficient basis for achieving this objective in spite of the efforts undertaken. Therefore, as indicated in the Council of Delegates' resolution adopted two days ago, the ICRC urges governments that support the Oslo Declaration to continue their efforts to conclude in 2008 a treaty prohibiting the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians. The States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons should continue their efforts and work towards the adoption of legally binding rules on cluster munitions.

To be sure, war has never been a simple matter and humanitarian endeavour has always had to face important challenges. It is no different in conflicts and other situations of violence today. Their diversity and complexity, the interrelation between local, regional and global events and developments, the sheer number of entities committing violence, the shifts in short-term alliances and the atrociousness of certain acts draw attention to the continuing importance of humanitarian work guided exclusively by the needs of those afflicted by armed conflict.

Three things need to be added to what I have just said. First, the fragility of many situations of transition from war to peace, involving sporadic armed violence or a chronic lack of security, hinders or prevents any real effort aimed at reconstruction and development. Second, a number of situations of internal violence in contexts of poverty, social and economic inequality, strong demographic growth and surging urbanization contribute to the emergence of new forms of armed violence, especially in urban settings, and to increased migration. Third, a rise in the frequency and impact of natural disasters, to some of which climate change is contributing, has aggravated the risk of pandemics in unstable situations and armed conflicts.

Humanitarian activities may also run the risk of being exploited or marginalized in connection with political or military actions taken by others. Exploitation occurs when parties to a conflict want to incorporate all humanitarian endeavours into a political strategy – at any cost. Clearly, the ICRC's exclusively humanitarian, independent and neutral manner of meeting victims' needs is not the only way of addressing the vast needs of a population afflicted by years of conflict. I acknowledge the importance and merit of other approaches in the areas of security, education and health. But the independence of an organization like the ICRC, its determination and, to a large extent, its ability to remain in contact with all sides in a conflict often allow it to reach areas that others do not enter, and make it in addition a useful and sometimes unique intermediary, in humanitarian matters, between those involved in an armed conflict. In 2007 alone, the ICRC played this role in Afghanistan, Colombia, Ethiopia, Niger and Sudan.

Diverse situations require diverse responses: this also holds true in humanitarian matters. The important thing, then, is to make sure that there is genuine and realistic coordination, based on the human and logistical resources actually available on the ground and taking into account clear priorities in terms of the contexts in which action must be taken. Rhetoric must never disguise any inability to take action and must not deceive those in need of protection and assistance.

I should also refer here to the work and responsibilities of the National Societies. In many armed-conflict situations, the National Society of the country affected is a vital ICRC partner. The independence of the National Society must also be safeguarded. That is why it is so important to clarify the National Societies' role as auxiliaries, which is also a topic on the Conference agenda. In particular, the clarification must lead to

a better understanding of what is meant in concrete terms by the duty of States to respect at all times the adherence by all the components of the Movement to the Fundamental Principles, in particular to that of the National Societies' independence.

Marginalization of humanitarian law, or even its exclusion, may occur if might prevails over all else. International humanitarian law is the appropriate solution in the quest for a realistic balance between military imperatives and respect for human dignity. International humanitarian law is not the product of naive or unrealistic thinking. The distinction between combatants and civilians, which, as we know, is difficult to establish in every case, remains important, as does respect for the principle of precaution and proportionality in the conduct of hostilities. Humanitarian law is realistic and necessary. It must be known and respected.

It is not easy to determine with accuracy the factors that strengthen or weaken respect for international humanitarian law. Among positive factors, I would like to mention heightened awareness of this body of international law among the general public. In addition, the Geneva Conventions have achieved universal acceptance. Nearly half of all States have explicitly adopted provisions implementing the Conventions and, where appropriate, their Additional Protocols, at the national level.

In terms of challenges for international humanitarian law, you will not be surprised to hear me say once again that today's conflicts are for the most part non-international and that the treaty-based law applicable to these situations is inadequate. The ICRC has organized several round-tables at the regional level, devoted in large measure to increasing respect for humanitarian law in non-international armed conflicts. Subsequently it has issued a publication on ways of improving compliance with international humanitarian law in these conflicts, which you will find with the report on the challenges for humanitarian law prepared by the ICRC for this Conference. In addition, the ICRC study on customary humanitarian law demonstrated that, in practice, many rules relating to international armed conflicts are deemed applicable to non-international armed conflict. This is a very positive observation, but we must further examine and reflect on the need to clarify or supplement codified law in the light of contemporary armed conflict.

It has to be recognized that today's armed conflicts present a certain number of challenges involving a legal dimension. So-called asymmetrical conflicts,

while not being the only situation in which violations of humanitarian law can occur, provide a good illustration of one of these challenges. In a strongly asymmetric power relationship, the party perceiving itself to be militarily weaker may be tempted to contravene humanitarian law systematically so as to compensate for this real or imagined weakness. The stronger party may then, in turn, decide not to comply with its obligations or at least to take them less seriously. In this kind of situation, which can lead to a downward spiral of reciprocity or, worse, to a denial, pure and simple, of humanitarian law, it should be pointed out forcefully that parties to a conflict have the same obligations and may not invoke reciprocity as an argument for not fulfilling them. This principle is at the very heart of humanitarian law. Rejecting it would have disastrous consequences for that body of law and for the people suffering the effects of conflict. Accordingly, everything possible must be undertaken to ensure that humanitarian law is complied with in practice by all parties to a conflict.

Similarly, the phenomenon that I call – for want of a better name – ‘the systematic criminalization of the adversary’ could also weaken humanitarian law. In an armed conflict, to see the adversary only as a criminal or even as a terrorist, to fail to recognize that – because he is involved in an armed struggle – the adversary is himself bound by a certain number of rules, to take away from him, so to speak, his rights and duties as a combatant: all of this can result in his being pushed even further in his lack of compliance with humanitarian law. Every combatant has duties and therefore also a certain number of rights. I insist here in particular on the obligations such as those set out in the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. I believe it is important to reiterate this point at the beginning of a Conference that will, I hope, reaffirm the importance of humanitarian law and of paying constant attention to respect for the fundamental guarantees protecting individuals that are set out within that body of law.

Terrorism, however, like the organized fight against it, has prompted new thinking on the scope and application of international humanitarian law and of other bodies of law. The report on challenges for the law that the ICRC is presenting at this Conference devotes extensive passages to it, especially in connection with the fundamental guarantees protecting detainees. It should be pointed out that humanitarian law is not the only – or, in general, even the first – legal recourse in addressing terrorism. We know that it is forbidden under humanitarian law to commit any terrorist act during an armed conflict. But terrorism goes well beyond the scope of armed conflict – the only situation

in which humanitarian law is applicable – and it is by means of other legal instruments and by yet other means – political, financial and law enforcement – that it must be addressed. These instruments and means do not come within the mission of the ICRC or, more generally, of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

International humanitarian law remains an apt instrument for addressing the challenges of contemporary conflict. Apt does not mean perfect or clear about everything. There are things that need to be clarified, especially in connection with the conduct of hostilities. There is also a great deal that still needs to be done in terms of ratifying existing international instruments and implementing them at the national level. The greatest challenge for States, and more generally for those involved in situations of armed violence, remains the effective application of international humanitarian law, including prosecutions and sanctions in the event that its rules are violated. I appeal especially to States, all of which are party to the Geneva Conventions and are thus bound to respect and ensure respect for the Conventions in all circumstances.

I have spoken of humanitarian law as of an instrument for granting a certain measure of security to persons not – or no longer – taking part in hostilities. Human security – the security of each individual – ought to be our concern in the other discussions we will have together as well. Respect for human dignity, respect for humanitarian law and respect for human rights are in my opinion long-term investments in security. This is also the way in which the notion of protection, which the ICRC places at the centre of its activities, should be understood, i.e. as a multitude of activities intended to induce public authorities and other entities to fulfil their obligations in terms of the security, well-being and dignity of persons adversely affected by armed conflicts or other situations of violence. By standing up for victims against the dangers and abuses of power to which they may be exposed, and by stepping in with tangible aid, the ICRC is committing itself to championing their rights, relieving their suffering, and preserving or restoring their dignity.

This commitment, along with respect for the essential elements of an international community that is considerate of each individual, is representative of values that I would like to see this Conference share.

You will have understood it well: the ICRC will remain an active component of the Movement – a network grounded in solidarity in which each component, in accordance with its responsibility and capacities, is

expected to carry out its humanitarian work – with full respect for the Fundamental Principles, for all those in need of protection and assistance. I thank you.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, Dr Kellenberger. Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me pleasure to call upon Mr Juan Manuel Suárez del Toro, the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

4.5.5 KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MR JUAN MANUEL SUÁREZ DEL TORO RIVERO, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chairwoman, distinguished representatives of the States, Mr President of the ICRC, Mr Chairman of the Standing Commission, friends of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, honoured guests and observers, it is an honour and a pleasure for me to address you on behalf of the International Federation, which represents 186 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from all over the world.

However, with this privilege also comes a huge responsibility: representing millions of Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers in their aspiration to achieve universal solidarity and in their commitment to defending the right of all people everywhere to a life of dignity free of discrimination. The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is always a good opportunity for the National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC to reflect together on the various issues that concern us in our daily work, sharing with the governments that support our principles and our efforts the deep concern we feel when we contemplate the many serious and complex problems besetting the world that call for a humanitarian, ethical approach.

It is also a golden opportunity for us, as the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, to share our knowledge with the representatives of States and learn from their

experiences. Our aim is to forge new partnerships to make specific commitments through pledges and to tackle more resolutely and successfully the myriad challenges we face, from the most localized to those that affect the planet as a whole.

This is an opportune moment to reaffirm our willingness to extend our cooperation, forge new partnerships and lend humanitarian assistance to the governments of the world, truly working *together for humanity*.

Distinguished representatives, we would like to continue extending our activities and making them more effective. By doing so, we hope to enable countless people living under precarious and harsh conditions to lead a life of dignity.

We know that poverty and exclusion are the root causes of vulnerability, and that the cruel fate of vulnerable people is exacerbated by disease, disaster and conflict.

Therefore, I believe that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement should persevere in its efforts to disseminate the message that international humanitarian law remains important and relevant in conflict situations. And at the same time, we should take all substantive steps towards the establishment of an international legal framework – hopefully along the lines of the International Disaster Response Law – that will allow rapid and effective action to be taken to help the most vulnerable people in all circumstances.

The frequency, scale and serious consequences of poverty, disease and sudden and isolated disasters add up to an unending human catastrophe of gigantic proportions. Consequently, in recent years, our Federation has been devising the working methods we need to accomplish our goals, and set up, through the Federation of the Future process, a Global Agenda that is convergent with and complementary to the Millennium Development Goals. Through this Global Agenda we aim to curtail the damage caused by disaster, disease and public-health crises, strengthen community development and National Society capacity to tackle the most urgent situations of vulnerability and promote respect for diversity and human dignity, helping to reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

It is through this Global Agenda that the efforts of each of our National Societies and their collective contributions to the humanitarian work of our Federation must now be directed.

We believe that our objectives are well-grounded, given the broad presence of our organization throughout the world. National Society volunteers help us to better grasp community problems, and, at the same time, inspire us to step up our efforts to resolve them. We want to be close to people.

In addressing this Conference, I would like to invite all countries, their governments and citizens to give their attention and maximum support to the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for the benefit of the most vulnerable sectors of society. There are millions of volunteers out there, committed to alleviating suffering, whatever its causes and whoever the victims, by means of local actions that are often carried out in extremely difficult circumstances, in their cities, towns, villages and neighbourhoods, or in remote, isolated spots, and they offer added value to the governments and citizens of the countries in which they serve and are often the only recourse.

As auxiliaries to the public authorities dealing with humanitarian issues, National Societies can provide invaluable support to emergency, health, and social-welfare services, among others. In that way, when disaster strikes – such as an earthquake or pandemic – Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers stand ready to lend a helping hand in community-based assistance programmes that complement State services.

This community-based approach has a great impact. Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers save lives, not only by responding efficiently and mitigating the harmful effects of disasters, but also by their tireless efforts to prepare for disasters, to reduce risks and to help communities and individuals grow and become stronger.

In responding to a crisis, volunteers not only draw inspiration from the pinnacle of humanity and apply their technical know-how; they can respond effectively because they are close to the community and show their care by helping friends, family and neighbours in times of need.

Together, volunteers form the immense network of solidarity that underpins our Federation and that we shall continue deploying for the benefit of the most vulnerable people. Today, our volunteers are keen to ensure that the work they do to help others becomes steadily more targeted and more effective in order to prevent suffering and protect the dignity of all. They wish to be the power of humanity.

This is the reason why, during the General Assembly of our Federation, which took place immediately before

this Conference, we began to reflect upon topics of shared concern for our Movement as a whole, and indeed for the entire international community. These are various facets of international relations and human behaviour that compound the hardship of individuals whose lives are blighted by intolerance, marginalization and social exclusion. Clearly, these phenomena will have a crucial effect on the future of mankind in a globalized world where, from an ethical and practical standpoint, it is not possible to create pockets of well-being for some, while excluding others.

Madam Chairwoman, we endeavoured last week in Geneva to identify opportunities for coordinated humanitarian action that will enable us to meet four major challenges: the humanitarian consequences of environmental degradation, including climate change; the causes, processes and consequences of international migration; violence, especially in urban areas, and public-health crises such as emerging and re-emerging diseases.

Because these problems have grave humanitarian consequences, it is vital for governments, international organizations and social-welfare and humanitarian organizations – first and foremost the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – to join forces in addressing them. As citizens of the world, we all have a shared responsibility to combat these sources of extreme vulnerability.

Never before has the world had access to so many economic, scientific and technological resources. And we must make sure that everyone benefits from them.

It is now clear, for example, that environmental degradation hits the poorest and most vulnerable communities the hardest, and it is happening already, right now, as stated in the International Federation's World Disaster Reports. And we have been warned that the degradation of our natural environment may bring about climate change with dire consequences for us all. We must therefore do everything in our power to reverse this course, first, because it is a source of great suffering today and secondly because it may cause great suffering for generations to come.

This Conference will also examine the ever-more pressing issue of international migration as we know it in today's globalized world and the means to alleviate the plight of those who flee across borders or move from one place to another in their own countries in an attempt to escape economic or social hardship, whatever the cause. Much suffering arises, for example, when family members are left behind,

and it is important to provide assistance throughout the entire migration process in the countries of origin, transit and destination.

(Original French)

At the meeting of the General Assembly we agreed to draw up a migration policy covering the main areas of Red Cross and Red Crescent activity: providing humanitarian assistance and protection, restoring family links, working to achieve integration and re-integration, mediating and building awareness as part of the fight against discrimination and stereotyping.

Intolerance of diversity, racial discrimination and xenophobia are causes of the violence that the Red Cross and Red Crescent has been striving to combat. The present Conference will examine the effects of urban violence on communities and the impact of armed conflicts.

All too often, violence continues to be the cruel and inhuman handmaiden of selfishness, intransigence and irrationality. Even outside of war, violence emerges in abhorrent forms in times of peace and stability: violence against women, child abuse and violent crime, to mention but a few. In this respect, I believe that the Red Cross and Red Crescent is especially concerned with promoting human values such as peaceful coexistence, respect for others and solidarity, above all among young people. We must pass on these values to the young generation.

(Original English)

We should not forget that the protection of health and the struggle against disease are crucial for human existence. These are areas in which the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is highly active in many communities.

The health of millions of people continues to be threatened by various emerging and re-emerging diseases, including the HIV/AIDS pandemic, tuberculosis, malaria and measles. This is intolerable in view of the fact that many lives could be saved by a simple decision to make basic health facilities and medicines more widely available. No community can develop or aspire to greater prosperity if its members are ill or their lives are at risk. That is why our efforts to promote better community health and health care are especially relevant.

Friends, while these challenges are clearly enormous, our experience and convictions have taught us that they are not insurmountable. It is true, however, that we

must act jointly with all like-minded partners, quickly and with firm determination. I therefore suggest that this Conference do its utmost to place sustainable and equitable development at the top of the international agenda. Today, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies stands ready to channel all of its energy towards the goal of working together for humanity. Thank you very much.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, the formal part of this first day is now over and I will suspend the meeting until tomorrow morning, 9.30 a.m.

However, I would like you not to leave because we still have an activity to go through. I want now to warmly welcome Lyse Doucet who is a presenter and special correspondent at the BBC and who will moderate a panel debate on the four humanitarian challenges. On behalf of the Movement, I would like to also warmly welcome our speakers and their facilitator and to thank you for making the time to come and be with us, to come and make the effort to join us to discuss a general debate on issues that are of extreme importance to this organization and to the community we serve.

4.5.6 COLLABORATIVE ACTION AND PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES

**Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter
and correspondent**

(Original English)

Hello! *Bonjour! Buenas noches! Assalamu aleikum!* My name is Lyse Doucet. I'm a Canadian, I'm a presenter and a correspondent for the BBC. Who are you? I know some of you. I've met some of you in Aceh after the tsunami, in the Family Tracing Centre. I met some of you in Kashmir after the earthquake two years ago. Some of us have survived cold winters in Kabul or hot summers in Baghdad. I've watched you at work, and been impressed. You have done interviews with me; we have had tea together.

I have always thought that the ICRC, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, was one of the best

humanitarian organizations in the world. But, they're making you sit here for five hours, which I think is an abuse of your human rights. So I thought I should apologize. I'm really sorry. So I have to try to make it worth your while. Because, you know what? You know what's wrong with this television screen or, at least, what's good for me? You can't shut it off. That television screen is going to be on for the next hour and a half. And I don't want you to tune out either. Why? Because all of us here today, we are going to discuss some of the biggest challenges facing all of us today. They're urgent, they're critical, and we live with them now.

So I'll ask you another favour: for the purposes of this hour and a half, I'm not going to be Lyse Doucet the journalist and you're not going to be some big, important members of government. You're not going to be one of the world's experts on water. You're not going to be a very important ambassador. We're all going to be here because we are affected in the same way. What is your declaration talking about? "Together for humanity." All of us. So, to start, let's just watch a film together. Don't turn off your television screen. Don't try, because you can't. It's specially made for this Conference and it's about the challenges we face today.

Screening of the video: "Our World, Our Challenges"

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

What do you think? There were no words in that film. What was it about? Four issues: climate change, including environmental degradation, violence, particularly in urban settings, health, which means recurrent and emerging diseases and access to health care, and international migration. Those are the four challenges that some of you have been discussing for days in your Council of Delegates, that we are going to discuss here today in the informal session, and some of you will continue to discuss it in the Conference, which continues tomorrow.

What was that film also about, at the end? It was about you – all of you. What am I told about all of you? I'm told you are extremely committed, extremely passionate, extremely dedicated and a little bit conservative. Is that true? Are any of you out there sitting and saying, "What has it got to do with me? Why should I be worried about polar bears or the Arctic or the Amazon rain forest or that there are

not a million species of birds? That's not what it's all about." How many of you here today, in your National Societies or your governments, already have projects dealing with climate change? Let me see a show of hands. Who is already dealing with environmental degradation and climate change where they live? Let's see some hands. What were we hearing in the news for the past few weeks? The terrible tragedy afflicting Bangladesh again. I heard so many stories about the 40,000 Red Crescent volunteers who were helping with the cyclone warning system and helping after the cyclone struck. What did we hear in the summer in Europe? Elderly people were dying from the heat wave and European Red Crosses were helping. That is what we're talking about when we're talking about dealing with climate change.

How many of you believe you live in a perfect world? Let's just see, just so I know who is sitting in this audience and thinks there is nothing for you to do. A show of hands? Who lives in a perfect world? We'd like to know where you live because that is what we want to achieve. And out all of the issues we have chosen four. You have chosen four. All of them are important but they are all linked, and all of them have to be given attention. And the thing is, they can't be solved by any one group or organization alone. I know some of you have some fantastic National Societies and some really supportive governments and a fantastic International Federation, not to mention the ICRC, but everyone has to work together. And all these issues are linked. So, today we want to talk not just about these challenges. We want to find out what you can do about them.

How can you – components of your Movement – work together? How can you build partnerships with people outside of your Movement? And in order to find out, for the first time ever, we have invited some experts who are going to join us today to give us their views on these challenges. I am going to welcome now ... to join me on the stage ... our experts. Dr Seung-Soo, Dr Samar, Dr Heymann, Mawanda Shaban, Dr Ndiaye, please join me. They have kindly agreed to come and spend some time with us and I have been spending some time with them. Some of them I already know, but let me introduce them to you.

Dr Han Seung-Soo is the UN Secretary-General's special envoy on climate change. He is also on the UN Secretary-General's advisory board for water and sanitation and he chairs the high-level experts' panel on water and disaster. Before that, he seems to have done almost every important job there was in the Korean Government – Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Finance, Chief of Staff to the Korean

President, Minister for Foreign Affairs – and that is why I met him many years ago. We did an interview for the BBC's *Hard Talk* programme. And he is still talking to me now, which I think is an achievement for him. But let me tell you a secret about Dr Han: his secret weapon is his wife who was the Vice-President of the Red Cross in South Korea. And you know what? His wife fell in love with the Red Cross before she fell in love with him. So, he has lived with the Red Cross, he told me, almost all of his adult life. So, he has some things to say. He was also knighted by the Queen of England, but he told me not to tell you that.

Ms Ndioro Ndiaye is the Deputy Director-General of the International Organization for Migration. We hear a lot these days about Senegalese leaving their country, and I have to say she is probably one of the best exports to come out of Senegal. She was the Minister for Social Development there. She was also the Minister for Women's, Children's and Family Affairs. She has worked in Senegal on humanitarian affairs, and she has worked at the international level on humanitarian affairs, particularly through the United Nations. She set up her own NGO and if any of you have been to Senegal ... Where is the Senegalese delegation? Can we see you here?

Dr David Heymann is Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization. He is responsible for health, security and environment. He is also the representative for polio eradication. He has a very long history in dealing with communicable diseases. He spent 13 years in sub-Saharan Africa as an epidemiologist; he also spent time in India working on smallpox eradication. He is American by birth, international by choice. And today he said to me, "Lyse, I'm in your hands." I said, "David, you're a doctor, don't make rash statements like that." But he is very happy to be with us here today.

Ms Sima Samar, Afghan by birth, might sometimes, in darker moments, hope she was Canadian like me. But, she is Afghan and one of the resources of her country. She is now the head of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. She also serves as a UN *rapporteur* on human rights in Sudan. You'd think she has enough to do dealing with human rights in Afghanistan, but they said to her, "Well, in your spare time, could you deal with human rights in Darfour?" And, just in case you think that toppling the Taliban government in 2001 meant that everything was fine in Afghanistan, she received death threats when she was the Minister for Women's Affairs in the post-Taliban government. She still receives death threats today in her battle for justice in her country. We welcome you, Sima Samar.

And finally, Mr Mawanda Shaban. When they told me we would have one representative from the Youth Movement, I said, "My goodness, it must be someone quite special to be chosen out of all those delegates." And who do they produce? Mawanda Shaban of the Ugandan Red Cross. He joined the Movement when he was nine years old and he now has a Bachelor's degree in information technology with a diploma in computer science. He is 26, which we think is still ... Is that middle age or is that youth still? We think it's still youth. He is a member of the Youth Commission of the International Federation, he was Chairman of the National Youth Council, he is a Youth Representative of the Central Governing Board of the Ugandan Red Cross and he is now a National Youth Adviser. And today he is going to be my adviser: he is going to be my eyes and my ears, listen to all of our experts who have joined us today and give us some insights and tell us how he thinks the Movement can work on these particular challenges because, after all, they are the generation who will inherit the earth. All of the decisions are made by my generation – your generation – but the world will be left to his children and grandchildren.

They mentioned to you earlier ... and some of you have already sent in your questions. We'd also want to hear from you, so if you'd like to ask a question of our panel, there are pieces of paper that have been circulated. Let us know, and they will get the questions up to me. I apologize in advance: we won't be able to have all of your questions. Otherwise, you'll be sitting here for ten hours instead of five, and I simply couldn't allow that. And don't forget this is the beginning of the dialogue and not the end. There will be time to discuss at the reception tonight; there will be time to discuss in the Conference tomorrow. This is the beginning of what should truly be a global conversation.

Panel discussion: Emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

We're going to start with health. Now, what can I tell you about health? Pretty well nothing, because health has been at the heart of your Movement since the very beginning, since 1864, thanks to Henry Dunant who talked about the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and the sick in the armies in the field. And now you are on the front line in many places, in the

battle for access to health care. Your own Statutes provide for a role for you in working on health. Now we want to find out a little bit more about the challenges facing you and what more you can do. To start with us, we're going to go to Dr Heymann. Dr Heymann, first of all, let's just begin talking about some of the greatest threats facing many countries of the world when it comes to either emergent or recurrent diseases.

Dr David Heymann, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization

(Original English)

Thanks Lyse. You know, emergent and re-emerging diseases are very important because they take us by surprise and they usually come from an animal. They breach the barrier between animals and humans. They infect humans and then they can both transmit from human to human and cause an epidemic or they can stop transmitting. If they do transmit from human to human, it's a very, very serious event in many cases.

I was thinking, as I was coming over here today, back to 1995 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There was an outbreak in a hospital in a small town in the middle of the country, where there were over 300 people who had died within a period of 10 days. The hospital closed because the health workers themselves became sick and died. WHO went to work with the government to see what was causing the outbreak and to try to stop this outbreak. When we got to the small town, the hospital was closed, yet the patients were still in the hospital. They were being fed by Red Cross volunteers who were taking care of them. There were no longer doctors and nurses available, and the Red Cross workers were taking care of those patients. In addition, they were burying the dead and they were working with those families that were bereaved to try to help them overcome their sadness. And they were working in the communities to try to make sure that people didn't get in contact with this disease. After we learned from the laboratory that this was Ebola, the Red Cross workers became even more important because then they went to all of the communities surrounding the outbreak area, talked with the village elders and the people in those communities and were able to help stop that epidemic from killing people and from spreading internationally and causing a threat to global health security.

Just last year, Lyse, in Niger ... I remember another incident with Red Cross volunteers. This was during

a campaign to inject to provide immunization from measles to children throughout Niger. Attached to that campaign for measles was also a campaign to distribute mosquito nets to mothers so that they could protect their children from malaria. It was the Red Cross volunteers again who were very active in the communities, mobilizing the population to go and get immunizations and also to go and get bed nets, and showing mothers how to use these bed nets to preserve their children's lives. Two very important examples of how these emerging and re-emerging infections cause surprise, cause human illness and death, and how people always have an ally in the Red Cross or the Red Crescent.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

But what are some of the big killer diseases, the epidemics, the pandemics? For example, we hear a lot about HIV, TB now. What are the things that everyone here should be thinking about and preparing for? Because this is what we're talking about now. We're not just talking about rushing in when the damage is done; we're talking about preventive measures as well.

Dr David Heymann, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization

(Original English)

Well, infectious diseases like Ebola and malaria are numerous; also, TB, AIDS, diarrhoeal diseases in children and pneumonia in children. These diseases, along with measles, kill about 15 million people in the world each year and, of course, those are people in developing countries where they don't have access to the goods that are needed to treat them.

There again, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies play a major role in mobilizing populations to be sure that they know that there are drugs or vaccines that can prevent or treat these diseases. And that partnership is a major partnership. At the global level, partners like WHO and UNICEF and the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and malaria mobilize resources and provide technical guidance to countries for these diseases. At the country level itself, governments strengthen their health-care systems to reach the people at the very periphery of those systems with the drugs, with the goods, with the

vaccines and with the knowledge that is passed from the international level to the national. Finally, there are the local communities: in those communities, Red Cross volunteers mobilize the populations and also – in some instances, in some countries – actually provide some of the interventions necessary to cure or to prevent diseases. So, a partnership is required for treating these diseases: it goes from the global level all the way to the very periphery where health workers and Red Cross volunteers are key to stop death and suffering resulting from these diseases.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

But from where you look at it, what do you think are the main gaps now in terms of that system? You looked at a number of levels. What are the gaps that people should be addressing?

Dr David Heymann, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization

(Original English)

Well, the gaps are going all the way from central governments – which do not have the resources to purchase the drugs and vaccines necessary – to health-care infrastructures, which are often weak. Many times, countries prefer to invest their money in hospitals rather than in health-care systems that get drugs and vaccines out to the people on the periphery. And then, at the periphery and in some communities, there are no medical services. And there, again, is where volunteers are important in making sure that people know that if they move to a more central area they will find the goods necessary. In many instances, these volunteers actually take the people and the goods from the health-care centres out to the people, rather than always having the people go to the medical facilities.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

And what would be your observations in terms of what you have said about how some health services aren't there or that they are weak? In many parts of the world, I think, this is really one of the main issues:

that health services are in a state of collapse. Some of the National Societies will know that – they are trying to work with governments to compensate for infrastructural weaknesses, if not the complete lack of them. What do you see as the main challenges in terms of access to public health services? Particularly for the most vulnerable, let us say.

Dr David Heymann, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization

(Original English)

That's right. Humanitarian action is very important when there are displaced populations, when there are civil disturbances, and when there are a whole series of issues that force people to move to safer areas or to areas where they can find medical or other services. But, in those situations, the masses often overwhelm the systems that are in place. Therefore, it takes carrying out a census of people in those areas, it takes knowing where the people are, and it takes volunteers to get the fresh water, the safe water, to get the goods that will prevent diseases or the goods to treat diseases, to the people. And here again, NGOs and, especially, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are very important. They're courageous, as you said; they go into the areas where these people are and they prevent diseases from causing sickness and death.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Let me now bring Mawanda Shaban of the Uganda Red Cross. Many of the National Societies have to deal with the prevalence, the pandemic of HIV/AIDS and I know you were doing a lot in Uganda. They say that infections among the youth may account for half of all cases of infection. In terms of scaling up the response, what more could be done?

Mr Mawanda Shaban, Member of the Youth Commission, Uganda Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Thank you very much. First of all, I want to recognize the fact that the International Federation has got this big network of volunteers. Not only has it got this big network of volunteers, but they are also very committed.

Now, when we talk about HIV ... this is an area of interest, especially for us, the young people in the Movement. I know that the International Federation has tried to put some, and we have addressed this issue vigorously. But, I do believe that the challenge that we are now facing, especially in Africa, is the issue to do with parent-child communication. I think that parents in Africa have to pull up their socks, to talk to their children, to make sure that they do know how to protect themselves against this HIV/AIDS. I'm sure that we are carrying out some of the necessary activities; we as youth, especially in Africa, have addressed this very, very well. We are talking to our peers on how to protect ourselves against this mysterious question of HIV. But, most importantly, I think this also requires some element of advocacy. So, I think that the International Federation could also strengthen the element of advocacy, now that we are going to work more closely with governments and so on. I am sure that we shall try to scale up our interventions also.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

I'm going to take the liberty of being the Chair because I have done a bit of research on all of you and throughout the session I'm going to be calling on some of you. Of course, if you don't really want to talk, if you're a bit shy, you can say so. And I don't want to privilege certain people because I know all of you have great stories to tell, but I wonder: Where is the Botswanan Red Cross? Because I understand you also have some lessons learnt from the kind of work that you have been doing in the health sector. Any lessons learnt, Botswana, in the kind of work that you've been doing with HIV/AIDS?

Ms Mabel Rammekwa, Secretary-General, Botswana Red Cross

(Original English)

Volunteers have done a lot of work in the area of home-based care. For the youth in particular we've had our OVC – Orphans and other Vulnerable Children – programmes: the youth assist orphans and vulnerable children with homework and provide after-school care. That is really very important because there is no point in providing the assistance, the ARVs – anti-retroviral drugs – or any of the other assistance without giving daily support to the children who suffer the consequences of the HIV scourge. So, the volunteers,

especially the youth, have been fundamental in assisting with the OVCs in particular.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Any lessons that you have learnt in the years of doing it, that you will use in terms of a different response, a better response, a larger response?

Ms Mabel Rammekwa, Secretary-General, Botswana Red Cross

(Original English)

Going into the future, I think if we get ourselves organized in time, then we will be able to deal with it a lot better than we have. Okay, we've been able to provide the anti-retrovirals, but we have not been responding adequately to the psychological impact on the community.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Thank you. What about Ukraine? Because I've been reading about some of the programmes you have ... We move a little bit away from HIV/AIDS: you had this Country of Childhood exhibition fighting against the stigmatization of AIDS. Why don't you share? We don't want publicity here; we want to hear some of the lessons learnt for you.

Dr Ivan Usichenko, President, Ukrainian Red Cross Society

(Original Russian)

The Ukrainian Red Cross Society has a number of programmes. First of all, it supports the public authorities in their efforts to combat poverty, by providing vulnerable groups in society with medical and social assistance. Secondly, it works hard to prepare the public and the Red Cross itself to respond to disasters and help those affected. It also supports health facilities and the fight against HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, implements international humanitarian law, and helps health facilities organize blood

donations, etc. Not to mention tracing activities, for those who have lost contact with their relatives, and family reunification.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Thank you, Ukraine. We have a question submitted by Monique Coulibaly from the Ivory Coast. I was grateful for the question because she asked about a disease and nobody knew what the disease was, which underlines again that you actually sometimes don't know what you're preparing for. Fortunately, we have Dr Heymann who seems to know everything about diseases and so I submitted this question to him. Monique Coulibaly wanted to know about what she called in French, *ulcère du Buruli*: she said this affected pregnant women, people's ability to work, and families. Tell us about that. Because I don't know how many people know about this particular disease, which, obviously, is found in West Africa.

Dr David Heymann, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization

(Original English)

That's right. Buruli ulcer is a disease in West Africa and also occurs in some other parts of the world. Its origins are mysterious: nobody really knows the cause, but it starts as an infectious agent, very similar to the agent that causes tuberculosis. It's a mycobacterium in the beginning: this somehow infects human skin and causes a huge ulcer. This ulcer does not heal; it continues to grow and continues to grow, and then, as it begins to scar, it contracts the skin together. While scarring, it bends the limbs or the arms or the hands or wherever it occurs. It's a very serious disease that is not only disabling but also leads to the stigmatization of its victims because of the deformities created by it. So it is a very important disease and it is one that researchers are now working on – thanks to resources provided by the Sasakawa Foundation in Japan – actually, trying to better understand its causes than to treat it.

Here, again, the Red Cross and Red Crescent are very active in areas where this is occurring in Africa, helping people get to the health facilities where they can have the necessary treatment, which usually, unfortunately, has to be a skin graft, to cover the part where the ulcer has occurred; because, there is really no other treatment.

Panel discussion: International migration

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Dr Heymann, thank you. The problem is that this is such a huge auditorium: if you'd like to ask a question, you can write it on any bit of paper, and if you raise your hand and your card, someone will come and pick it up, one of the many wonderful volunteers who are with us today. You can see them: they're wearing red shirts and they never stop running around. They'll be bringing the questions to us. I apologize because we won't be able to answer all of them. But if you want to contribute to the debate or put a question to any of our experts, then that is the best way to do it.

International migration: probably one of the biggest challenges facing our world today in terms of relations between developing and developed countries, North/South, within regions, etc. Now, it's not a new issue. As early as 1991, your Council of Delegates recognized that "New forms of movements of persons due principally to economic and social hardship, frequently leading to severe malnutrition and famine conditions and often associated with political instability have emerged. These persons who are not fulfilling the international criteria for refugee status are in need of humanitarian support." We're not talking about refugees per se because they have different conventions and organizations that take care of them. We're not going to get into the legality of these issues. Whether they have a right to be there or not to be there, they are there. When I was discussing this question, one of the best ways it was explained to me was by someone from the International Federation: he said he used to be an ambulance driver for the International Federation. When he arrived at the scene of an accident, he did not start by asking, "Well, did the red truck hit the blue bicycle or did the blue bicycle hit the red truck? Who's responsible for this accident?" No. His job was to help the injured, to provide care, and those other legal or political questions would be taken care of by other authorities. So, today, for the purposes of this debate, we want to look at the humanitarian issues affecting those in need. And there are many. They're in the tens of thousands and some of you here have had very, very important experiences in that area. Ms Ndiaye has had a lot of experience in this area as well. First, we want to talk a little about your perspective on the humanitarian consequences of international migration.

**Ms Ndioro Ndiaye,
Deputy Director-General of the International
Organization for Migration**

(Original French)

I would like to begin by thanking the General Assembly of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for placing such key questions on its agenda – not only political questions but also technical and operational questions arising from the management of international migration.

I would also like to underscore from the start our deep respect for the staff of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement whom we encounter in the field, with whom we constantly work and with whom we endeavour to take up challenges, because when the supporters of international humanitarian law as such are not present, the actors providing humanitarian aid, those who assist and accompany vulnerable persons, work together. And the International Organization for Migration works with the International Committee of the Red Cross throughout the world – not only in the Americas and in Asia but also in Africa and Europe.

The second point I would like to make is that not everything relating to international migration has a humanitarian dimension. First of all, there is normal, legitimate migration, migration which takes place in accordance with legal principles, which respects the rights of the host country and migrants and which takes place in an orderly fashion, for the benefit of both the country of origin and the host country. These international or national migrants who migrate legitimately do not require humanitarian assistance to exercise their rights and duties with regard to mobility. This is a very important point. There are 190 million migrants, who represent almost 3 per cent of the world's population, and a great many of these respect the laws regarding going and coming.

Yet, among these migrants, there is a group that is vulnerable, that requires humanitarian assistance. In general, there are two or three categories of person in this group.

First, there are persons engaged in irregular migration – people who do not have the necessary papers or who have not gone through the normal channels that States have established among themselves to ensure that corridors for the circulation of people operate in an orderly fashion, in accordance with the standards laid down by both the host country and the country of origin. We say that the status of these

persons is irregular, clandestine or illegal. There are a great many subtleties separating the three terms, so I will use them and you are free to accept or reject any of them. In the final analysis, however, these are persons who do not enjoy legitimate status. When they are apprehended by police or security officials in a country, they find themselves in precarious situations and require assistance. An example that hits close to home is what is happening between Spain and the sub-Saharan African countries, with migrants transiting through the Maghreb. These countries of origin, transit and destination share a crucial problem: assisting these irregular migrants while we interview them (when I say “we,” I am thinking of the international community, not solely the International Organization for Migration), locate them, and identify them in order to ask them whether or not they wish to return to their country and to determine the conditions under which we can organize a return with dignity for these persons. Thus, in the case of irregular migration, there is a genuine demand for humanitarian action. I think we should bear this in mind.

The second case requiring humanitarian action is when these persons are in the process of what we call ‘assisted voluntary return.’ These are migrants who are not asylum seekers, who are not classified as refugees, as you have so rightly pointed out, who do not have the means to return home but wish to do so. In such situations, the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross work together to give them the information they need, with a view to convincing them to return. And once they are convinced, we assist them by giving them the means to return home or, better yet, we help them reintegrate into their home societies.

The second, very large proportion of these people who require humanitarian action in international migration is the result of situations in which migrants are forced to move. This occurs in emergency situations – for example, a war – as in Darfur; a crisis, again in Darfur; or a post-conflict situation, as in Sierra Leone, Liberia or Iraq. When migrants find themselves in such circumstances, we assist them; first of all, because they need a safe haven; we feed and clothe them; we provide them with assistance until they return home.

Another category of irregular migrants, which the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross mentioned a short while ago in his speech, consists of people who are victims of trafficking. These people must be assisted, either through placement in shelters or centres, once they have been located, or

by means of education, training and information. Once this has been done, we also strive to help them fit back into the socio-economic system in their countries while keeping them safe from traffickers and preventing their return to this vicious circle of prostitution, ill-treatment, violence, and so on. In this connection, I fully endorse the efforts of the Migration and Information System of the Americas to protect vulnerable people who have been victims of human trafficking. There are very specific cases where humanitarian action is required.

It is important for us to coordinate our efforts with an organization. The National Societies are extraordinary entities. They operate in the field, they are free agents, even as far as the government is concerned, but they also act as auxiliaries to governments. I have personally experienced situations in which the National Societies have acted as intermediaries to contact people in distress with very good results, including feedback and proper assessment of action taken. Thus, we work together with the International Committee of the Red Cross to implement humanitarian measures linked to international migration, and it is only fitting that this assembly should learn from these experiences so that we can make the appropriate recommendations.

There is also an emerging form of migration that has an impact on international migration: for example, internal migration that has not been triggered by a crisis or by drift from the countryside. In fact, the move from a rural to an urban setting is a temporary one, and is followed by migration abroad. This type of migration, which is not on any development agenda, could well invalidate the mechanisms and working methods we have been implementing unless we factor it into our analysis. We must deal with this type of migration; we must learn how to empower local authorities to manage these flows of people who leave their rural environment for a semi-urban or urban environment and end by feeding irregular channels of international migration. This is a critical issue.

The last point I wished to raise has to do with international legal instruments. As you know, the only convention that exists to help migrants' families to travel or work in a way that is dignified, proper and respected by the host country is the much-talked-about International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The present total of 34 ratifications does not include a single developed country. Latin America is in the lead, followed by a few Asian and African countries. I feel that it is crucial to ensure that

migrants, including irregular migrants, are treated properly and have their rights respected.

I will stop here for the time being, but there are extraordinary possibilities for humanitarian action in relation to migration, when the latter is forced or irregular, and linked to trafficking, the persecution of persons, sexual slavery, and so forth. These are clear and recognized cases in which humanitarian action may be justified, but such action is valid only if it is conducted in synergy with the environment; because the more inhabitants leave rural areas, the more these rural areas will suffer from the degradation of their environment, which in turn will have an impact on climate change. When people move, they degrade the environment, and the process becomes a never-ending cycle. We must therefore break this vicious cycle in order to ask the right questions and encourage the involvement of all those who can help stop this process. The same holds true for health, as you have already mentioned. Another important factor pertains to brain drain – to everything the diaspora of migrants can do to support the efforts by the National Society of any country to assist development.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Yes, but I think it is probably the perception of everyone here, wherever you live, that this problem is getting bigger, not smaller. Just very briefly, Ms Ndiaye, are the gaps critical? Do you get a sense that, as you mentioned, at the political level there is still much to be done in terms of getting governments to sign up for a framework? Do you get a sense that people are coming in to actually fill the critical needs, whether it's very humanitarian like food, shelter, health care, legal advice? Are these beginning to be addressed or is there still a critical gap, from where you look at it?

Ms Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director-General of the International Organization for Migration

(Original French)

Much more needs to be done to ensure that the policies followed by the different actors operating in the same place, to assist the same people, are consistent. I believe that the international community would have everything to gain by working in a much

more coordinated and coherent fashion to solve these people's basic problems. A short while ago, you spoke of restoring family links. For example, when you run a displaced persons' camp or when migrants are moving in all directions because there is an emergency and it is difficult to ensure their safety, how can we make sure that the ICRC works together with other actors to ensure that the children who have been lost, the wives who are in one place and the husbands who are elsewhere, can find each other and once again form a normal family unit, regardless of where this unit can live? Much remains to be done, and if you agree, we can also include something to this effect in the recommendations.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Let's get a concrete example here. Where is Spain sitting? Because that's the country a lot of us would know about: tens of thousands of people in the last few years have arrived in Spain, many of them in the Canary Islands. We want to hear just about lessons learned.

Spanish Red Cross

(Original Spanish)

Thank you very much, good afternoon. From our point of view, the first lesson we learned was that working with migrants is a comprehensive task. It consists of assistance, but also of another very important element: cooperation with the National Societies in their home countries, in terms of economic development projects and assistance provided by these National Societies.

At a national level, another lesson we learned was that if we do not engage in the whole process, by providing assistance and by incorporating and integrating migrants into the community, including by supporting them in their job search and career development, in some way we have not discharged the duty incumbent upon any National Society that wishes to work with people and, above all, with vulnerable people. In short, this tells you a little about the lesson we have learned over these years, and we would also say that it has not only made us rethink the activities we carry out with migrants, but we have also used some of the ideas from our work with migrants in our work with other groups.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

It is interesting to know how people again cross-border. Societies have to work together with an international approach. That's a consistent theme. Dr David Heymann mentioned that when it comes to health; certainly, Dr Ndiaye did it when it comes to migration.

What about Sweden? Sweden, of course, has had to take in more Iraqi refugees than any other country in the world. And now that it has been ruled that, actually, Iraq is not an area of conflict, they're not described as refugees. I understand that, quite unusually, people have asked the Swedish Red Cross to take up this issue in your Society.

Swedish Red Cross

(Original English)

Yes, as you know, we are providing a number of services to the asylum seekers and refugees in Sweden. You have already mentioned legal advice, family reunification, tracing, restoring psychosocial support and a lot of other matters. But the most important area that we have to be better in is advocacy of non-discrimination and diversity, before both the general public and our government. Also, as you say, we must do the same regarding our auxiliary role to the government: we cooperate when we support the refugees and asylum seekers, but we also protest when we think that they – the government – are wrong. For instance, concerning the situation in Iraq, we think there is another tone that can be taken: you cannot send people back to Iraq for now.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

But are you getting good support from your government in this area? Because, of course, National Societies have this unique auxiliary role, working with their governments in their country.

Swedish Red Cross*(Original English)*

Yes, we have a rather good situation with our government concerning the auxiliary role. We are allowed to get support for activities and we are allowed to discuss when we don't agree. So, yes, we have.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent*(Original English)*

What about Mexico? I wonder if we can have some observations from Mexico. That's another great issue. Is it 1.5 million Mexicans that are detained every year in trying to cross the border into the United States? Or perhaps even the American Red Cross or the Mexican Red Cross want to talk a little bit about things that they've learned while coping with a problem that certainly isn't going to go away; it's getting bigger all the time. This is an issue that Mexico has had to deal with in terms of migration: people who are turned back. We know that hundreds die every year trying to make the journey to the United States. What happens? Do you help them across the border? I've heard stories about doctors helping some of the injured when they make their way back to Mexico. Is this something that actually has become a big issue for you? And, of course, you'll probably be working with the American Red Cross on this.

Mr Carlos Figueroa, Vice-President, Mexican Red Cross*(Original Spanish)*

In Mexico, the Mexican Red Cross operates on a unilateral basis. We provide care for migrants on Mexico's northern border through mobile clinics and ambulance teams at each of the border-crossing points. Mexico has a real problem: it is a country of transit for migrants who come from Central America, primarily Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua and, to a lesser extent, from South America. As these migrants journey from their country of origin to reach the North American border, they create daunting challenges for Mexico.

In 2003, the Mexican Red Cross launched a pilot programme, in coordination with Mexico's National Institute of Migration, benefiting more

than 43,000 people on our northern border. Yet we have not managed to secure the participation of the American Red Cross, despite our requests in various national and international forums, because this pilot programme would involve concerted humanitarian action on both sides of the border. We have not succeeded in this respect because the United States of America considers that managing illegal migration goes against its laws, a point of view that is reasonable and one must respect it. In Mexico, however, we provide assistance to Central Americans – Hondurans, Guatemalans, or others – without considering their origin or status. The main types of treatment are pre-hospital care, medical care, food aid in some cases and clothing in others. What came across in many of your presentations was a lack of distinction between refugees, displaced people and migrants. I believe that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must, throughout the world, provide a clear definition of economic migrants, those who, for economic reasons, emigrate from or leave their country in search of a better life. The overall aim is to replace illegal immigration by legal transmigration.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent*(Original English)*

Thank you very much. Maybe this is a thought to take with you to the Conference tomorrow: the representatives from both Spain and Mexico mentioned the importance of all the National Societies working together across borders. Perhaps that is something to think about in terms of moving forward. The Mexican delegate mentioned some difficulties in this regard, because people might be looking at it differently from different sides of the border. But, in terms of looking to the future, that certainly would seem to be one of the ways of exploring this further.

Panel discussion: Environmental degradation, including climate change**Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent***(Original English)*

We're going to take up more of the questions in terms of international migration in a moment, but we are

going to focus on climate change now. Do you know ... does it ever strike you, when you watch those ads on television for climate change, that they're always about polar bears and birds and animals? I haven't seen many ads where there actually are people. The humanitarian consequences of the climate change: I was talking to Dr Heymann about that today: "Are we conscious enough of other people when it comes to climate change?" Let me just quote Rajendra Pachauri, who is Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: "Most of the uncertainties have been resolved and they confirm that the poorest of the poor are most likely to be hit by the impacts of climate change." We don't just watch out for climate change; the purpose of this discussion is also environmental degradation. While we sit here, it's happening almost everywhere we live, around the world. And what does that mean? There is a reduction in the capacity of the environment to meet social and ecological objectives: in plain terms, in people's ability to actually live, survive.

Dr Han, you've been travelling the world. We are very grateful he was able to join us here. He has been talking to the good and great on the very political level, about something to replace Kyoto, because, of course, he has been living with the Red Cross for several decades. Let us start by talking about what needs to be done on the global level – since that is your main concern – in terms of dealing with ... at the end of the day, for the purposes of this, it is going to be humanitarian consequences. But what has to be done on that level?

Dr Han Seung-Soo, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Climate Change

(Original English)

I think science is very clear that global warming is the result of human activity, and human activities are compromising human security everywhere today. A global climatic degradation, or climatic upheavals, are causing serious harm to human beings through increased floods, droughts, heat waves or even storms. I think the so-called BAU (business as usual) approach will not do, because if we go on like this without taking any special measures, then by the end of this century, according to the predictions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the average global temperature will increase by six degrees centigrade. If we compare this with the one degree centigrade increase during the past 10,000 years, it is quite a reasonable amount of increase. So we have to be very careful.

Because this is global, we need a global undertaking. The Secretary-General of the United Nations identified climate change as one of his top priorities and he is fully committed to playing a leadership role in helping spur the global response to this. In that spirit, he opened a high-level event on climate change on 24 September, on the margin of the general debate of the United Nations General Assembly. At the time, over 80 heads of state and governments were gathered in New York to discuss this problem; they now realize that this is their problem as well. It is a global problem and it needs a global response.

By the end of 2012 we will see the current Kyoto Protocol expire. So we will need to replace or substitute the Kyoto Protocol after that, and to do that we have only two years. We have to finish negotiations among governments by the end of 2009, because we need two or three years for the ratification process in the international assemblies of the respective countries. So we are going to have a so-called 13th CoP (Conference of Parties) at the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) in Bali, starting on 3 December this year. This will be a very important conference and we hope that individual governments will be able to agree on a roadmap for the negotiations. I don't know what will happen then, but we hope that all the representatives who are coming to Bali will be united in dealing with this problem so as to have a good roadmap for negotiations during the next two years.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

But do you feel that this issue of human vulnerability to the impact of climate change is given enough importance on the national and international agenda?

Dr Han Seung-Soo, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Climate Change

(Original English)

Indeed, climate change ignores national boundaries. One nation may be able to deal with it, but it is not enough. It is necessary but it is not enough. You need regional cooperation and also a global undertaking in dealing with these problems. Usually, those who suffer most from climate change are the least developed

countries or small islands, developing countries, and the poor and the elderly. They are the ones who have contributed the least in bringing about climate change. We are all vulnerable, but more vulnerable than most of us are the poor and the elderly. And we have to do something about it: so-called adaptation to climate change is one of the very important issues that we have to deal with.

There are four pillars in dealing with climate change. One is mitigation: changing our values to reduce the magnitude and pace of climate change. Another is adaptation to the new situation. The third is technological innovation: we think that it is through technological innovation that we will be able to solve some of the problems. And the fourth is financing, because for mitigation – according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and according to the UNFCCC – by 2030, we will need 200 billion US dollars. For adaptation, for developing countries alone, in 2030 we will need – but this figure is rather uncertain – from US\$ 28 to 68 billion. It is a huge amount of money, in addition to the resources now available for the Millennium Development Goals. So we have to be united, particularly with developing countries. Members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have to spend more money on helping developing countries in this.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

We have a question from Gwendolyn Nisbett of the Saint Kitts and Nevis Red Cross Society. How does the UN plan to persuade governments to involve communities at the grassroots level in dialogue and action on climate change?

Dr Han Seung-Soo, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Climate Change

(Original English)

I think the United Nations should draw the worldwide, community-level resources of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies into a new network. We haven't done that. I think there is room for very close cooperation between Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and the United Nations. This is the work that we have to do together in the future.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

What would you see as some of the main humanitarian consequences? What are the main areas that should be addressed for the purposes of this discussion and for adaptation by people, to prepare for the future? Of course, we cannot be completely prepared because we do not actually completely know what is coming in terms of degradation and risks and threats as well. What would you see in terms of the consequences that people should be looking out for?

Dr Han Seung-Soo, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Climate Change

(Original English)

Many people think that climate change is an environmental issue, but it is actually more than an environmental problem. It is a problem of sustainable development. It is probably also an issue related to international security: last April, the Security Council of the United Nations discussed climate change as an international security issue. So it involves more than degradation of the environment. Humanitarian problems are one issue, but there are more problems associated with climate change than the humanitarian sort. Therefore, I think high politics of the world is trying to solve this problem. I don't know if they will succeed, but we are trying very hard to do so.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Good! Let me bring in Mawanda here. You have been at a lot of youth meetings of late, discussing matters with your colleagues. When it comes to climate change ... is that something where the youth believe they can play a larger role in terms of mobilization, helping people to prepare, and in risk reduction?

Mr Mawanda Shaban, Member of the Youth Commission, Uganda Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Thank you very much. Of course, the subject today, globally, is climate change. And, in fact, we, the youth,

are worried about what kind of world we are going to live in. When it comes to climate change, I am sure that the International Federation has already made interventions. You have heard of floods that have been happening everywhere. We, the youth, especially in the International Federation, have not been sitting idly. We have contributed much, actually, when it comes to relief distribution, when it comes to evacuations, to these challenges presented by climate change. In my country, at the moment we are facing floods. I have been there, I have watched what the youth are doing and I have also been engaged. The youth have helped in a lot of ways. The youth do mobilization, to create awareness of the predictions that have been given by the meteorological centre, and so on. So, the fact is that the youth are committed; the youth have done something.

However, I think that what also needs to be done, as I pointed out, concerns the issue of environmental preservation. I think that we have to work together – governments and so on, and we as civil society organizations – to create awareness, to talk to all the people. We have to make mass campaigns – mass mobilization – to spread information about the effects of climate change. I think we have to work together; we have to make regional partnerships. Regional partnerships: what that means is that where we come from, three or four countries should join together and come up with strategies. When we faced these floods, which I never imagined that Uganda would face – but Kenya had faced them and they had experience – the Kenya Red Cross came in to support the Uganda Red Cross. I think regional partnerships will provide much support because regions might face very similar climatic challenges. However, I want to recognize that we, the youth – especially within the International Federation – are looking into this area critically, and we have the commitment to come in where possible.

Ms Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director-General of the International Organization for Migration

(Original French)

I would like to bring up the issue of capacity building for youth. How can we empower them to take charge of this type of action in the field? It's not that obvious. They have no place to learn this and they are facing a new challenge. In my opinion, the Conference could include in its conclusions a plan of action for training young people in National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Thank you. Thank you very much. I wonder whether anyone from the American Red Cross might like to offer some reflections on lessons learned after Katrina. Of course, natural disasters continue to be a problem on the coasts of the United States.

Ms Bonnie McElveen-Hunter, Chair, American Red Cross

(Original English)

As you all know, we did experience a disaster in the United States with Katrina, beyond the scope of anything that we had ever experienced before, and we have indeed learned lots of lessons as a result of our disaster relief arising from that huge disaster. Just very briefly – I know your time is limited: although we are very much aware of the need of positioning relief supplies, we have learnt new lessons on the types of supplies that are needed and how to pre-position relief supplies, especially in the areas of greatest vulnerability. We also have learned that we have to increase our partnerships with other organizations, organizations that may, perhaps, have people within them that can help us reach ethnically diverse populations, especially the Mexican population along the coast or along the border with Mexico. We also learned some lessons about our roles and responsibilities with regard to the Federal government. We have had ongoing discussions with the Federal government and better prepared ourselves with the Federal government, with respect to those roles and responsibilities. Lastly, local governments and State governments: it is important to have discussions with them. We have learned lessons on how to collaborate better with local and State governments. All of these things, we think, will help us in the future. Heaven forbid we have another disaster of that magnitude.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Yes, well, we hope you or anyone else won't have a disaster of that magnitude, but, unfortunately, it is probably more likely than not likely. Nicaragua – I saw on your website – did a disaster preparation

study, trying to involve local communities. I wonder if Nicaragua might like to come in: again, a country that is lashed by storms. What about Germany? After the floods in 2002, lessons learned? We didn't expect that to be happening, the flooding of the river Elbe all across Central Europe. Do you want to offer any insights?

German Red Cross

(Original English)

Yes, thank you. Lessons learned? Quite a lot of lessons learned! First of all, we had to learn that inside Germany we have to prepare ourselves for disasters, to a degree that we hadn't expected. Secondly, we had to learn that Nature does not pay attention to building plans. That means that we had to learn that a lot of houses in some regions were built where you should never build houses. And that had to be corrected in the rehabilitation phase: a tremendous effort. It took us three years to rehabilitate – in the proper places – the right houses, which was a huge task for the German Red Cross as well. And we had an external evaluation of all the interventions that were done during the floods. We found out that we had to reform our disaster preparedness system in Germany totally. We had to reform our Red Cross disaster preparedness system, which, until then, had been designed to provide shelter for 30,000 people within 24 hours instead of providing punctual assistance for people who were left alone in homes, for the elderly left alone in hospitals that had to be evacuated. We are still working on this. Thank you very much.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Thank you. Well, thank you to both of you for sharing some of the lessons learned. I know we all like to think we are the best society, the best government, but it is good to know that people have taken their experiences on. The American Red Cross have mentioned the vulnerable population. Something to bear in mind for National Societies and governments: How to find the most vulnerable people in times of crisis? Also this question: since you actually don't know what is going to hit you, and houses should not have been built in some areas, expect the unexpected. So thank you for that. Thank you, Dr Han, for sharing your reflections as well.

Panel discussion: Violence in urban settings

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

We are going to move on now to our fourth challenge, which is urban violence. For the first time in history, more than 50% of the world is living in urban areas. Of course, as we all know, that offers great opportunities, but it also has great disadvantages in terms of growing poverty, in terms of marginalization, in terms of violence, in terms of what we want to look at today, and risks. Now, we are not focusing particularly on armed conflict here – although there are of course manifestations of that in the aftermath of armed conflict in terms of big cities – but on violence within communities. Let me quote you on what your mission is. Your mission statement says that you must “prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.” Just before I came here I looked at the news. There was violence at the football matches in Brazil and violence again in France. So, let us just take a look at the phenomenon of urban violence. Dr Sima Samar is going to help us look at that. Let us begin by looking at, perhaps, some of the humanitarian consequences of what is, of course, a huge topic.

Dr Sima Samar, Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

(Original English)

I think violence causes a lot of human disasters, but it affects the highly populated areas more, like the urban areas. I think violence leads to the violation of a lot of human rights, basic human rights. If I look at basic human rights – like the right to life, right to access to education, right to health care, right to clean water, right to shelter – they are all violated during violence. And this can be conflict or it can be community violence; it can be suicide attacks like those that, unfortunately, we are facing these days. I think that whatever violates human rights does lead to human disasters. I think violence is a man-made disaster. So, I think we have to try to prevent any kind of violence within the community.

As I said, it can be armed conflict, it can be violence within the community, it can be violence in the form of a gang act or gang rape; it can be suicide attacks

of the kind that we face in some countries these days. Violence causes violations of basic human rights and it does cause a lot of human disasters. For example, take just the access to professional opportunities, access to job opportunities. I can give the example of Afghanistan as a conflict area. The youth in Afghanistan – because they cannot choose their own profession, because they don't have a lot of opportunities to work or have a job that they want – go and grow poppy and opium. Or they go and join some of the armed groups and take part in the violence that causes a lot of human disasters.

I think violence does affect everybody in the community. If you look at children – they are the future of humanity and of human society – it has a lot of effect on them: it reduces their access to education, reduces their access to food, reduces their access to health care; it just restricts all their movement. And if you look at women, you will see, actually, how much violence restricts women's movement: women's access to health care, women's access to education. And lack of education causes a lot of violence. So, I think that everybody within the society is affected by violence and we are all responsible and we have to be committed to reducing violence.

I believe that preventing violence is less expensive than intervening to stop the violence: that is the idea that we have. Everybody has an obligation; everybody has a responsibility to really try to prevent violence, whether it is international conflict, national conflict, a tribal problem within the society and community, or a gang within the society.

I think the problem is inequality and lack of access to basic social services. Poverty is causing a lot of violence. I think violence and poverty are very much linked to each other. So, rejection of poverty will help to prevent a lot of violence. And I believe that freedom from poverty and freedom from violence are basic human rights. We all have to respect human rights and human dignity if we really want to have more change and a better world.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

You mentioned poverty, you mentioned the lack of jobs. Are there other ways in which people can address the issue of violence, particularly as it affects those who are most vulnerable? How to increase their resilience, how to protect them from living in fear?

Dr Sima Samar, Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

(Original English)

Well, I think one of the issues is poverty. I think the international community and the developed countries really have to commit themselves to reducing poverty in every part of the world and to helping every human being who is in need. I think what is already decided by international community that which percentage of their income should go to the reduction of poverty is important. That is important. Promoting access to health care – especially, I think, to preventive health – is essential to reducing poverty in every country. I think it is everybody's responsibility to do that.

The other issue is access to development and security. Without security, we cannot have development. Without development, we cannot have sustainable security. Of course, lack of security causes a lot of violence. I think they are interlinked and everybody has the obligation, especially the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to try and do more in order to prevent violence within the society. They can help with the reduction of poverty and, of course, help those people who are displaced because of either conflict or violence, and the people who are refugees. This is a big burden on the ICRC, on National Societies and on the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The violence or humanitarian disaster is so great that the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies cannot, by themselves, really deal with it. So, we have to provide support, and everybody has to have a commitment to providing this support and reduce the violence in every part of the world. Because, I think, everything is globalized these days. If we have violence in one part of the world, it does reach another part of the world. So, once again, there is the question of humanity. And then we have to deal with it and it is our responsibility.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Thank you. Mawanda, I imagine you would have some thoughts on youth. I mean, that is one of the big problems in terms of urban violence, youth gangs, and youth being attracted by these possibilities. Volunteering itself brings civic engagement. Are there any specific areas in which the youth are working to

try to tackle these areas and where they could also do more?

Mr Mawanda Shaban, Member of the Youth Commission, Uganda Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Well, of course, it is a fact that when you talk about violence, even when you talk about migration, you cannot separate it from the youth. But I would like to look, in thirty seconds, at what causes this violence. And the major challenge is definitely lack of integration with the society. Once there is lack of integration, when the youth are not integrated, when the women are not integrated – culturally, economically, or socially – there will be violence. So, I think that there should be campaigns to integrate the community – the women, the youth, the different tribal sectors and cultural sectors in the community. I think then there will be no violence at all. But this does not mean that the International Federation has not addressed this. The fact is that the Federation has already tackled this area. They have tried. The thing is, we have seen some youth in their school links. Because, as you know, the International Federation is global, but then it is operating at a very local level. We have seen some links. There are school clubs that are having campaigns against bullying. We have seen the youth – in different communities in different National Societies – having campaigns against stigmatization, against discrimination, and so on. So I think that the whole issue of violence needs to deal with the integration of all the sectors in the community.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Now we have a question from the Ghana Red Cross Society, from – I think it's – Andrews Frimpong. He wants to know, "to what extent the youth migration influences urban violence if you get young people moving into new communities and changing the mix obviously?"

Dr Sima Samar, Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

(Original English)

Well, coming from a country with a long conflict, my experience is that we have a lot of youth who come

to the urban areas or to the cities in order to look for job opportunities. Unfortunately, if they do not find jobs – of course, they have to try to find a living and try to feed their families – they might join gangs and take part in robberies. It is important to remember that most members of the young generation move to the cities in order to get an education. But if there are not enough facilities for education for them, then, of course, they try to find ways to live. Given the drugs in the society, and also the large number of weapons in this conflict-affected society, they could easily join the different groups that are active in the production or smuggling of drugs, or join the armed groups that exist throughout the country. Unfortunately, we live in such a society and these are the problems we face. I think that in order to reduce violence within this society, within countries throughout the world, the important issue in the social sector is education. We have to look at education and really find ways to tolerate each other, to promote equality, and high-quality education. We have to do this in order to reduce the opportunities for the youth to join those different groups and to provide more opportunities for them to get an education, to get better jobs, to live in a better environment. Which is better than participating in drug trafficking or armed conflicts.

I think because of the violence we could see a lot of migration. I mean, everything is linked – the environment, migration, health problems – with violence, of course. We can see how many of our youth are going to Pakistan or to Iran in order to seek job opportunities, and then how many problems and how much discrimination they really face in those circumstances. So, everything is linked with violence, and I hope that we will have a world without violence and full of equality and justice.

Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter and correspondent

(Original English)

Well, that would certainly be a wish for all of us. Before you go, Dr Han – I know you also have to catch your flight to Brussels – do you have any last thoughts about how all the different components of the Movement – the National Societies, the International Federation, the ICRC – and governments can all work together to tackle these massive problems. A thought from you before you go.

**Dr Han Seung-Soo, UN Secretary-General's
Special Envoy on Climate Change**

(Original English)

Well, not only climate change but all the other issues should be integrated into national policy planning in some way. Some sectors are neglected, but I think if we have comprehensive national plans, in conjunction with a global sort of undertaking, it will certainly help solve some of the problems.

**Dr David Heymann, Assistant Director-General
of the World Health Organization**

(Original English)

You know, Lyse, in 2003 a new virus, the SARS virus, jumped across human populations and spread around the world. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies mobilized at that time to get ready, should this cause a major pandemic. We are facing another threat today, the threat of a pandemic of influenza. And the Red Cross and Red Crescent will be very, very important should this pandemic develop or rather when it develops. So we need the Red Cross and Red Crescent to help us remain prepared for anything that might come up. It might surprise us; it might cause an epidemic or a pandemic.

**Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC presenter
and correspondent**

(Original English)

Dr Heymann, Mawanda, Dr Sima Samar, Dr Han, thank you to all of you. I am a bit disappointed that not

very many of you sent in your questions. I don't know whether that is because you don't like Canadians, you don't like the BBC, you're a bit tired. But I hope that at least you have taken some inspiration from our speakers. Certainly, I think what they have left me with is a sense that there is a role for your Movement in all of these critical areas and that it is critically important that all the different components of the Movement and other members of international organizations and governments work together, across borders, within their countries and internationally as well. May you take away as well the thought that this is something that must continue to be discussed. I hope you will discuss it at the reception this evening and, of course, I wish you the best when you discuss it at the Conference tomorrow. I look forward to seeing some of you in the field again for a cup of tea. Thank you very much for being with us for the panel.

**Invitation to the reception hosted by the
Swiss Federal Council and the authorities
of the Republic and Canton of Geneva
and of the City of Geneva**

H.E. Blaise Godet

(Original English)

Dear delegates, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Swiss Federal Council, and on behalf of the State Council of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and of the Administrative Council of the City of Geneva, I take great pleasure in inviting every one of you to a traditional Swiss buffet. The reception will take place outside this room in the lobby of the Conference centre, right now, after the closure of this meeting. Thank you for attending this reception. Thank you.

4.6 SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Tuesday 27 November 2007

(9.30 a.m.)

4.6.1 ORGANIZATION OF WORK (CONTINUED): WORKSHOPS, SIDE EVENTS, PLEDGES AND PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

**Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Excellencies, dear Red Cross and Red Crescent friends and colleagues, welcome back to the Conference and welcome back to our second plenary meeting today. After our very interesting panel discussions yesterday evening, I hope we are all inspired for the general debate on the future of humanitarian challenges. Before I open the floor for the general debate, we have a report on the panel discussions last night, but also, before I do that, the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ambassador Stephan Husy, will give us information on the workshops, side events, pledge procedure, and also, briefly, on the election of members to the Standing Commission.

**Mr Stephan Husy,
Secretary-General of the Conference**

(Original French)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to pass on some information relating to the workshops and side events that will take place during the Conference. Before doing so, could I please remind you that the speakers' list is open until 11 a.m. and is located just outside this room, on my left.

Ten workshops will be held alongside the Conference on Wednesday evening and Thursday morning. Please refer to the programme, which has been

distributed. These informal events will provide a further opportunity to examine and discuss various issues relating to the subject matter dealt with during the Conference. Officially, the workshops are not part of the formal agenda of the Conference, and there is no requirement for decisions to be taken or to be reached by consensus. The workshops will be the subject of a brief report at the final plenary meeting on Friday.

In addition to the workshops, information sessions are also planned alongside the official Conference programme. These events will highlight experiences and best practice connected with the themes and objectives of the Conference.

Conference participants are encouraged, as they were four years ago, to make voluntary pledges for the period 2008-2011, either individually or in partnership with others. Pledge forms will be available during Conference working hours, at the desk just outside the room, on my left, in the same place. An overview of participants' pledges will be presented during the final plenary meeting on Friday morning.

I will now give you some information about the procedure for electing the members of the Standing Commission. Along with their invitations, all delegations will have received a note explaining the procedure, terms and conditions for electing the five members of the Standing Commission. The election procedure is governed by Article 21 of the Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. These texts were distributed along with the other Conference documents. Detailed information concerning the candidates already put forward is available on the Standing Commission website. It is still possible to put candidates forward for election to the Standing Commission. The deadline is 2 p.m. today, 48 hours before the opening of the meeting at which the vote will take place. Nominations should be delivered to the Bureau in closed envelopes. Candidates must be members of a National Society. When you vote, please bear in mind Article 21 of the Rules of Procedure, which asks that you take account of candidates' personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution. At least 24 hours before the election, you will find the names

and CVs of all the candidates in your pigeon-holes along with a proxy form, which must be completed by the head of delegation if he is unable to attend, thus enabling a nominated person from within the delegation to take his place. An informal meeting to introduce the candidates will take place at 6 p.m. today in the Centre de conférences de Varembe, opposite the CICG, in Room A. The vote itself will take place during the third plenary session of the Conference on Thursday. We would therefore ask all delegations to be present on Thursday at 2 p.m. sharp for the roll call of members and the start of the vote. If fewer than five candidates obtain an absolute majority during the first ballot, a second ballot will be held, starting at 6 p.m. the same day. If the first ballot has not finished by that time, the second ballot will be held on Friday at 9 a.m.

Finally, I would like to remind you that any documentation you wish to circulate must be submitted to the Bureau of this Conference for advance approval. I would like in particular to emphasize that the distribution of documents on delegates' tables in the plenary is reserved for official documents. Since promotional material relating to the Standing Commission elections was left on delegates' tables in the plenary, as an exceptional measure we will allow the other candidates to submit a request to the Secretary-General to do likewise. Thank you.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, Mr Husy, for those clearly explained practical procedures and, now, we'll proceed in order to make our Conference the success that we all want it to be.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, we would like to receive the report on the panel discussions that took place last night. Our Conference rapporteur, Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki, is on his way up here.

4.6.2 COLLABORATIVE ACTION AND PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES (CONTINUED)

Summary of the panel's presentations

H.E. Mr Ichiro Fujisaki, Conference rapporteur

(Original French)

Madam Chairwoman, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great honour for me to be elected rapporteur for this important Conference. A great honour for me, but this is not a common cliché for an ambassador, it's true. But, as always, honour comes with responsibility. My responsibility is to be neutral and impartial. I promise you that I will be both. I will also be brief so I will not quote every intervention. I will concentrate on the main points. My duty now is to report on the panel discussion of yesterday afternoon. It is not easy to report on a panel discussion in which almost everyone participated, but I will try. Don't worry, I will stop speaking in poor French. I will switch to another international language, Japanese – which unfortunately is not one of the five languages mentioned by the Chairwoman. So English then.

(Original English)

The panel was the first such attempt in the long history of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference. It lived up to, even went beyond, our expectations. It was stimulating. This was due to the quality and the variety of the discussions. Also, we had a very powerful and dedicated moderator, Ms Lyse Doucet. The panel made it clear that the choice of theme for the Conference was right. Four topics were proved to be the most important challenges. It was clear that no one country or National Society alone can cope with them, but that concerted efforts are what is required. Let me summarize some of the major points.

Dr Heymann of WHO stressed that 15 million people die of communicable diseases every year. He cited several cases in which the Red Cross and Red Crescent played a key role in crucial times when local health systems were in jeopardy. He, especially, highly commended volunteers. He, however, stated that there remain gaps and that to cope with them, it is essential to develop an efficient cooperation between National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, governments and other institutions.

Ms Ndioro Ndiaye of the IOM stressed that migration requires an overall approach that goes beyond systems. She also appreciated the importance of cooperation between the IOM and the Red Cross and Red Crescent. She stated that the strength of a National Society is that it is auxiliary to a government, and that at the same time it maintains its total independence. She said much more has to be done by the international community and it is to be regretted that no developed country has ratified the Convention of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families. She stressed that the capacity building of youth by the Red Cross and Red Crescent was key.

Dr Han Seung-Soo, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General, stressed that climate change is a security issue as well. Business as usual is no longer possible. He stated that we urgently need to negotiate a new Protocol since the Kyoto Protocol will expire in 2012. Negotiations start next week in Bali. He suggested that developing close cooperation between the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the United Nations was imperative.

Dr Sima Samar shared with us her expertise in the field of urban violence, based on her own experiences in war-torn Afghanistan. Violence has a devastating impact on human rights and dignity. She stressed that poverty and the lack of jobs are the hotbeds of violence. She called for further commitment, especially by developed countries, towards this end.

Mr Shaban Mawanda, of the Ugandan Red Cross Society, contributed as a representative of the new generation. He stated that the youth are concerned about the future and ready to engage in increasing awareness. He also stressed that more integration is needed and that the International Federation has been working towards this end.

Time limits were respected during the discussions. And in between the debates, some of us recalled our schooldays – when the teacher was looking around to point to a pupil to answer her – and looked down in order to avoid eye contact with the moderator.

It was felt by some that a little more discussion among the panellists could have made the panel even more worthwhile. But, to be fair, through this approach, the moderator stimulated our discussion and made it quite lively. We enjoyed it.

Through question-and-answer sessions, the need to enhance cross-border cooperation between National Societies was stressed. Valuable individual experiences were shared. In concluding, let me make

a few remarks. The issues we discussed pointed to the importance of imagination. Through the use of our imagination, we can prepare ourselves so as not to be taken by surprise, we can be more mindful about others' pain, we can be more tolerant of others, we can be cognizant that everyone needs some hope.

What should be done concretely is to step up cooperation among those concerned: governments, National Societies, the International Federation, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, international organizations and other stakeholders. Governments should have integrated plans to cope with these interlinked problems; in particular, developed countries are expected to step up their cooperation. In the capacity building of youth in any of these fields, the Red Cross and Red Crescent is expected to play a bigger role. Lastly, if I may, it is recommended that this kind of seminar be repeated in the 31st Conference. It deserves that. I would like to thank Ms Toivola of the International Federation, Ms Haroff Tavel and Mr Bugnion of the ICRC for assisting me in preparing the report. I thank you, Madam Chair.

General debate on partnerships to address the humanitarian consequences of environmental degradation, international migration, violence in urban settings and emergent and recurrent diseases

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, Ambassador Fujisaki. Now ladies and gentlemen, we have come to that stage where we finally open the debate. The general debate is now open, but I would like to say a few words in order for us to keep to certain confines of the debating process.

I'd like to appeal to all speakers to strictly adhere to the time limit. There will be a clock on the video screen, which will help you to time yourself and to keep track of the length of time you have taken.

May I also bring to the attention of the observers on the speakers' list the following advice: approximately five minutes before you are up to speak, please go to the last row in the upper portion of the room, where seats have been reserved for you to speak from. All observers do please take note of that. To save time, approximately five minutes before you are to speak,

please proceed to the back row at the top end of the room.

Please also note that you can distribute the text of your statements to the participants by providing the necessary copies at the tables reserved for this purpose. To facilitate the translation process, please submit a written version of your statement at the desk on the other side, on my left in this room.

Finally, I'd want to underline once more that statements by delegations must be in strict compliance with Article 11.4 of the Statutes, which stipulates as follows: "All participants in the International Conference shall respect the Fundamental Principles and all documents presented shall conform to these principles. In order that the debates shall command the confidence of all, the Chairman shall ensure that none of the speakers, at any time, engages in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature." Now, ladies and gentlemen, the first speaker is the delegate from the Government of Portugal. Sir, you have the floor.

**Mr Augusto Santos Silva,
Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Portugal,
on behalf of the European Union**

(Original English)

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration. The EU looks forward to working with you and all the delegations present in a constructive manner. We are confident that, together, we will be able to achieve a positive outcome at this Conference.

The focus of this session could not be more appropriate as we are all increasingly concerned about the impact of climate change, degradation of natural resources, international migration and health challenges. This brings us to the slogan of the Conference, "Together for humanity." Interaction, coordination and sharing of responsibilities constitute the only ways in which to address new humanitarian challenges. Global-scale emergency situations demand global-scale collective responses.

The frequency and intensity of natural disasters have been on the rise over the past few years and,

unfortunately, the latest assessments from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change show that this trend will continue. We therefore reaffirm the importance of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action and its disaster preparedness strategies, and call upon all relevant actors to coordinate efforts undertaken at headquarters and field levels in this regard.

International migration is also a key priority for the EU. We are concerned about forced displacement and we believe that the Movement should continue to have a central role in addressing the human consequences of this phenomenon.

The EU regrets that violence in urban settings is a leading cause of preventable human suffering worldwide. While acknowledging that the primary responsibility for ensuring adequate care and support for the victims of violence lies with the State, the EU would like to emphasize the importance of violence prevention programmes that take into account community mobilization with respect for diversity at its core. The EU welcomes the Movement's efforts to address this relevant issue.

Despite increased efforts and resources, the number of people infected and dying from HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis continues to rise. More than six million people in the world die each year from the three diseases. The EU is pleased to see the resolve of the Movement in addressing those in need, especially in countries that lack basic infrastructures. We will continue to support coordinated international efforts by UN agencies, NGOs and the Movement in this important challenge.

The number and complexity of conflict-affected countries have increased over past years, posing serious threats to humanitarian action in the field. The EU is deeply concerned about the lack of security for humanitarian personnel, including the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and reiterates the need to fully cooperate with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations.

The EU strongly reaffirms the continued relevance of international humanitarian law and the obligation on all parties involved to respect it in all international and non-international armed conflicts, and in situations of occupation arising from an armed conflict. For this reason, the EU adopted "Guidelines on Promoting Compliance with International Humanitarian Law" in the year 2005. The purpose of these guidelines is to set out operational tools for the EU and its institutions and bodies to use in promoting compliance with

international humanitarian law. They underline the EU's commitment to promoting such compliance in a visible and consistent manner, and are addressed to all those taking action within the framework of the EU. They also aim to address compliance with international humanitarian law by third States and, where appropriate, non-State actors operating in these third States.

I come to my conclusion: international humanitarian law continues to provide vital protection for the victims of any type of armed conflict. We call upon all participants in this Conference to send a clear message reiterating the importance of preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict situations and the relevance of international humanitarian law to this goal. The EU consensus on humanitarian aid, reached last week, will reaffirm the fundamental principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence as cornerstones for the provision of humanitarian assistance, together with the need to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law.

The EU also reaffirms that terrorism continues to represent one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and must be universally condemned. However, counter-terrorism initiatives must be conducted with respect for the rule of law and in full conformity with international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, when applicable.

At the 28th International Conference, the European Union presented four common pledges. I remember them: raising public awareness in relation to international humanitarian law, supporting the International Criminal Court, promoting respect for international humanitarian law in peacekeeping operations, and promoting early ratification and implementation of the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War. We have already presented a proficiency report on activities undertaken during the past four years and we are happy to give further clarification to the Movement and, of course, to receive feedback from your organization.

Now we are pleased to undertake new commitments and therefore present the following seven pledges: to support public dissemination and training on international humanitarian law, to promote national implementation and enforcement of international humanitarian law, to respect fundamental procedure and other guarantees in relation to those detained in relation to an armed conflict, to promote the

internationalization of standards for the export of arms, to address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, to support the guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance, and finally, to support the development of partnerships with National Societies in EU Member States.

The Member States of the EU are looking forward to developing further joint efforts with all governments, international organizations and National Societies, in a true spirit of partnership, towards an enhanced protection of populations in need. Neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence are the principles pertaining to humanitarian assistance.

**H.E. Mr Radojko Bogojević, State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Serbia**

(Original English)

As the delegation of the Republic of Serbia joined the EU statement, and in line with one of the general debate topics, my remarks will focus on cooperation between the State authorities of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the National Red Cross Society of Serbia.

Bearing in mind the fact that, in recent years, the Republic of Serbia was faced with armed conflicts both in neighbouring countries and on its own territory, it deems that adequate and timely provision of humanitarian assistance to people in need is extremely important.

Since 1990, the Republic of Serbia has given refuge to more than half a million refugees. This number has since been reduced to 100,000 in Serbia today, due to their becoming locally integrated as well as to their return to their countries of origin. The Republic of Serbia has been working, and will continue to actively work, on the full implementation of the Sarajevo Declaration signed in 2005. Unfortunately, although this process had to be finalized by the end of 2006, it has not been completed yet.

On the other hand, it is with sadness and concern that I have to emphasize that the number of internally displaced persons who were forced to leave Serbia and the province of Kosovo and Metohija in 1999, has remained almost the same until the present day. The Republic of Serbia has been providing shelter for eight years for 210,000 internally displaced persons from the province and for 20,000 internally

displaced persons in the province itself. Of special concern is the fact that, despite the eight-year-long international presence there, fewer than 10,000 persons have returned to Kosovo and Metohija, which is a negligible number compared to the total number of internally displaced persons.

In the efforts made by the State authorities, aimed at providing adequate assistance to the refugees and internally displaced persons during their long displacement, the Red Cross of Serbia has proved to be a reliable partner.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia is investing enormous efforts in the ongoing negotiations on the future status of Kosovo and Metohija. Taking into account humanitarian challenges that might be the consequence of any unilateral act, the Government of the Republic of Serbia holds a firm position that it is possible and necessary to reach a compromise through negotiations and without imposing artificial deadlines.

In this context, the Red Cross of Serbia is exceptionally important in tracing missing persons and informing the families of victims of the armed conflicts, in accordance with the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. The Red Cross of Serbia is performing these functions on behalf of, and for the Government, as its public powers with which it is invested.

Bearing this in mind, I wish to inform you that the Republic of Serbia and the National Red Cross Society of Serbia have joined in the pledge to restore family links. The other pledge made jointly by the Republic of Serbia and the Red Cross of Serbia at this Conference concerns the problem of cluster munitions and participation in finding a way of banning the use of this type of munition, which affects the civilian population above all, including children.

As a representative from a State that is party to the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, I wish to point to the irreplaceable role of the Red Cross of Serbia in the field of dissemination of international humanitarian law. In addition, there are many other fields of cooperation between the competent authorities of the Government of Serbia and the Red Cross of Serbia, such as health, emergency aid, blood donation and so on.

On many occasions, the Red Cross of Serbia has gained international recognition for its work in this respect. The Red Cross of Serbia has also been active in numerous operations related to natural disasters and other accidents, both in the country and in other

States, through partnerships with other National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Madam Chair, the Red Cross of Serbia is one of the oldest National Societies in the Movement, active for more than 130 years. The Government of the Republic of Serbia recognizes the need for further development of the Red Cross of Serbia as an independent National Society that will fully operate in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. Madam Chair, we are faced today with numerous challenges in the modern world, such as international and local conflicts, global terrorism, the complex issue of migration, pandemics and contagious diseases and ever more frequent large-scale natural disasters. Therefore, I wish to believe that all of us who are present in this Conference room are aware of the need for adequate international engagement and constructive cooperation, and for the creation of a framework for prevention and rapid action in humanitarian catastrophes, in an effort to prevent and, when necessary, ease the suffering of the affected population and to provide timely and full assistance in line with the Conference slogan, "Together for humanity."

**H.E. Sameh Shoukry,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Egypt, Geneva**

(Original English)

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the African Group. The present Conference is being held at a time when serious threats and challenges pose greater risks to humanity. This requires firm and concerted action on the part of the States Parties and all components of the humanitarian movement. In this context, I would like to express the appreciation of the African Group to the ICRC and the International Federation for the documents that have been prepared for this Conference, which constitutes a good basis for our deliberations.

The central theme of the Conference, "Together for humanity," is most appropriate. The four identified challenges constituting the focus of the Conference – environmental degradation, the humanitarian dimension of international migration, violence in urban settings, emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges – are of paramount importance.

With regarding to international migration, we emphasize the importance of identifying ways and means to maximize its developmental benefits and

to reduce its negative impact. Better cooperation is needed – among governments, National Societies, international organizations and NGOs – in dealing with the humanitarian problems encountered by migrants and ensuring the protection of their rights.

Reducing the vulnerability of populations to the effects of natural disasters, armed conflicts, food insecurity and diseases is a priority in Africa. Environmental challenges such as desertification and land degradation, in addition to natural disasters and climate change, are threatening the livelihood of Africans and endangering the continent's socio-economic progress and its ecosystems. Food insecurity has a number of root causes, including environmental degradation, disease and armed conflict. In spite of documented successes, the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria continue to adversely affect the African continent.

All the challenges before us require the intensifying of partnerships and the revitalizing of joint efforts between governments and National Societies, and with other institutions and organizations. In doing so, it is necessary to take into account the different capacities of States and National Societies in dealing with these challenges. We therefore reiterate that mobilizing the necessary international financial and technical resources, in addition to building local capacity to respond to humanitarian challenges, particularly in African countries, is essential.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the African Group's appreciation for the continuous and enhanced efforts deployed by the ICRC and the International Federation to improve the situation of people adversely affected by armed conflicts, disasters and diseases in Africa. I would like to express the need for a firm and effective response in countering the emergence of new forms of mercenary activity in armed conflict, which have caused immense suffering, as well as the need to reject any attempts to legitimize such activities. The African continent's modern history has been plagued by such activities and it will steadfastly oppose their re-emergence on the international scene.

In order to improve the international community's response to humanitarian challenges, we need to capitalize on the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

Humanitarian non-governmental organizations, when acting in accordance with established norms and principles, can also make an important contribution in providing humanitarian assistance and relief. By virtue of the nature of such organizations and the

scope of their activities, it is incumbent upon them to maintain the highest standards of compliance with humanitarian law and human rights. Any serious violations of these norms – as was recently the case, in the abduction and international trafficking of children from Chad and Sudan – adversely affect the image and reputation of the vast majority of law-abiding and genuinely humanitarian NGOs, and hinder their ability to provide assistance and fulfil their obligations. We call upon the international humanitarian community to issue the long-awaited and deserved condemnation of this act.

The African Group strongly supports the stated intention in Conference documents to reaffirm the continued relevance and validity of the principles and rules of international humanitarian law, and of humanitarian principles and values. We also call for the examination of ways and means to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law, including its customary rules, in keeping with our collective obligations pursuant to Article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions. In this regard, the African Group believes it is timely that this Conference build upon the proposals emanating from the regional ICRC seminars, held in 2003, on improving compliance with international humanitarian law, as well as upon the relevant ICRC reports, including its recent study on customary international humanitarian law. Therefore, the Group proposes that the humanitarian law draft resolution before us should request the ICRC, based on the above documents, to present a consolidated report, including specific recommendations for the consideration of States Parties and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on possible options for enhanced monitoring of compliance with the Geneva Conventions and with other obligations under international humanitarian law.

In the context of the follow-up on the implementation of previous decisions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we strongly believe that all States party to the Geneva Conventions, National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC, have to assume and fulfil their responsibilities with a view to ensuring full compliance with the consent provision of resolution XI of 1921 and the faithful implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Israeli National Society, Magen David Adom, in 2005, which constituted the basis for holding the Diplomatic Conference in 2005 and the ensuing amendment of the Movement's Statutes. We look forward to a proper and thorough follow-up of the issue, and

fully support the adoption of a resolution during the present Conference that would ensure a thorough follow-up to the Memorandum of Understanding at the next session of the Council of Delegates and the International Conference. Such a measure can help ensure the credibility of the humanitarian movement and uphold its fundamental principles.

**Mr Rolf Einar Fife,
Director-General of the Legal Department,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway**

(Original English)

Norway fully supports the objectives of this Conference. Compliance with humanitarian law is a key concern. Underpinning the body of humanitarian law is respect for human dignity. This is a universal value, inherent to humankind and unchanged by new threats and new types of conflict. We want to place on record that existing humanitarian rules remain fully applicable today. This does not, of course, exclude a need for new rules in specific areas, as demonstrated by the unacceptable suffering of civilians caused by the use of cluster munitions. This is a humanitarian problem and requires a response balancing military necessity and humanitarian concerns.

The Oslo process aims at establishing a binding legal instrument that can address the problem effectively. Our key concern is to keep focused on the objectives rather than on mere process. We must not lose sight of the real issues and the victims' perspectives when delving into discussions of technical details of weapon systems.

We appreciate in this regard the statement made by President Kellenberger yesterday, encouraging States to join the Oslo Declaration. We agree with him that we now need a clear commitment to the objective of adopting a legally binding instrument, a clear commitment that the instrument should completely prohibit those cluster munitions that cause a humanitarian problem and a clear deadline for the completion of negotiations.

Accountability is key to secure compliance with humanitarian law. We welcome the growing adherence to the Rome Statute on the ICC. As more and more States establish effective national systems in support of international criminal justice, climates of impunity are gradually removed.

We commend the independent monitor, Mr Pär Stenbäck, for his sober and thorough consideration

of the implementation of the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel. We welcome in this regard the approach unanimously taken by the Council of Delegates with regard to ensuring an adequate follow-up.

The vulnerability of communities and individuals is compounded by environmental, migrational and health developments. Strong partnerships between States, components of the Movement and other stakeholders are needed. We note with appreciation the emphasis of the Movement's General Assembly and the Council of Delegates on the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's response to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable people, regardless of their legal status. The neutral and independent approach of the Movement is a key contribution in this regard. Finally, we salute the efforts of the ICRC to promote better gender representation and participation, in particular through the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security. We are here assembled in Geneva with united resolve and a unique platform illustrating existing partnerships and highlighting potential for further effective action.

**Mr Bengt Westerberg,
President of the Swedish Red Cross**

(Original English)

Let me first start by fully agreeing with what was just said by the Norwegian delegation on cluster munitions, but after that I will concentrate on migration. The Swedish Red Cross believes that there is an urgent need to give more attention to the humanitarian consequences of migration. Many migrants – in particular, irregular migrants – are in a state of profound vulnerability.

The search for new solutions to the migration dilemma has to be guided by consideration for vulnerable groups and respect for international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law. The Swedish Red Cross is convinced that it is absolutely imperative to find solutions to guarantee protection – in accordance with the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol – for all those refugees and asylum seekers who are travelling in the mixed migration flows.

It is of particular concern to us that States uphold procedures that enable persons to have their asylum claims received and processed in a correct and humane

fashion. We also urge States to grant complementary protection to persons who cannot avail themselves under the 1951 Refugee Convention but nevertheless are in need of international protection.

We are pleased to note that many governments recognize that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are well placed to provide impartial and independent advice on the vulnerabilities of migrants and asylum seekers. However, we have also become aware of a worrying predicament facing National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in countries where assistance to irregular migrants constitutes a felony. We are bound by the Fundamental Principles of our Movement, which clearly set out that humanitarian assistance has to be impartial and neutral. Our response can't be burdened by the legal status of a person. It is based purely on vulnerability and humanitarian needs.

We encourage governments and National Societies to enter into a dialogue in order to ensure that the Red Cross and Red Crescent have access and are able to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants, regardless of their status, without being criminalized or otherwise penalized for these actions.

In our country, as in many other countries, irregular migrants do not have legal access to health care. The argument is that irregular migrants should not in any way be encouraged to stay. We believe, however, that health care should not be used as a tool for migration management or to deter irregular migration. Health care is a fundamental right that every human being has by virtue of his or her humanity. The Swedish Red Cross is looking forward to strengthening cooperation between governments and the Red Cross and Red Crescent in the field of migration.

H.E. Mr Xuto, Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Thailand

(Original English)

Despite the great strides that mankind has made, and will continue to make, in all areas of human development, the grim realities and deadly repercussions of war, conflict and natural and man-made disasters remain. In moments of human suffering everywhere, the ICRC and its partners' actions provide solid proof of the sense of humanity that most of us share. They tirelessly and selflessly continue to protect those made particularly vulnerable by conflicts and natural disasters. Lately, the universal blanket of protection and humanitarian work has spread to

cover even more of humanity. Complementing the Red Cross endeavour, partnership and cooperation among key players and organizations are crucial for serving millions of those in need.

Thailand has for over a century considered the Movement's core principles to be truly praiseworthy. She fully supports and promotes international humanitarian law as it was carefully crafted to strike a balance between the legitimate security needs of States and the protection of human life and basic rights.

Recently Thailand invited Mr Jacques Forster, Vice-President of the ICRC, to deliver a lecture in Bangkok – as part of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's lecture series – on the topic of "International Humanitarian Law: Recent International Developments, Regional Momentum and Opportunities for the Kingdom of Thailand." That lecture generated considerable discussion and constructive debate afterwards among current and future decision-makers in Thai government and law society circles.

Since our last meeting four years ago, Thailand and South-East Asia in particular have been struck by natural disasters – growing in number and intensity – and the harmful spread of emergent and recurrent diseases. Thailand is pleased that we have been able to share our positive experience and preparedness with many nations and regions around the world. The scale of the tsunami in December 2004, on the other hand, demanded an immediate and sustained response. Shelter, water and sanitation, health, psychosocial support and forensic expertise were immediately made available – and accessible to the affected – not by the Thai government alone but also by many friendly governments and non-governmental agencies. On behalf of the Thai people, I would like to express once again our gratitude to all those who have helped alleviate the suffering of the affected.

Important lessons have been learnt from that experience and the fact that we were able to respond to that crisis effectively was due to our partnerships and disaster preparedness. At the regional level, Thailand was among 168 countries that adopted the Hyogo framework for action for the years 2005-2015 – entitled "Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters" – at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005. Since then we have incorporated the main principles of the Hyogo framework for action into our own national agenda. Our new 2007 Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Act has been enacted

with a view to filling in the gaps in inter-agency coordination.

International environmental concerns including desertification and climate change have now galvanized worldwide public awareness. The degradation of a particular rangeland, soil erosion on farmland and the progressive reduction of production or income all have a serious adverse impact on the availability of food and the livelihood of millions. They will therefore present real obstacles to our efforts to sustain human security. To combat this, Thailand has formed dynamic partnerships to promote sustainable development through projects that balance the fulfilment of human needs while maintaining the quality of the natural environment. We understand the need to ensure the resilience and adaptability of the most vulnerable people in the face of a deteriorating environment.

Madam President, I would like to conclude my remarks by applauding the continued efforts of the Movement to promote international humanitarian law and undertake humanitarian endeavours around the world. Although war, conflict, disasters and environmental degradation may continue to ravage the world, let us uplift the human spirit with our firm commitment to advancing humanitarian work and answering the calls of all those in need.

**Mr Olivier Vodoz, Vice-President,
International Committee of the Red Cross**

(Original French)

Our Conference is taking up four very important topics, each of which entails challenges that far exceed individual organizational capacity, both in theory and, more importantly, in practice. In the humanitarian tradition that has prevailed at Conferences of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, we wish to tackle these difficult and complex questions in a spirit of cooperation and openness, honesty and determination.

As for the first topic, the ICRC is focusing on the humanitarian consequences of environmental degradation, particularly the appropriate responses for populations affected by conflict situations linked to environmental damage. In this connection, it will tailor its humanitarian responses to meet the needs created by climate change and will continue to promote respect for the rules of international humanitarian law relating to environmental protection.

Problems linked to international migration include new types of population movement. Here as well, the ICRC is primarily interested in the humanitarian perspective in armed conflicts or other situations involving violence. Nevertheless, when migrants encounter varying degrees of marginalization, exclusion or discrimination, when they have become vulnerable or even – as a growing number of women have experienced – when they are victims of physical or mental violence by criminal networks or even State officials, the ICRC intends to continue to actively support the efforts of National Societies with its expertise in the protection and restoration of family links. International law relating to the different categories of displaced people exists and must be respected. In particular, it is essential to continue to promote and ensure respect for the various international protection mechanisms specifically made available to certain people or groups of people, especially refugees.

The ICRC also notes with concern situations of chronic or sporadic, latent or extreme urban violence, which, albeit different from the armed conflicts with which they must not be assimilated, feature characteristics that are similar to the violence of cities at war. They have the same impact on the population: people are wounded, killed, imprisoned or tortured, or disappear. The ICRC is concerned about the humanitarian consequences of this violence. On the basis of recent experience, it is giving thought to the added value of its action as a neutral, independent institution when such violence is caused by organized armed groups and has grave humanitarian consequences.

Finally, the ICRC closely monitors the development and spread of diseases in situations of armed conflict. In the countries or regions where armed conflicts occur, the health system is often fragile from the start. As a result, fighting and insecurity adversely affect the quality of emergency treatment – even the mere possibility of such treatment is threatened – let alone preventive medicine or general medical care for the population. Epidemics can develop rapidly and are a constant threat. In such situations, ensuring access to care for the affected populations remains an ongoing challenge, along with protection of medical staff, which is essential. Doctors and nurses must be able to provide individuals and communities with the requisite emergency care as well as basic health security.

There is a common thread running through several of the topics that we are discussing today: the precarious situation of prison inmates and the risks

they face. The ICRC, which visits some 2500 places of detention in some 70 countries throughout the world, is particularly aware of such problems. As far as health is concerned, prisoners often serve a double sentence: deprivation of liberty, of course, but also acute exposure to contagious or even fatal diseases, such as tuberculosis, AIDS, dysentery or typhus. It is therefore essential to include prisoners in all forms of screening for transmissible diseases.

Clearly, a growing number of migrants are deprived of liberty, often merely because of their irregular status. The ICRC is prepared, in situations where it is not already present at detention sites, to support National Societies that are capable of making a lasting contribution to humanitarian action that fulfils the unmet needs of migrants or asylum seekers.

Among the areas examined by our Conference, a strong emphasis must be placed on education, particularly that of young people. To pay off in the long run, such efforts require creativity, patience and determination and necessitate various forms of cooperation between political authorities, economists, educational systems and mutual aid organizations such as National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Cooperation is not an imposed attitude or mechanism; rather, it is one of the tools that partners choose in conjunction with shared goals, either selectively or on a lasting basis. As they are used to cooperating within a universal network and enjoy constructive relations with the authorities of their country or region, National Societies can usually help identify responses to the humanitarian emergencies created by precarious or vulnerable situations. This is also what the ICRC is seeking, in accordance with its humanitarian mandate and its own capacities.

**H.E. Mr Robert Fillon,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Monaco, Geneva**

(Original French)

Our agenda has just reminded us of the consequences of climate change for natural disasters. In human terms, there is an enormous impact, which we intend to combat with all the means we can muster. For this purpose, Prince Albert of Monaco set up a foundation for the environment and sustainable development in June 2006. In addition, we ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2006, mindful that, in a highly built-up environment such as ours, only a “zero opt-

out” policy would enable us to meet the ceilings set by that international instrument. Outside our country, our foreign policy of cooperation finances campaigns to promote new forms or sources of energy and reforestation. For its part, the Red Cross of Monaco makes a significant contribution to projects aimed at assisting disaster-stricken populations. Here, I am thinking in particular of reconstruction operations in Indonesia following the tsunami in 2004.

As for pandemics, which pose a threat to public health, the Principality of Monaco is fully committed to combating HIV/AIDS. H.R.H. Princess Stephanie has used her determination and media fame to help combat this scourge by becoming a Special Representative of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). In addition, the Principality signed a cooperation agreement with UNAIDS in early 2007 and supports the campaign launched by the United Nations Children’s Fund, UNAIDS and the World Health Organization: Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS.

The Red Cross of Monaco was founded in 1948 under the presidency of H.R.H. Prince Rainier the Third. Since then, it has enjoyed the Government’s full support. The presence of H.R.H. Prince Albert the previous day at the inaugural ceremony provided proof of that commitment. In addition to the response of the Government of Monaco to emergency appeals for countries in crisis, the National Society has taken part in projects abroad: aid missions, disaster prevention and educational activities. In a desire to enhance the effectiveness of relief, we support the project relating to guidelines to facilitate the deployment of relief teams in disaster-stricken countries, which are to be adopted at this Conference.

Yet, as far as we are concerned, concrete action in the field and the preparation of a body of humanitarian law with concrete goals are two complementary areas. As is well known, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has led the way with regard to humanitarian law; its work in the field, which is known and recognized by all, has given it ample legitimacy to play this role from a legal standpoint. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, to which the Principality of Monaco is a party, constitute the essential international instruments in this respect. That is why Monaco wishes to recognize the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission, provided for in Additional Protocol I and tasked with investigating violations of humanitarian law, thereby promoting its concrete implementation. To date, very few States have granted such recognition. In our opinion, this is regrettable

indeed when it comes to building this body of humanitarian law, which we hope will be as effective and respected as possible. In closing, I would like to leave this thought with you.

**Sir Nicholas Young,
Chief Executive, British Red Cross**

(Original English)

In the British Red Cross, we share the concerns about the challenges that have been highlighted here. We are glad to be debating them, as auxiliaries, with our governments. I would like to focus in my remarks on two key issues, climate change and migration.

This year, we have seen devastating flooding from South America to Africa and Asia and across the UK too. We have found it extremely difficult in the UK to raise money from our normally generous supporters for all these events. Media attention was short-lived – except, I have to report, for the flooding in our own backyard – and the money simply did not come in. This suggests to me that we have to focus as a Movement, and with our governments, on the task of building the organizational capacity of all National Societies to respond for themselves as much as possible to these weather-related disasters. It also means that we must continue to promote actively and effectively (more effectively than we do at present, I have to say) our position as the world's leading disaster response organization. We have to compete for funding from governments and public alike. And that means being great at what we do and telling everyone about it.

We also, incidentally, need to be aware of our own environmental impact as a Movement. In the British Red Cross, we recently undertook an independent audit of our carbon emissions, and discovered that our Logistics Emergency Response unit, with its reliance on big cargo planes, generated more carbon than any other department. We have to be aware of this and take action ourselves to protect our environment.

On migration, the role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as a key bridge across the world's divided societies and communities is surely a vital one. Vulnerable people across the world see us naturally as an organization to turn to in a crisis. And we must be prepared to offer that help, following our Fundamental Principles, however unpopular that might make us with the general public (which often disapproves of migrants) or our governments (which of course have the right and responsibility to legislate

on migration issues for the good as they see it of the population as a whole).

While movement of people is a needed and welcome part of modern life and an interdependent world, migration is unfortunately also a breeding ground for vulnerability and discrimination. Criminal gangs set out to exploit vulnerable migrants for sex or cheap labour. These gangs will not thank us for our efforts to protect their victims in the murky and dangerous world of migration, and we will need to act with care and caution. Our work with vulnerable migrants will also take us into areas regarded as “political” where we will have to balance our passion and concerns as humanitarians with the need to act neutrally and impartially, avoiding outright political controversy, whilst at the same time advocating effectively on behalf of people who really do need our help, whatever their legal status. Based on our long-standing relationship of mutual trust and support, we look to our governments for support in interpreting our humanitarian auxiliary role in these circumstances and in acting accordingly.

**H.E. Mr Ahmet Üzümcü,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Turkey, Geneva**

(Original English)

In response to the increasing number of humanitarian crises, all actors must work together in providing assistance to people in need. Let me welcome first the theme of the 30th International Conference. It is timely for the international community to reaffirm its determination to work *together for humanity*. The Declaration at the end of this Conference will certainly provide an impetus to our efforts towards this goal. Environmental degradation, climate change, international migration, humanitarian impact of violence, emergent and recurrent diseases and access to health care are important issues to be addressed. However, the challenges we face are not limited to these.

One of the major threats continues to be terrorism. Terrorism is not a threat confined to the place where it hits. Acts of terror are targeting our common values and ideals. Terrorist attacks, including those against humanitarian workers, which in no way can be condoned, should leave no doubt in our minds as to the brutality of this scourge. Terrorism is a negation of both humanitarian principles and human dignity. Therefore I would like to underline once again that not only the condemnation of terrorism but a more

serious, determined and effective collective fight against it, is an absolute necessity.

Humanitarian crises in conflict-affected regions impose a heavy burden on neighbouring countries as well. In order to enhance their capacity in favour of populations in need, this burden should be shared by the wider international community. Turkey has always been responsive to the needs of its neighbours. The government and the Turkish Red Crescent are among the major humanitarian assistance providers for the Iraqi people, including those who have fled the country.

We all know that the allocation of humanitarian aid resources is not perfectly balanced. Some crises attract far greater attention than others. Ensuring equitable distribution of aid should also be a priority. Humanitarian assistance must rely on needs-based assessments, without being distorted by political considerations. Information management is also important. Steps must be taken to ensure an effective and reliable information system.

Enhancing the international humanitarian response system requires further innovative institutional reforms to encompass the totality of humanitarian actors. It is a fact that the humanitarian system is diverse, sometimes fragmented. Its major constituent parts are, in most cases, fiercely independent, often competitive, and equipped with overlapping mandates. This entire system is not easy to coordinate and is fraught with unnecessary duplication.

The active cooperation between National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC, as well as the broader coordination within UN agencies and other humanitarian actors, should be further improved. We must ensure that each actor operates within its streamlined mandate, eliminating overlaps, thus utilizing the limited resources available efficiently. The cluster approach and the Global Humanitarian Platform initiative could entail greater coherence, accountability, transparency and complementarity.

We should spare no effort to create the appropriate environment to help the Movement uphold its principles, while maintaining its humanitarian responsibility and credibility. The adoption of the new emblem has created the preconditions for full universality. It has also paved the way for the admission of the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society into the Movement. The Memorandum of Understanding between the two National Societies had facilitated the resolution during the 29th Conference. We have taken

note of the report on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and its enclosure. Fuller implementation of these documents is of paramount importance. From a purely humanitarian perspective, we think it is imperative that further progress is soon achieved on this issue.

I believe that our deliberations will show the magnitude of the multi-faceted challenges faced by the international community. These could be met by building upon the collective conscience of humanity and making use of our common wisdom. In addressing the challenges, our main priority should be the effective global coordination of humanitarian action. This would enable UN organizations, components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, NGOs and all other stakeholders to attain the efficiency needed in working in a mutually reinforcing manner *together for humanity*.

**Ms Elzbieta Mikos-Skuza,
Vice-President, Polish Red Cross**

(Original English)

“Together for humanity” carries, in the best possible way, the message that today’s humanitarian challenges need strong cooperation between the international community of States and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the largest global humanitarian organization. On a smaller scale, it implies partnerships between individual States and their National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies in order to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in our countries. Such cooperation requires a good understanding of the special, unique status of National Societies – let me emphasize again: special, unique status – as auxiliaries to the public authorities.

National Societies are not just NGOs, unlike many other private humanitarian institutions, but are public service organizations that, in order to be effective, need to strictly maintain their independence, neutrality and impartiality.

The Polish Red Cross is engaged in a regular dialogue with national authorities to promote such an interpretation of our partnerships. The good results are visible in the dissemination of international humanitarian law (particularly among the Polish armed forces and civil defence structures), disaster preparedness and response, disease prevention, honorary blood donation programmes and first-aid training. Our activities with children and youth have the full support of national educational authorities.

It seems, thanks to this dialogue, that it is now clear – for both our National Society and the State – that auxiliary must not be used to set limitations to the Polish Red Cross's humanitarian mandate. On the other hand, it must not be used to expand this mandate beyond strictly humanitarian purposes.

We are sure that after this Conference the respective roles of States and National Societies will be better understood, so that we all can more effectively face challenges and respond to the vulnerabilities of our times, and act *together for humanity*.

**H.E. March Pujol, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Spain, Geneva**

(Original Spanish)

Spain endorses the statement made by Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

The twenty-first century has begun with clear signs that the pace of humanitarian crises is accelerating. Today, we must take more and more humanitarian action aimed at finding rapid, effective and lasting solutions to the growing vulnerability of human beings. This challenge requires us to find comprehensive solutions – solutions that are undoubtedly more complex, that must be based on a vastly improved ability to analyse information, that must ensure better cooperation between countries, between international bodies, with non-governmental organizations and society, and that must increase respect for individuals, human rights and international humanitarian law.

As a reflection of its concern over the impact of climate change, Spain has not only doubled its development aid over the past three years but has also endeavoured to back coherent environmental sustainability policies, promoting clean development and boosting the capacity of ecosystems and socio-economic systems to adjust to the effects of climate change. Mindful of the need to join forces, the Spanish Ministry of the Environment and the Spanish Red Cross signed a cooperation agreement in 2006 and have supported various measures to protect, conserve and improve the environment.

Madam Chairwoman, allow me to comment briefly on migration management. Spain supports a migration policy based on four pillars: channelling migratory flows by means of legal migration, combating irregular migration, in particular organized criminal networks of human trafficking, integrating migrants, and cooperating with host and transit countries. In

this connection, the Spanish Red Cross cooperates fully with the Spanish Government, not only with regard to humanitarian care for migrants in situations of vulnerability but also through various programmes to promote integration, including work insertion programmes and awareness-building campaigns targeting the host society.

Two years ago today, we welcomed the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent. Today, there is a glimmer of hope for the peace process in the Middle East. We must ensure that clear and firm steps are taken to put this agreement into practice. No contribution is too small. In this connection and in this spirit, Spain urges all parties concerned to facilitate the implementation of the said Memorandum by all means possible.

In fulfilment of a promise made by Spain at the 28th International Conference held in 2003, this delegation is especially pleased to highlight the creation of the Spanish Commission for International Humanitarian Law, a body tasked with coordinating and submitting for consultation the application and dissemination of international humanitarian law in our country.

On the occasion of this 30th International Conference, Spain wishes to make several commitments that will require joint steps by the State and civil society, such as an effort to include courses in international humanitarian law as required subjects at military teaching academies, as well as the stimulus we would like to give to the inclusion of the foundations and basic principles of international humanitarian law in the activities of educational centres as required subjects.

In closing, in the spirit of cooperation that characterizes this Conference, we have entered into a joint commitment with the Spanish Red Cross: to promote awareness-building through a travelling show, with a view to increasing understanding of migration, combating stereotypes and conveying the concept of equality among people, in order to avoid stigmatization and discrimination.

**H.R.H. Princess Margriet of the Netherlands,
Vice-Chair, Netherlands Red Cross**

(Original English)

Four years ago, at our 2003 International Conference, the last document was entitled "Preparedness for Climate Change." Today at this International

Conference, the topic of climate change is no longer the last one. We all acknowledge that the consequences of climate change are one of our main humanitarian challenges today.

Since the Netherlands Red Cross initiated the Red Cross and Red Crescent Climate Centre five years ago, more than 40 National Societies have joined up with the Centre. These are mainly National Societies from developing countries, countries which are being hit hardest by the effects of climate change. Over these five years we have gained a wealth of experience in dealing with the humanitarian consequences of climate change. These experiences were set out in the *Climate Guide*, available to all of you here at the Conference. The work has been made possible thanks to generous contributions by, for example, several National Societies present here, to whom we would like to express our sincere gratitude. We are particularly grateful for the engagement of the Netherlands government which made substantial funding available.

As a provider of humanitarian relief, the Red Cross has witnessed a steep increase in the number of weather-related disasters over the last years. This increase fits the trend reported by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Therefore, although 2007 may well set a record, the disasters of this year should be no surprise to us, but the people who had to live through them were taken totally by surprise. And more is expected in the coming decade before much-needed measures to fight the causes of climate change will take effect, especially benefiting the poorest people in the poorest countries that are most disaster-prone, people who have contributed least to the causes of climate change, but who suffer most. They rely on our human and financial resources to support them. I am convinced that our Movement is ready to contribute to the much-needed action on climate change. With our wealth of experience in disaster management, early warning, community risk reduction, water and sanitation, and food security, we are ready for action. We can use our network to link all levels at which climate change needs to be addressed, from local communities to international policy and action.

We all look to the UN Climate Conference in Bali next week for progress and encouragement to address the climate change challenge. It is my sincere hope that through the Declaration, our Conference here in Geneva will send a threefold message to Bali: to join forces with governments and non-governmental and other organizations to address the human consequences of climate change, to scale up the humanitarian relief work we already do and engage

ever more in reducing the risk for disaster rather than responding after the event, to mobilize the necessary human and financial resources to assist those most in need, the poorest people who have the least means to withstand or recover from disasters.

At our previous International Conference, we discussed the potential negative impact of climate change. The urgency for action was still being disputed then. Today there is no choice: climate change is happening. We must address it and we will, *together for humanity*.

**H.E. Blaise Godet, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Switzerland, Geneva**

(Original French)

Madam Chairwoman, we are all directly concerned by these complex and interdependent problems which, more than ever before, require joint action. We must encourage cooperation and ensure that the activities of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement complement those of governments and international, regional and non-governmental organizations if we are to build effective partnerships and avoid duplication of efforts.

National Societies make an undeniable contribution in the context of armed violence and its impact on the population. Their work in the affected communities strengthens social ties and offers concrete alternatives to violence, particularly as far as children and adolescents are concerned. Switzerland undertakes to promote responsible social and economic development policies that make it possible to break the endemic cycle of violence, particularly through its active participation in the implementation of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. Switzerland calls on States that have not yet adopted this Declaration to do so and thus take concrete steps to reduce violence considerably by 2015. Switzerland also calls for active cooperation between all components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and States with a view to alleviating the humanitarian impact of armed violence.

Questions linked to environmental degradation, including climate change, as well as efforts to combat emerging and recurring diseases, must be tackled in a comprehensive and complementary manner by governments and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement while ensuring full respect for the Fundamental Principle of independence. The

operational guide for National Societies on issues relating to climate change is an excellent example of a useful, high-quality contribution that makes it easier for National Societies to take up this challenge.

International migration poses a major problem because it is often a mix of people in need of international protection and of those who do not come under this strict definition. Categorizing migrants and establishing clear responsibilities for assistance is becoming increasingly difficult. Let us not forget, migrants are likely to find themselves in a position of great vulnerability and in need of assistance. In this context, the strength and specific role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are reflected by its ability to provide assistance to all migrants in distress, regardless of their legal status.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is invaluable because of the relevance of its impartial, neutral and independent humanitarian action and because of the universal nature of its network. This unique position makes it an ideal partner for both communities and governments. We hope that this Conference will help strengthen cooperation among all the partners concerned by the challenges that are being addressed.

**Dr Dragan Radovanović,
President, Red Cross of Serbia**

(Original English)

I have the privilege to address the Conference on behalf of the Red Cross of Serbia, which has been active for more than 130 years and recognized for its continuous work by the Movement.

We have been experiencing delicate and difficult times since 1876 : two Balkan wars, two World Wars and, more recently, armed conflict in the region and in the Republic of Serbia. Moreover, during that time, we have been severely affected several times by various natural and man-made disasters. Within the last 132 years, the Red Cross of Serbia has faced numerous challenges, but we are proud to have gone through these times committed always to fulfilling the mission of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and being devoted to its Fundamental Principles.

We would like to use this opportunity to mention just one theme: our experience related to the cluster munitions by which, unfortunately, Serbia has been

affected. There are almost 20 locations affected by cluster munitions on the territory of Serbia, with more than 270,000 submunitions. We are fully aware of the terrible consequences of these extremely inhuman means of warfare that predominantly affect civilians who do not participate in armed conflicts, especially children. It is estimated that clearance of the affected areas will take almost ten years.

Bearing in mind this experience, the Red Cross of Serbia, together with sister National Societies, actively participates in awareness raising campaigns and international action that lead to the restriction or total banning of these weapons.

In addition, as an auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, we cooperate on this specific issue with our authorities. We are glad that our State has also recognized the importance of these issues, and that, from the very beginning, their position has been firmly that these weapons should be banned. As a result, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, supported by the Norwegian government, organized a conference of States affected by cluster munitions. The conference was organized in October 2007, with the participation of 47 States and many non-governmental organizations. Our Red Cross was one of the participants.

Through partnerships in the field with our authorities, we continue to dedicate our efforts to achieve our aim, which is to ban the use of cluster munitions. We would like to use this opportunity to welcome the dedication of this Conference to the reaffirmation of international humanitarian law, with an emphasis on the obligation to reaffirm the existing rules of this body of law.

**H.E. Juan Martabit, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Chile, Geneva**

(Original Spanish)

In view of the time constraints, I shall focus on climate change, without downplaying the great importance of the other major themes of this Conference.

As other speakers have pointed out, environmental degradation and climate change represent major challenges for human security and sustainable economic development. In affected areas all over the world, both human life and productivity levels are at ever greater risk because of devastating events, which are, unfortunately, more and more commonplace. Such disasters must encourage us to create greater

awareness of the human dimension of climate change. And this, in turn, highlights the need for national and international policies that go to the heart of the problem.

Without going into the causes of the damage wrought by climate change or the commitments that countries could assume with a view to solving this global problem – given that this task falls to the United Nations Climate Change Conference – we should concentrate on the humanitarian impact of this problem.

Climate change is not new to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. At the 27th International Conference, which took place in 1999, a decision was adopted in this field. And the topic was also taken up at the 28th International Conference, held in 2003.

There is no doubt that States should give priority and allocate resources to the implementation of broad measures to reduce disaster risk, including steps to cope with problems related to climate change and variability. Likewise, National Societies must strengthen their cooperation with States and climate change experts in order to alleviate the negative effects on vulnerable population groups and ensure more effective, targeted action.

Yet the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement does much more than merely respond to existing crises. That is why we believe that it should also give priority to prevention. As far as climate change is concerned, the challenge in our view is to start by identifying the risks, then deal with the humanitarian consequences.

Special emphasis should be placed on cooperation with States in all areas relating to climate change, from the promotion of greater awareness to prevention, preparedness and humanitarian intervention in crises.

**Mr Wan-Sang Han, President,
Republic of Korea National Red Cross**

(Original English)

I would like to restrict myself to one issue out of our humanitarian challenges. The migration concerns of any given country have become an international issue and can no longer be considered an exclusively domestic matter. The number of migrants in the Republic of Korea shows a sharp increase as well. The influx of migrants to my country has been increasingly

steadily. There are over one million migrants in Korea now. The figure shows a 10% increase annually. The Immigration Office of Korea predicts that this figure will soar to 9.1 million by 2050 if this growing pace is sustained.

This term “migration” in general sounds neutral and non-committal. In the absence of a legally binding definition of the term “migration,” humanitarian concern and action should be focused on the most vulnerable migrants, whom I would like to label “marginal migrants,” and their concrete plight. Under this category come the socially displaced, the politically oppressed and the economically exploited in the countries of transit and/or destination.

This marginal migration is the humanitarian consequence of forced and compelled migration. It arouses our concern as humanitarian actors. We, as the Movement, are deeply committed to the cause of alleviation of human suffering. Therefore, National Societies, as auxiliary actors, should seek means and ways to fulfil more effectively humanitarian needs in this matter in conjunction with their respective governments. The cooperation of all stakeholders is also required in order that responsibility might be shared.

Finally, let me urge that in our global discussion here on this matter, the concrete plight and human pain of the most vulnerable – the marginal migrants – should not be abstractly blurred or marginalized.

**H.E. Mr Masood Khan,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Pakistan, Geneva**

(Original English)

The Draft Declaration, “Together for humanity,” addresses the four contemporary challenges related to the environment, international migrants, urban violence and public health. The Declaration lays down the parameters of principle and action in these areas and gives direction on how National Societies can deal with these issues even more effectively.

Clearly, we agree that there is a humanitarian dimension to international migration. National Societies can provide migrants food, shelter, clothing, health care, first aid and psychosocial support. They engage in advocacy for the integration of migrants. The Draft Declaration rightly underlines the need to mobilize community respect for diversity and action against racism, discrimination, xenophobia, marginalization

and other forms of exclusion. This is most relevant in the case of Muslim migrants who face all types of discrimination and intolerance. The National Societies can help in removing misperceptions and propaganda about Muslims and thus strengthen the forces of tolerance and integration.

This Conference, Madam Chairperson, is about partnerships. This Conference is about consolidating existing partnerships between States and National Societies and making them more effective. This Conference is about making the international humanitarian community more responsive to the challenges of the environment, migration, violence, health, the faithful application of international humanitarian law and disaster response and management.

We salute the ICRC and the International Federation for their outstanding humanitarian work in Pakistan. In the past two disasters – the 2005 earthquake and the 2007 floods – the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, many friendly National Societies, as well as the International Federation and the ICRC, stepped in to assist the local and national authorities in rescue, relief and recovery operations. We saw partnerships in action at the local, national, regional and international levels. Above all, we are proud of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society for their commitment, dedication and the results they achieved on the ground.

We respect and uphold the principles of international humanitarian law, especially the Geneva Conventions. International humanitarian law should be applied without discrimination in all situations. Here, we would like to echo the call of President Micheline Calmy-Rey of Switzerland made yesterday: international humanitarian law should not only be elaborated; it should also be implemented.

We commend the work done by Mr Pär Stenbäck, and appreciate his report on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Societies of Palestine and Israel, which was signed in 2005. We note with satisfaction that the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding has been put on the agenda of this Conference. Also, the resolution adopted by the Council of Delegates upholds the Memorandum of Understanding, maintains the monitoring mechanism of the ICRC and the International Federation for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and promises to strengthen it, and puts a report on the Memorandum of Understanding on the agenda of the 31st International Conference. With regard to the implementation of the Memorandum of

Understanding, it is clear that some steps in the right direction have been taken. But much more needs to be done with sincerity and consistency. The issue of ambulances must be resolved without further delay. The 1921 Rules ought to be invoked and applied.

**Mr Pierre de Senarclens,
Vice-President, Swiss Red Cross**

(Original French)

While recognizing the importance of the four humanitarian challenges dealt with under this agenda item and endorsing the comments made by this morning's speakers who took a stand against cluster bombs, the Swiss Red Cross would like to focus on international migration.

Migration has marked the entire history of mankind. Today, as in the past, its origin and nature vary greatly. In a world of political, economic and social interdependence – inherent to globalization – the nature and scope of such movements imply new challenges for States. The governments of sending, transit and receiving countries, as well as intergovernmental institutions, have all too often proved to be incapable of fully assuming their responsibilities in the face of these challenges.

In view of the growing vulnerability of certain groups of migrants, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must shoulder ever greater humanitarian responsibilities to assist these populations and alleviate their distress.

The Swiss Red Cross must deal with problems created by increasingly stringent legislative measures concerning migrants. It strives to lessen the prejudicial humanitarian impact of such legislative provisions, in particular by offering concrete humanitarian assistance and providing legal advice.

At this Conference, we deem it necessary to remind governments of the need to meet their international obligations, especially those regarding refugee law and international migrant protection standards. National Societies must provide assistance to all vulnerable people, particularly migrants, regardless of their legal status. Governments must support these efforts, which are based on the principles of humanity and impartiality that form the bedrock of international humanitarian law.

Regardless of their specific mandate and duties, governments and National Societies must do their

utmost to strengthen their cooperation in the field of migration, particularly with a view to reducing migrants' vulnerability. The Swiss Red Cross is proud to make two migration-related commitments at this Conference, in partnership with the Swiss Government. The first undertaking is aimed at facilitating migrants' access to the health-care system and strengthening the transcultural skills of health-care personnel in Switzerland. The second is designed to boost cooperation with the authorities with regard to support for migrants who must return to their country, either voluntarily or involuntarily. The Swiss Red Cross is taking on these activities in its capacity as an auxiliary to the authorities, while scrupulously respecting the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

**Mr Marcus Laurent,
Director-General of the Legal Department,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland**

(Original English)

Finland associates herself with the statement made by Portugal on behalf of the European Union. Let me just add a few remarks on a national basis. We value the opportunity to come together to address some of the greatest challenges to humanity today: climate change, vulnerability of migrants and displaced people, situations of violence including international and non-international armed conflicts, and global health threats. We would like to commend the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and the ICRC for the excellent preparations for this Conference, whose purpose is to work *together for humanity*.

The emblems of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement stand for neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian assistance. Such assistance is indispensable for the victims of catastrophic situations – whether caused by natural disasters or armed conflicts – and can only suffer from the blurring of the lines between military, political and humanitarian action. The ICRC has called upon States to respect the exclusively humanitarian mission of the Red Cross and its need to remain distinct from the parties to a conflict. It is essential from the point of view of securing access to those most in need that States respond to this call and make sure that there is still space for neutral and independent humanitarian action. Let me, in this context, also refer to the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative, the principles of which recognize the humanitarian principles and

the special role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as the future European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

It is important that the Conference send an unambiguous message about the continued relevance of international humanitarian law (IHL), in armed conflicts. One of the challenges to IHL today is the need to counter the recurrent argument that the law is unclear, that there are no rules and that the existing rules do not tackle the reality of present-day conflicts. It is true that the treaty-based distinction between international armed conflicts and armed conflicts not of an international character has created problems of applicability, which may have resulted in real or perceived gaps in protection. In this respect, the extensive ICRC study on customary IHL has been a landmark event. The study shows that State practice in the past decades has in fact gone beyond existing treaty law and extended the application of fundamental IHL rules to different types of conflict. The greatest challenge is not related to the need to draft new rules of IHL, but to the need to ensure full compliance with and effective enforcement of the existing legal framework.

Finland has been chosen to participate in a side event of Commission A, in connection with the auxiliary role of National Societies in relation to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. Such cooperation has a long tradition in Finland. The Finnish Red Cross has been a reliable partner in providing excellent expertise and mobilizing resources for humanitarian action and we highly value its role in the dissemination of IHL. We fully support the Draft Resolution on the specific nature of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and on the role of National Societies in the humanitarian field.

Climate change has geopolitical, economic, environmental and energy consequences. It may render attainment of the Millennium Development Goals more difficult and aggravate problems in vulnerable States. A new and adequate international climate agreement extending well beyond 2012 would also work in terms of preventive security. We appreciate the contribution of this forum to raising awareness of the need to work together also for this goal.

Likewise, we see merit in efforts to draw attention to the humanitarian consequences of migration and to the potential for strengthening the cooperation between governments and the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in addressing the issue.

Turning now to specific humanitarian commitments, Finland subscribes to the seven pledges made by the European Union. On a national basis, together with the Finnish Red Cross, we pledge to work together in order to support the integration of migrants in Finland and to strengthen efforts to prevent the marginalization of vulnerable migrants, to fight against ethnic discrimination and racism, and to develop the preparedness for receiving asylum seekers or other migrants in a mass-influx situation. The goal is to implement a true two-way integration process in which both migrants and the host society actively participate.

Together with its Nordic partners, Finland pledges to raise awareness about and promote respect for the neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action carried out by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in situations of armed conflict. Furthermore, Finland will continue its efforts, described in a pledge given in 2003, to promote international discussions concerning the applicability of IHL to attacks on computer networks.

To conclude, Finland would like to express its strong support for the activities carried out by the different components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. We wish the 30th Conference every success.

**Professor Frederick Fenech,
President, Malta Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

Since the year 2000, Malta has been facing the challenge of responding to increasing numbers of illegal immigrants. The vast majority arrive by boats, and many of them are often destitute. Malta is the smallest and most densely populated country in the European Union. It is also one of the most densely built-up countries in the world, lying at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, between North Africa and southern Europe. Malta, with a population of just over 400,000, has received over 8,000 irregular immigrants since 2002. This is equivalent to a country like the United Kingdom receiving 1.2 million irregular immigrants over the same period of time, and Germany receiving 1.65 million. Illegal immigration, therefore, poses a serious challenge which is likely to remain a serious issue for some time.

The local authorities have developed the administrative structure and capacity to process

claims for international protection when it concerns persons who meet the criteria for refugee status and those who qualify for humanitarian reasons. At present, there are three detention centres for illegally resident third-country nationals and there are also open centres to which immigrants are transferred after finishing their period of detention.

The Malta Red Cross Society, with its meagre financial and human resources, has managed to employ a humanitarian coordinator through a grant from the Swiss and Austrian Red Cross Societies. And I would like to thank them for their solidarity with our National Society. This coordinator provides tracing services to maintain communication among families, using the Red Cross and Red Crescent global tracing network to restore family links and assist immigrants, who are separated from their relatives, to have news of them. Helped by local and foreign volunteers, he teaches English to adults and children to help them further their integration into society. We also have volunteers who, through donations, provide material to the most vulnerable amongst the immigrants. However, all this is only a drop in the ocean of help required. The Malta Red Cross Society is having discussions with the Red Cross EU office, and with IOM, UNHCR and other local NGOs, especially the Jesuit Refugee Service, in order to establish ongoing cooperation. Our National Society needs financial support and human resources to alleviate this human suffering. I appeal to donor National Societies to support us with their resources so that we may meet our humanitarian obligations more effectively.

**Mr John Bellinger, Legal Adviser,
Department of State, United States of America**

(Original English)

I want to begin by remembering the leadership of Dr Al-Hadid, and the rest of the Standing Commission at the 29th International Conference last year, leading to the admission of the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society to the Movement. The presence of these two National Societies here today, for the first time as members, is especially appropriate as governments are to gather in just a few hours in Annapolis to take steps to forge a lasting peace in the Middle East. We understand the importance the international community places on full implementation of the MDA-PRCS Memorandum of Understanding, and we will continue to encourage all parties to implement fully the commitments made at the 29th International Conference.

This year's conference theme, "Together for humanity," is one the United States is pleased to support. We take great pride in our National Society, the American Red Cross, and its more than 125 years of experience serving those who are most in need of assistance. The US government's cooperation with the American Red Cross is based on our respect for this organization and its obligation to operate according to the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. I am pleased to report that in 2007, the United States enacted legislation that increased the independence of the American Red Cross – a move fully supported by the United States Government.

We continue to be impressed by the work of tireless Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers around the world as they respond to the crises of the day. On behalf of my government and the American people, I again want to thank the numerous National Societies and governments who contributed so generously to help the people of New Orleans recover from Hurricane Katrina. Katrina – just like the cyclone that recently hit Bangladesh – reminded us that natural disasters can afflict all countries, developed as well as less developed.

The United States government supports the ICRC in every country where it operates. This support is a compelling example of what is meant by partnership with the Movement. Our relationship with the ICRC remains strong and productive, and we maintain tremendous respect for the mission of the ICRC and the work of the Movement as a whole.

We applaud the Movement as it seeks to ensure that it is able to continue this important work in the 21st century. We particularly support the work of the International Federation in preparing National Societies to respond to a possible influenza pandemic. I am proud to report that the United States Agency for International Development recently announced a pledge of 30 million US dollars to the international Federation over three years, to help prepare more than 20 countries to provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations in the event of such an outbreak.

We are also pleased that today presents another opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to international law. As we all know, the years since the tragic attacks of 11 September 2001 have highlighted the challenges the international legal system faces in combating international terrorism. The US government has been engaged in an active dialogue with the international community regarding these challenges. The ICRC has been an important voice in

defending the integrity of international humanitarian law while combating terrorism, and we look forward to continuing our work together in this area.

In this regard, the United States appreciates the tremendous effort made by the ICRC in assembling and analysing a substantial amount of material to produce their IHL Customary International Law study. My government, however, and a number of other governments remain concerned by the methodology used to arrive at the conclusion that a rule is custom and we have set forth our concerns in a letter dated 3 November 2006, which is printed in the June 2007 issue of the International Review of the Red Cross.

Similarly, while the US shares the ICRC's concern over the humanitarian impact of explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions, we are concerned that in addressing the threat posed by clusters, States not lose sight of the broader threat from all explosive remnants of war. The US has worked to reduce the humanitarian impact of any clusters we may use. We are also at the forefront of efforts to deal with the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and hope that other States and the ICRC will support these efforts.

In closing, the United States government is pleased to participate in the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent because of our strong commitment to humanitarian values and international law. We encourage the Movement not to lose sight of its core competencies: delivering humanitarian assistance, responding to natural disasters and playing an important role in health activities. The world has learnt to depend on the Movement to provide this life-saving assistance in even the most dire circumstances. We will remain a strong supporter of, and partner in, the humanitarian work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

**Mr Tadateru Konoe, President,
Japanese Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

The International Conference on Primary Health Care, held in Alma Ata in 1978, some 30 years ago, marked a major milestone in shifting attention to community-based health-care systems, adding an important human rights dimension to countries' efforts to bring health care to their people. The Alma Ata declaration affirmed that health was a fundamental human right

and that people should participate individually and collectively in planning and implementing their own health care, with goals set for achieving “health for all.” Nevertheless, today, many people in resource-constrained settings still cannot be reached by basic preventive and curative services, particularly those people living in absolute poverty who can be even more seriously affected by the humanitarian consequences of climate change, migration, social exclusion, disasters, social instability, economic distress and so on.

Achieving “health for all” is far from a reality anywhere in the world. In rich and poor countries, people suffer from lifestyle-related diseases triggered by unbalanced diets, smoking or alcohol abuse. Additional pressure on health care is imposed by ever-increasing ageing populations who may be isolated from their family and society. Tuberculosis, a recurrent disease, is on the rise globally; that and the threat of emergent diseases such as SARS and avian flu reinforce one’s sense that public health is an issue that transcends borders and thus requires a coordinated approach.

This International Conference addresses emergent and recurrent diseases as one of the major humanitarian issues. Achieving health for all should be taken as a shared responsibility that requires fostered cooperation between governmental stakeholders, grassroots organizations – particularly National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, which are auxiliaries of public authorities – and, most importantly, individual citizens. It is quite timely and useful for our Movement to exchange views on health issues of common concern with government representatives because we are committed to and capable of achieving synergies with national authorities to promote good health, minimize health inequalities and tackle factors that influence physical, mental and social well-being. In order to prevent diseases wherever possible, it is vital that families and communities are accessed by Red Cross and Red Crescent peer agents or community health workers because their outreach service can make a difference along the road towards achieving “health for all,” in line with the motto of the Conference, “Together for humanity.”

**H.E. Ms King Bee Hsu,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Malaysia, Geneva**

(Original English)

Malaysia appreciates the long-standing and outstanding role of the Movement in promoting

adherence to international humanitarian law in its mandated area of work for the well-being of mankind. With respect to the four global challenges confronting our society today, we certainly require stronger humanitarian partnership and collaboration among all relevant actors if we are to effectively address the humanitarian consequences. We know that these issues have been the subjects of much deliberation and many bilateral, regional and international fora. Admittedly, the international community is still grappling with them. Nonetheless, we are encouraged by the serious measures and steps taken by States, international organizations and other parties to address them comprehensively and collectively. Given this, and taking into account the capacities of National Societies, we believe that the focus of our debate here should be on how the Movement can complement and provide value-added substance and actions to the ongoing initiatives and plans of action implemented in other fora. It is our view that National Societies could also focus on how they can further strengthen their advocacy work to better educate and inform the public on ways to deal with various humanitarian issues facing the world today.

On the issue of environmental degradation and climate change, aside from providing the right support to governments during humanitarian crises, National Societies could play a greater role in educating and informing the public in the areas of disaster preparedness and emergency response, as well as in environmental and climate change awareness. The Malaysian government would be ready to work with the National Society in our country on all aspects of these issues, from awareness raising to prevention, preparedness and humanitarian responses to crises.

With regard to international migration, a growing global phenomenon, it is important to understand the root causes and the implications of migration, to learn from each other in a systematic and comprehensive way, and to build partnerships so that we can maximize opportunities and minimize risks for migrants, their families and communities. We believe this can be achieved without compromising the sovereign right of governments to determine their migration policies. We applaud the continuous efforts of National Societies in providing for and addressing the needs of migrants everywhere, especially in times of humanitarian crisis, and encourage close collaboration between States and National Societies in this respect.

Malaysia agrees that emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges endanger

individuals and communities everywhere. National Societies can play an important role in complementing the efforts by States to reach out to the public, in particular the most vulnerable groups, to prevent and combat these diseases. We also believe that there must be increased community involvement in health-care activities, and campaigns driven by National Societies and their networks of volunteers.

In conclusion, Malaysia reiterates its support for continuous and stronger collaboration between States, National Societies and other important actors in addressing the various humanitarian challenges faced by our society today. Malaysia hopes that, through this closer cooperation, the goal of promoting and strengthening universal humanitarian principles in order to protect human dignity will be achieved.

**Mr Steve Carr, Member, Board of Governors,
American Red Cross**

(Original English)

Over the past four years, our National Society has worked diligently to follow up on key issues raised at the last International Conferences. We have achieved real progress in making significant changes to our governance structure and statutes, in our tireless efforts to advocate for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society, in the advancement of the Exploring Humanitarian Law, or EHL, curriculum for youth, in the launching of a dialogue on the humanitarian effects of climate change and in our commitment to strengthen our national and international disaster preparedness efforts in coordination with the Movement.

We have also actively supported the work on international disaster response law and auxiliary status, in the belief that these initiatives can significantly improve our collective ability to serve the most vulnerable.

The American Red Cross is grateful for this International Conference, as it has required us to reflect, consult and ultimately respond to very difficult and timely issues. On this important occasion, I am pleased to draw your attention to commitments the American Red Cross is making through our pledges.

First, the American Red Cross will join in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross and other National

Societies and governments, including the US government, in scaling up efforts to prevent malaria, a long-standing priority for the American Red Cross. Malaria prevention efforts build on our National Society's priorities and health strategies and leverage the unique volunteer network of our Movement. Additionally, we will be providing robust support for integrated infectious disease control.

Second, the American Red Cross and the United States Departments of Defense and State, will together advocate for the ratification of five international humanitarian law treaties by the US Senate.

Finally, the American Red Cross will reaffirm its commitment to impartiality in the delivery of disaster services.

The American Red Cross's statement on impartiality assures the public that our organization offers assistance in an equitable and impartial manner. It promises that the American Red Cross will not request or record information about a client's citizenship or nationality. Nonetheless, some undocumented migrants remain wary of seeking services from any agencies for fear of repercussions. Thus, we pledge to seek additional ways to effectively provide disaster relief services to diverse populations, including migrants.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Mexican Red Cross whose disaster relief experts played an invaluable role during the recent California wildfires. By drawing on their common language and cultural understanding, we were better able to reach migrant communities in a major national disaster.

We look forward to reporting back on our progress in implementing these pledges when we reconvene in four years. We are privileged to be here, fully engaged with the Movement.

**H.E. Mr Roger Julien Menga, Permanent
Representative, Permanent Mission of the
Republic of the Congo, Geneva**

(Original French)

The theme of this Conference reminds us, quite simply, of the role incumbent upon the international community in these troubled times. The actual state of the world, which was portrayed in the film shown at the opening of the Conference, jars international awareness. This picture is worrying but is not without hope. And that is why we are here today.

Erosion and recurring floods have increased the vulnerability of the people in my country, the Republic of the Congo. The Congolese Red Cross, in partnership with components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross – and the Government, are doing a wonderful job to alleviate the plight of those affected by these tragic events. This Conference provides a suitable opportunity to show them our support and appreciation for their dedicated efforts.

Madam Chairwoman, during the International Conference of 2005, our Government had pledged to have the Congolese Parliament adopt a law on respect for the emblem. The process is on track, thanks to a group of experts that worked on the joint proposals put forward by the Congolese Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Early next year the draft bill will be submitted to Parliament for its consideration and adoption.

Our country, which has signed the Protocols additional to the four Geneva Conventions, strives to promote and enforce all facets of international humanitarian law. Experts covering these issues are in my delegation.

Allow me, Madam Chairwoman, to reiterate my concern about the lack of respect for human dignity in our world. Our Conference theme represents our aspirations to solidarity and mutual respect, and our humanity. Along with my good wishes for a successful outcome to the Conference, I wish to express the hope that an African member will be elected to the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

**H.E. Mr Li Baodong, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of China, Geneva**

(Original English)

We are faced with new challenges in a changing world. With traditional security threats at hand, we are witnessing increasing non-traditional challenges, such as terrorism, epidemics and climate change. Members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement should mobilize potentials and resources to respond to these challenges on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit. To that end, China has the following points to make:

First, to seek peace and promote development, we believe that international disputes should be settled by peaceful solutions. In order to achieve long-term stability and common prosperity, we should promote development and try to narrow the gaps between the North and the South.

Second, to boost unity and strengthen cooperation, we need strong cooperation at the international, regional and bilateral levels. Developed countries and relevant international organizations should give more financial and technical support to developing countries to build up their capacities.

The Geneva Conventions have become the first Conventions to be universally accepted. So, our third point is this: we believe that in adherence with the principles of international humanitarian law, the Conventions should be further disseminated and fully implemented so that victims of war and armed conflict can be protected and assisted in a prompt and efficient manner.

Fourth, in order to put the emphasis on mechanisms and on action, governments should support and strengthen National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Experience shows that to better protect our people's lives and property, we should enhance disaster monitoring and forecast and information sharing.

The Chinese community is always ready to help others with its own capacity and contributes to the humanitarian cause. In support of the provision of relief after the Indian Ocean tsunami, China donated 1.3 billion renminbi, which is the largest amount of humanitarian aid provided by China on record. Now the establishment of an Asia Giant Disaster Study Centre has been put on our agenda. Last June, China's Foreign Ministry and the ICRC jointly hosted an international seminar to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the first two Protocols additional to the four Geneva Conventions. I would like to inform you of the establishment of China's National Committee on International Humanitarian Law, for the purpose of better promoting the dissemination of international humanitarian law.

Madam Chairwoman, the Chinese government values the positive role played by the ICRC. We are ready to further enhance our cooperation. We are confident that with the joint efforts of all participants, the Conference will push the international humanitarian cause forward.

**Ms Jane McGowan, President,
Canadian Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

Global challenges require global partnerships to find global solutions. We at the Canadian Red Cross believe that the auxiliary role of National Societies is critical to building a firm foundation for partnerships with governments. For over a year, the Canadian Red Cross has worked closely with our government, consulting widely with stakeholders to build a better understanding of the auxiliary role as the basis for effective cooperation in such areas as emergency management, health services and dissemination of international humanitarian law. The Canadian Red Cross is proud to be tabling with its government nine joint pledges. These pledges set out a robust, shared agenda for the coming years for the benefit of those we serve. Madam Chairwoman, we are all aware of the devastation caused by malaria. Since 2003, the Canadian Red Cross, with the support of the Canadian government, has been actively involved in cost-effective malaria prevention campaigns. By the end of this year, we will have distributed over 4.8 million bed nets in eight African countries. The bed nets are distributed free of charge as part of an integrated child survival strategy where beneficiaries also receive vitamin A supplements, measles vaccinations and deworming treatments. These efforts are made possible only through partnerships with sister National Societies and their extensive volunteer networks. Madam Chairwoman, of the many challenges we face today, violence in all its forms is a global disaster. It touches everyone, either behind the closed doors of homes or institutions, on the streets or through armed conflict. International humanitarian law regulates and minimizes the effects of armed conflict. The Canadian Red Cross emphatically supports the Resolution on International Humanitarian Law and calls on all governments and National Societies to reaffirm the protection framework contained therein. Our distinctive emblems symbolize protection and we urge all governments to work tirelessly with us to ensure respect for them. Interpersonal violence leaves individuals, families and communities with lasting health, economic, social and legal consequences. Over the last 23 years, the Canadian Red Cross has developed evidence-based, culturally appropriate violence prevention programming and educated over 3.5 million people. These programmes have been developed and delivered in partnership with, and with the support of, all levels of government in Canada. Of all our citizens, children are the most vulnerable to violence and to many health risks, including malaria. We must protect them and we urge

governments and National Societies to work with courage and commitment for the most vulnerable. We call on all National Societies to join the International Federation's pledge on preventing the abuse of power. In conclusion, Madam Chairwoman, it is our hope that this Conference will carry us forward, united in the belief that we can address all of these challenges together, for the sake of our shared humanity.

**Mr Viktor Kalbanau, Secretary-General,
Red Cross Society of Belarus**

(Original Russian)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in these discussions on urgent global problems.

Two years ago, the Belarus Red Cross experienced a serious crisis: work in several key areas was curtailed, financial debts were incurred and a number of other problems arose. Outside assistance was required and that assistance was provided by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, a number of National Societies including Switzerland, Denmark, Germany, Austria and Sweden and other States. We are extremely grateful for all the support we received.

As a result, the work of our organization received a much-needed boost in a number of areas. For example, support from the International Committee of the Red Cross for the dissemination of international humanitarian law made it possible to combine the efforts of the Ministry of Education and the Belarus Red Cross, increasing the number of young people being taught about international humanitarian law from a few hundred to 12,000 within two years. The study of international humanitarian law, as a discipline, was introduced in more than 500 of the country's educational establishments. This, in turn, has significantly increased the prestige of the Red Cross at the local level and resulted in a major intake of volunteers, creating good prospects for the development of our National Society.

However, it is not enough just to attract young people to our ranks. It is more important to retain them, and that is only possible if volunteers feel that their work is relevant and necessary to society.

Unfortunately, in a number of areas, we have been unable either to develop our activities or to use the existing potential of our volunteers. We are currently seeking partners and support in areas such as first-

aid instruction, emergency response and remedial action in the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident. I hope that by highlighting this fact we will be able to find the support and resources needed to solve the problems facing our National Society.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Marco Nescalo for understanding our problems, especially those relating to Chernobyl.

Thank you for your attention.

**H.E. Dr Glaudine Jacoba Mtshali,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of South Africa, Geneva**

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by Egypt on behalf of the African Group. The global character of the humanitarian challenges singled out by this Conference for debate, with a view to finding common solutions, calls – more than ever before – for a concerted effort towards international humanitarian cooperation. We are constantly reminded that our planet is becoming ecologically more unstable and increasingly vulnerable to natural hazards as a result of the depletion of its essential resources and the deterioration of its natural processes. Environmental degradation and its contributory causes – climate change, deforestation, desertification, enduring droughts, etc. – are real and growing threats, as evidenced by the recently released reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The poor and the more vulnerable, who are situated in developing countries, have become instant targets. There are many reasons for this, among them the disproportionate impact of climate change on developing countries combined with sub-optimal disaster management responses and inadequate national capacities owing to limited resources. As humanitarian actors and partners, we need to urgently enhance our efforts to both preserve our environment and scale up disaster management interventions including capacity building.

The developing countries, including those of the African continent, tend to be on the receiving end when it comes to the negative consequences associated with international migration. It is for this reason that we have joined other African partners in calling for more emphasis in identifying ways and means to maximize the development-related

benefits of this phenomenon. International migration needs to be approached in a manner commensurate with the globalizing world economy. This, among other things, entails addressing the root causes of migration and the need to create employment and other opportunities through investment and incentives for economic growth.

My delegation welcomes the attention given to reaffirming the relevance and implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL). South Africa has ratified a number of IHL instruments and will soon accede to Protocol III additional to the Geneva Conventions. Over a year ago, the South African Government established an International Humanitarian Law National Committee, which plays a crucial role in the implementation of IHL in South Africa.

South Africa is aware of some difficulties experienced in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Israeli National Society, Magen David Adom, in 2005. In order to meet the needs of the affected communities, we look forward to a comprehensive follow-up and resolution of this issue.

My delegation has observed with concern that over the past 16 years, no African has been elected to serve on the Standing Commission, regardless of the fact that the Statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement require that the principle of geographical representation be observed. My delegation would like to make a clarion call for this Conference's election to take this important principle into account. In conclusion, Madam Chairwoman, South Africa will be hosting the Seventh Pan African Conference in 2008. My government is working closely with the National Society to ensure that the Conference will be a resounding success.

**Dr Ivan Usichenko, President,
Ukrainian Red Cross Society**

(Original Russian)

The increasing number, variety and interrelationship of humanitarian challenges throughout the world require National Societies to enhance their potential, develop the volunteer movement, and improve cooperation with government agencies. In the Ukraine we place great emphasis on cooperation with the government. The Ukrainian Parliament has adopted two laws – “On the Ukrainian Red Cross

Society” and “On the Red Cross and Red Crescent Emblem” – and concluded several agreements with ministries at the central and regional levels. The leaders of governmental structures need to be informed of the capabilities of the National Society and the importance of uniting our efforts to resolve the country’s humanitarian problems. We have always enjoyed strong support from the government and local authorities and have the level of mutual understanding required to strengthen the potential of the National Society. This, in turn, reinforces the effectiveness of government policy in various spheres.

In performing its auxiliary role, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society takes stock of urgent humanitarian problems in the country and helps the State to tackle poverty, combat tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS epidemics, support the victims of natural and man-made disasters and trace missing persons. We are working to actively resolve problems in connection with the implementation of international humanitarian law and we provide support for illegal migrants and refugees in the areas where they are temporarily housed. The local authorities facilitate and assist the work of regional Red Cross organizations wherever possible. Moreover, I must also stress that these relationships are based on respect for the Fundamental Principles of our Movement.

In the future, we will be taking steps to increase cooperation with governmental structures and we are counting on the continued support of the government for our humanitarian work.

The proposed draft Resolution – “On the Role of National Societies as Auxiliaries to the Public Authorities in the Humanitarian Field” – cites many important international documents already adopted. It goes without saying that these documents make reference to the exceptional importance of the National Society’s auxiliary role.

We support the proposed Draft Resolution on this issue.

Thank you for your attention.

Ms Ouandaogo Bana, President, Burkinabé Red Cross Society

(Original French)

I would like to begin by conveying warm brotherly greetings from the Burkinabé Red Cross Society, its

volunteers and the vulnerable people of my country who, thanks to the humanitarian action of our Movement, have found peace of mind and hope once again.

Over the past five years, my country has been hard hit by humanitarian situations following the crisis in the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire, locust plagues, drought and, just recently, flooding due to the harmful effects of climate change. The living conditions in my country, which are already precarious for a great many inhabitants, make population groups even more vulnerable when disaster strikes. To cope with these recurring humanitarian problems, our National Society works together with the government and enjoys the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and some sister National Societies, in particular the Spanish Red Cross, the Belgian Red Cross (French-speaking community) and the Luxembourg Red Cross, enabling it to meet victims’ needs.

Some 274,000 people out of over 300,000 Burkina Faso migrants repatriated from Côte d’Ivoire benefited from Red Cross assistance between 2002 and 2004. Thanks to the joint efforts of the Burkinabé Red Cross Society, the Belgian Red Cross, the Luxembourg Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Africare, a non-governmental organization, 174,444 of those hardest hit by the 2005 locust plague received assistance.

In 2007, flooding affected more than 92,000 persons, claiming 42 lives. The volunteers of our National Society were the first to provide emergency first aid, often in difficult conditions. In emergency situations, 6,200 victims were helped by our National Society with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Reconstruction aid will shortly allow the rebuilding of 330 homes, with the support of the Spanish Red Cross and funding from the European Community’s Humanitarian Aid Office. In 2007, the International Committee of the Red Cross provided emergency relief to 9,000 victims of violent clashes between farmers and stockbreeders.

Apart from these emergency situations, our National Society has stepped up its efforts in behalf of children in difficulty, through a project for the rehabilitation of street children (an average of 500 children are taken off the streets each year and 300 return to their families or professional life and school) and one to

combat the trafficking and exploitation of children. In addition, 2,016 school kits were distributed at the beginning of the 2007 school year, to school children living in especially difficult circumstances, in six provinces. These projects, too, are being carried out in partnership with the National Societies of Belgium and Spain.

Nor has our National Society lagged behind, in such sectors as food security (2,100 women were taught to read and write and 12,600 benefited from income-generating projects), hygiene/sanitation, assistance to the elderly and the disabled, and in efforts to combat poverty through a comprehensive women's project in several of the country's provinces.

Operations were performed with doctors from the United States of America, Morocco and Burkina Faso. In 2006-2007, such operations focused on cataracts, with nearly 800 patients operated upon – the outcome of a partnership with the Islamic Development Bank, the Government of Burkina Faso and the National Society.

Whenever necessary, the National Society always responds promptly to any request – from the government and from partners such as the United Nations, the European Union and embassies – for the participation of volunteers in social mobilization and other humanitarian activities, which has brought it an award presented by the government: the Order of Merit of Burkina Faso.

Madam Chairwoman, I now wish to take up the auxiliary status, recognized by authorities for National Societies, and assure you that the Government of Burkina Faso strictly respects the principle of the independence of our Movement. In addition, the advantages (full tax exemption for purchases of equipment and real estate) extended to our National Society by the Government reflect the credibility that our Movement enjoys with our country's authorities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our government – for its unflagging support for the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – and our country's institutions, which do their utmost to deal swiftly and effectively with all matters that concern us. Its direct involvement in hosting the 5th Pan African Conference in 2000 in Ouagadougou, and the President of Burkina Faso's visit to the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, are clear signs of the government's interest in our Movement. In addition, among other steps, the Parliament of Burkina Faso adopted a law in 2003 on the nationwide use of the emblem.

However, even though the partnership with the Government is clear, commitments must be made to provide greater support for our National Society in the implementation of our Movement's new programmes, in particular the strategy for restoring family ties, as well as in the humanitarian challenges we constantly face.

Madam Chairwoman, I would like to express the sincere gratitude of the beneficiaries of these joint efforts to the Spanish Red Cross, the Belgian Red Cross, the Red Cross of Luxembourg, the French Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross. This is the most important thing of all: working together for those in need.

**H.E. Don MacKay,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of New Zealand, Geneva**

(Original English)

The New Zealand Government very much welcomes the focus of this year's Conference: "Together for humanity." The Movement's attention to the humanitarian implications of evolving events in relation to the environment, migration, health and violence can and will very valuably complement with currently under way and other multilateral fora in these areas.

This International Conference is a valuable opportunity for governments and National Societies to come together and review our work over the past four years and to plan cooperation in the future. The New Zealand government works closely with the New Zealand Red Cross and welcomes the close relationship between National Societies and governments encouraged by the Movement, including through the development of joint pledges.

Indeed the theme of this year's Conference highlights the need for collaborative responses right across the board. New Zealand has provided positive feedback on the International Disaster Relief Guidelines and we are keen to implement them.

We are strongly committed to the Movement's work on international humanitarian law, and to that end in August, New Zealand hosted the Second Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on international humanitarian law, which had as its sub-theme: "Towards a culture of obligation and responsibility." In February of next

year, we will host a conference on cluster munitions to promote further progress on this important humanitarian issue. With respect to the Ottawa Mine Ban Convention, we have delivered capacity building in the Pacific and we are soon to assume the role of co-chair of the victim assistance programme. We have also remained active with regard to curbing the proliferation of small arms: this includes support for improved transfer controls and for the Arms Trade Treaty. We are also, Madam Chair, in the process of moving towards ratification of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and accession to its two Protocols and, of course, we are also working on national legislation to provide legal protection for the third emblem (the red crystal). Once completed, that will enable us to ratify Protocol III additional to the four Geneva Conventions.

Madam Chair, given our strong commitment to the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, the New Zealand government takes pleasure in supporting the candidacy of Lady Jocelyn Keith for a seat on the Standing Commission. Given her long-standing experience at National Society, regional and international levels, and her tireless commitment to the Movement, we are confident that Lady Keith would bring an important and valuable perspective to the work of the Commission.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, may I compliment the National Society on the excellent discussion and outcomes from last week's meeting. We are confident that this week's meeting will continue, in the best tradition of the Movement, in advancing the important themes of the Conference under your leadership.

**Mr William Aurelien Eteki Mboumoua,
President, Cameroon Red Cross Society**

(Original French)

Our discussions on the humanitarian challenges – present and future – that pose a threat to human lives have been fruitful and intense, and that is a good thing. The Cameroon Red Cross Society prefers on this occasion to concentrate on international migration, something that has existed since time immemorial and that affects all continents and all peoples. It is a natural and sometimes inevitable tendency of human beings who seek the best living conditions. The root causes of migration are armed conflict, disaster, exclusion and poverty.

Within our sub-region, Cameroon is a kind of open door to migratory flows originating in the heart

of Africa. At present, Cameroon has nearly five million migrants, a figure that consistently increases in lockstep with internal tension, civil war, political instability, impoverishment and the quest for better living conditions, especially in Central Africa. At this very moment, we face large-scale population movements from the Central African Republic.

This situation is imposed on us because of Cameroon's special circumstances and a certain lasting stability. And we fully intend to rise to the challenge. To this end, the Cameroon Red Cross Society has for some time been implementing an aid project for urban refugees – in the main cities, Douala and Yaoundé, to ensure that these migrants receive education and care and are properly integrated – with the help of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In addition, the National Society keeps working to improve the living conditions of Central African refugees in Garoua-Boulai, a village on Cameroon's border with the Central African Republic.

Several National Societies follow Cameroon's lead and work in the field, as auxiliaries to the authorities, naturally, but often also as partners for other humanitarian structures. Sometimes, they proceed differently from us. This is why it is important for our natural partners within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to help us further strengthen our capacities to make us more autonomous, allow us to act in strict compliance with our Fundamental Principles, enable us to provide more effective care for migrants, and help us reach the authorities, in order to promote the integration of migrants and facilitate their return, if need be.

**H.E. Mr Sung-Joo Lee, Ambassador, Permanent
Representative, Permanent Mission of the
Republic of Korea, Geneva**

(Original English)

Climate change and its catastrophic consequences now regularly appear in the news, and so do international migration issues. Violence, especially in urban settings, is taking on new forms and its scope increases with the steady growth of urbanization. Emergent and recurrent diseases threaten to infect more and more people, given the sustained international exchanges. All these issues and their humanitarian consequences concern each one of us, since no one can claim to be safe from, or to control, them. It is high time, therefore, that these global problems were addressed by all of us, together.

Madam Chair, in the Republic of Korea, problems linked to these issues have been identified and efforts made to solve them and to minimize their consequences. Let me share with you some of our experiences.

More than 93% of our population lives in densely concentrated urban areas. People no longer relate to one another as they used to in the past, and despite living closer to each other, they are increasingly isolated. This contributes to the rise of urban crime and violence. To address this phenomenon, the government has implemented a number of policies in behalf of the most vulnerable segments of the population. The Korean Red Cross, NGOs and others also significantly contribute to addressing the root causes of crime and violence.

Madam Chair, there are more than one million immigrants now living in the Republic of Korea. The government favours their smooth integration and cultural centres offer them the opportunity to learn the Korean language and customs. Another priority of the government is to protect their human rights by preventing discrimination and unfair treatment. My country is now turning into a multicultural, multi-ethnic society.

Madam Chair, we have a relatively low rate of HIV in my country. However, we still witness discrimination and prejudice against HIV-infected people. The government seeks to inform and educate people to prevent the spread of the disease and the social ostracism of those who are infected. The Red Cross holds important campaigns in this regard. The government also assists in medical research and intervenes to improve access to medicine.

Madam Chair, we are indeed embarking on a very ambitious endeavour, given the dire humanitarian consequences of these issues. Dialogue and cooperation are certainly the ways to achieve the best possible outcomes and I hope this Conference will lead the way to success. The Republic of Korea is committed to do whatever is in its power to alleviate such humanitarian consequences, both at home and abroad.

Ms Sarah Naz, Deputy Director, Organizational Development, Pakistan Red Crescent Society

(Original English)

Our delegation would like to address the humanitarian challenge of emergent and recurrent health issues, particularly HIV/AIDS. Madam Chair, as we all know,

HIV/AIDS is a chronic, life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus. In the last 25 years, AIDS has become a global epidemic. In Pakistan, the estimated HIV/AIDS burden is still low, around 0.1 percent of the adult population. While the number remains relatively low, failure to recognize the HIV/AIDS threat in Pakistan may lead to a widespread epidemic.

Until recently, Pakistan was classified as a 'low prevalence country' with many risk factors leading to the rapid development of an epidemic. However, the latest evidence indicates that the situation is changing rapidly. Pakistan has a concentrated HIV epidemic (prevalence is over 5% and rising to 30%). A similar situation, almost, prevails in other South Asian countries. These developments warrant a new survey of the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. The earlier data appear to be under-reported owing to the stigma attached to the ailment.

Madam Chair, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society's Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS was developed after a series of discussions within the National Society and the South Asia Regional Network for HIV/AIDS. The strategic plan developed is in line with the HIV/AIDS priorities of the government of Pakistan and the International Federation's HIV/AIDS policy.

Madam Chair, despite the alignment of the National Society's strategic HIV plan with the government's plan and policy, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society is not seen as a partner of the government in implementing these strategies. There is a need for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to reflect on how National Societies can become credible partners in the global HIV response, as many National Societies are still not perceived as stakeholders in their respective national responses.

Madam Chair, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society was the first in South Asia to establish a voluntary counselling and testing centre. So far, 7,000 people have benefited from this facility. Pakistan is also moving forward with regard to the integration of HIV/AIDS patients in the society. In a bold gesture, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society recently gave prominence to one of its affected volunteers by awarding her a special prize in a ceremony chaired by the President of Pakistan. This was well covered in the media. We are also doubling the capacity of our blood centres to ensure the expanded supply of blood.

Madam Chair, keeping in view the situation in South-East Asia, it is proposed that, in the global HIV/AIDS response, representatives from countries

having concentrated HIV epidemics be included in the HIV Governance Group. It has also been suggested that projects under way include training for prevention, treatment and care. However, in countries where religious, cultural and social values act as impediments to the dissemination of information about AIDS, projects must include awareness issues in their training. This can be helpful for countries where the concept of, and new approaches to, HIV/AIDS are still evolving.

**H.E. Mr Alireza Moaiyeri,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Iran, Geneva**

(Original English)

The Islamic Republic of Iran remains dedicated to the advancement of international humanitarian issues, particularly through providing immediate and urgent relief assistance. Joint relief operations symbolize international solidarity, promote friendly relations amongst people and contribute to world peace. We believe that the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is a vital forum to deal with the humanitarian issues facing the international community.

The 30th Conference aims to pursue important objectives, such as strengthening the need for collaborative action and partnerships between States as well as with components of the Movement and other stakeholders in addressing the challenges facing humanity: environmental degradation, migration, urban violence, emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health risks, etc. Along with this, the specific nature of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – its action and partnerships – and the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to their public authorities should be recognized and appreciated.

We move towards setting guidelines that could strengthen the legal framework for timely international disaster response at the international, regional and national levels, improving the coordination and effectiveness of disaster relief and recovery assistance while intensifying cooperation to reduce the damage caused by natural and man-made disasters. The agenda item on the applicability and relevance of international humanitarian law in preserving human life and dignity in armed conflicts, and on the technical aspects of this body of law, deserves particular attention.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its full commitment to the principles of international humanitarian law, in

particular the four Geneva Conventions. We are against any attempt to infringe international law or to use double standards and selective approaches. We look forward to seeing the inclusion of the rights, interests and concerns of the Palestinian people in the final documents of the Conference.

The outcomes of the 30th Conference will have a significant impact on strengthening the role of National Societies in addressing human suffering as well as on reaffirming and implementing international humanitarian law. My delegation is fully prepared to cooperate in realizing the objectives of the Conference.

**Ms Peiyun Peng, President,
Red Cross Society of China**

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, the process of globalization has promoted global economic and social development. At the same time, the world is developing in a more unbalanced manner than before. As a result, we are facing new humanitarian challenges. Climate change, international migration, urban violence, HIV and other global issues are threatening the process of development, pushing the vulnerable into a more difficult situation. To respond to these challenges, we need strong partnerships between governments, National Societies and ordinary citizens.

The Chinese Red Cross has, for many years, been active in underdeveloped regions, providing relief to poor people affected by illness or natural disasters. Our volunteers provide community services to improve local conditions in such areas as water, sanitation and the environment. Their work has reduced disaster risks and improved the quality of life for the vulnerable in an effective way. The Chinese Red Cross plays a unique role in HIV prevention. We listen to the voices of high-risk groups: we advocate on behalf of people living with HIV, we fight against discrimination and strive for a harmonious society.

Madam Chairwoman, the Chinese government has proposed a scientific concept of development that stresses coordination and harmony. China is taking effective measures to balance urban and rural development, balance regional development, balance economic and social development, and ensure the harmonious development of human beings and nature.

The Chinese Red Cross is an auxiliary to the government in the humanitarian field. We are

facing an important development opportunity. We are working hard to build up capacity, streamline operational mechanisms, and mobilize social resources, to provide better services for vulnerable groups. We also hope that the Chinese Red Cross will be more actively involved in international cooperation and work together with you, my dear colleagues, towards our common goals.

**H.E. Ms Marie-Louise Overvad,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Denmark, Geneva**

(Original English)

Denmark aligns itself with the statement by Portugal on behalf of the EU. I shall focus on the tremendous challenge facing us today following from climate change.

Cooperation between the Movement and other humanitarian actors, UN organizations and NGOs with capacity in the field to implement humanitarian action is crucial. Strong operational partnerships, in which roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, can ensure more efficient and timely response. Denmark welcomes the important work done by The Hague Centre on Climate Change. To further dialogue and partnership in this field, Denmark has decided to organize an international conference in Copenhagen in the fall of 2008 on disaster and risk reduction and the consequences of climate change.

An integral part of a global strategy to address the consequences of climate change is disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction. Progress in implementing disaster risk reduction policies is urgently needed to counter the growing number of natural disasters. Further investments in risk reduction programmes must be undertaken. Denmark is committed to the full implementation of the recommendations of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Denmark welcomes the International Disaster Response Law initiative. Harmonization of laws and policies in the area of disaster response is key to facilitate effective international response. As co-chair of the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, Denmark wants to contribute to the development of key policies in this area.

Madam Chair, climate change and environmental degradation have an impact on livelihoods and the level of poverty, which may lead to greater migratory

movement. Climate change is also likely to escalate conflicts over essential resources.

Denmark commends the efforts of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to draw attention to the need for local capacity and mobilization of community support for migrants, irrespective of their local status. Adaptation to climate change must be mainstreamed in humanitarian and development assistance. Better coherence between humanitarian and development efforts may help, as well as more flexibility in our financial instruments.

Denmark encourages the Movement to focus more on planning and implementing exit strategies for handing over activities to development actors. Adaptation to climate change must be cross-cutting in all sectors. Water resource management and food security are key examples. Denmark encourages the Movement to strengthen its environmental approach, including formal guidelines for its water and habitat programmes.

Madam Chair, we strive to address new and pressing challenges caused by climate change and other man-made or natural disasters. But we must not lose sight of the fundamental basis of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: the promotion and protection of international humanitarian law. Also, the nature of armed conflicts and the challenges involved change. Likewise, our understanding of the principles and provisions of international humanitarian law must develop. We must not shy away from adapting to these changes. This is the only way to ensure comprehensive protection for victims in all regions of the world. We look forward to our work on this issue, too, during this Conference.

**Ms Monique Coulibaly Nee Kodjo, President,
Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire**

(Original French)

Côte d'Ivoire, located on a continent where disasters of all kinds and war have wrought indescribable havoc, is one country that, unfortunately, has first-hand knowledge of the major challenges on the agenda at this Conference.

The Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire fully supports the objectives and resolutions of this Conference. "Together for humanity" is a topic to which all of us can relate. The challenge is to increase awareness of the ties between National Societies and governments and other partners as we carry out our humanitarian mission.

Thus, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire, mindful of the challenges facing our countries, recalling its determination to constantly strive to improve the living conditions of vulnerable people and basing itself on the topics to be dealt with at this Conference, undertakes the following commitments for 2008-2011.

We are convinced that environmental degradation, which includes climate change, represents one of the worst threats to our countries and the entire planet. The Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire pledges to back efforts across the world by increasing awareness of the consequences of environmental degradation from a humanitarian perspective. We wish to associate ourselves with all national initiatives designed to promote environmental education with a view to development that is respectful of the environment and mindful of the need to conserve natural resources. Partnerships with governments and other organizations will provide the necessary platforms.

In order to alleviate the impact of international migration, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire intends to use all forums for cooperation and partnership at its disposal to make the humanitarian voice heard – the voice stressing the need to help those who live outside traditional medical, social and legal systems and have no access to processes guaranteeing respect for their fundamental rights. Foreigners account for 22 per cent of the 16 million inhabitants of Côte d'Ivoire. Consequently, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire pledges to establish, in partnership with the sister National Societies of neighbouring countries, a sub-regional network aimed at increasing awareness among young people in countries with irregular migrants and at meeting their humanitarian needs with regard to humanitarian assistance and the protection and promotion of international standards for migrants. This network could be set up before 30 June 2008.

Mindful that urban violence is a worldwide problem requiring urgent and effective action to ensure that our young people do not lose touch with the values that characterize a citizens' society based on humanitarian values, standards and principles, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire has committed itself to expanding the project for education in international humanitarian law – which has already resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Red Cross and the government – in order to reach unemployed youths and dropouts. Clubs are to be set up within youth associations via the training of peer educators and media-driven awareness-building campaigns. Priority will be given to the major cities in the country that

have been affected by war. These efforts are to be implemented before the 2008 general elections. There is a need to continue – together with the government and the International Committee of the Red Cross – the efforts to teach young people about the principles and values of humanitarian law with a view to ensuring the dissemination of the programme and total ownership of the project by the State. In addition, we pledge, with the support of our partners, to implement social reintegration projects for young people, in particular ex-combatants and street children who have been excluded from society and have lost their bearings. The Red Cross centre for assistance to children in difficult circumstances in Abidjan is already implementing a project of this nature. We commit ourselves to preventing violence and mobilizing the community, volunteers and young people through campaigns to promote respect for diversity and to combating exclusion by means of community radio broadcasts.

With regard to emerging and recurring diseases and public health, we are mindful of the scope of pandemics and public health threats such as HIV/AIDS, avian flu, tuberculosis and malaria, and recognize that a comprehensive approach to public health is needed to tackle tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and many other threats to health in prisons. Therefore, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire pledges to strengthen its existing activities, in particular by reactivating voluntary screening centres. The war has made Buruli ulcers of secondary importance. Even though the disease is not yet a worldwide concern – like tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS or malaria – Buruli ulcers affect hundreds of people every year in Côte d'Ivoire. This is why the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire commits itself to actively supporting the authorities' efforts to combat Buruli ulcers: a report of the World Health Organization reveals a sharp rise from 15,000 cases in 2004 to 25,000 cases in 2006. To take up this other challenge, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire is counting on its partners: the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other organizations. Immediate assistance needs are food and non-food items. For instance, parents have to spend months at a sick child's bedside. A centre for the treatment of Buruli ulcers could be set up by means of partnerships.

Turning to the specific nature of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in action and in partnerships, and the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the authorities in the field, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire wishes to point out that achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including that of reducing the number and impact of natural and man-made disasters by 2015, will require

a change of attitude. Accordingly, the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire is calling for the establishment of a stronger partnership with the authorities, with strict respect for the Fundamental Principles.

Many initiatives have been taken in relation to the reaffirmation and applicability of international humanitarian law – especially as regards training and exchanges with other countries – since the National Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law in Côte d'Ivoire was founded in 1996. We welcome the government's determination to pursue and achieve objectives related to the implementation of international humanitarian law in Côte d'Ivoire.

The adoption of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance will enhance the effectiveness of international relief operations and post-disaster recovery. Our National Society pledges to strongly support these guidelines and engage in networking.

**H.E. Mr Franciscos Verros,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Greece, Geneva**

(Original French)

We are prepared to work with you and the other delegations in a constructive spirit. Madam Chairwoman, we fully endorse the statement that the distinguished representative of Portugal delivered on behalf of the European Union. Naturally, we wholeheartedly support the commitments made in that statement.

I would like to take this opportunity to point out that Greece has faithfully fulfilled its own commitments undertaken at the 28th International Conference.

First of all, a good deal was achieved during the period in question with regard to the dissemination

of humanitarian law in Greece. The Red Cross booklet on international humanitarian law was translated and distributed to all the universities in Greece. The armed forces, particularly those that participate in peacekeeping missions, also receive systematic training in international humanitarian law. Such courses are also part of the training programme for police officers. Many forums on humanitarian law were organized, several of which were conducted under the auspices of the government or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Second, Greece has ratified the Protocol on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. A ministerial-level national advisory committee has been set up to coordinate the steps to be taken in the event of armed conflict.

Third, the powers and the independence of the National Civil Defence Agency were broadened. This decision made it possible, *inter alia*, to cope effectively with this summer's devastating forest fires.

Madam Chairwoman, with regard to the agenda of our Conference, we attach great importance to the discussion on the impact of climate change. The socio-economic consequences of environmental degradation are among the most important challenges of our time. According to a report by leading scientists, they pose a real threat to humanity and even constitute a potential source of conflict. We welcome the opportunity to devote some thought to this topic at this 30th International Conference. We take this occasion to emphasize that Greece, which currently chairs the Human Security Network, has chosen as a priority subject the search for possible solutions to the impact of environmental degradation on those who are most vulnerable.

I would be remiss if I did not refer to the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Palestinian Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom. If properly applied, it can and must set an example, paving the way for greater cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Tuesday 27 November 2007

(2.30 p.m.)

**Mr Ibrahim Tahir, President,
Nigerian Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

The theme “Together for humanity” might well be a Nigerian slogan in that, as you are well aware, Nigeria has always been very faithful to the creed of the humanitarian movement; it has placed itself at the disposal of its neighbours and its own region, and at the disposal of the international community, for humanitarian action whenever and wherever called upon.

We are scheduled to host an international conference on space information for disaster forecast and emergency response in 2008. As a regional base, we have developed a disaster emergency response mechanism for countries of the West African region. We did this in collaboration with the Office of Outer Space Administration in Vienna; it was ratified in a Treaty in Burkina Faso in January 2007.

We believe that the focus subjects chosen for this Conference reflect the fact that the international leadership of the humanitarian movement is very much intellectually engaged in and committed to solving some of the major problems that trouble our planet at this time. We, in the West African region and in Nigeria in particular, are very much concerned about climatic change: it has produced a cluster of problems, including migration – inward and outward – and violence and various disasters, especially floods, which, once a rarity, have now become endemic and are spreading rapidly, year by year.

We believe, Madam Chairman, that even though we are doing very well in the Movement with respect to a lot of the challenges that confront us, there are some areas – especially migration – in which the Movement could devote a little more attention to certain issues: in particular, migration across territorial frontiers in West Africa in which the right of return and matters like that become extremely important. When these issues are discussed during the debate on the Resolutions, if there is time, I think we shall be presenting a detailed position. Alternatively, we intend to write to the International Federation and the ICRC on a number of matters in which we think the Movement can pioneer certain solutions and provide direction. We commend you

for holding this Conference with this theme and on those subjects; we are happy to be here and we look forward to contributing more at the correct time.

**H.E. Mr Petko Draganov,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Bulgaria, Geneva**

(Original English)

Having at the outset associated ourselves with the statement of Portugal on behalf of the European Union, allow me to briefly share with you some observations in my capacity as Bulgaria’s permanent representative at the Bulgarian permanent mission in Geneva. As already stated, current studies on climate change show that disasters have become frequent events on the global, regional and national levels. The Bulgarian government is alarmed by the frequency and the impact of disasters on Bulgarian territory. In this respect, we share the increasing concern of the international community about the adequacy of existing legal mechanisms for the facilitation of humanitarian activities in response to natural and technical disasters.

Our experience with heavy floods in 2005 indicated the primary importance of providing aid to affected people, particularly during the first hours of the disaster. Coordinated action with operational units and structures of the Bulgarian Red Cross in disasters, accidents and catastrophic situations were helpful in decreasing and preventing human suffering and vulnerability.

The Bulgarian government appreciates the Bulgarian Red Cross’s support. It considers our successful joint efforts in disaster response to be a good example of “the role of the National Society as auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.” May I note with satisfaction the volunteers’ award recently bestowed upon our National Society by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

We recognize as especially important and useful the possibilities available to the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for engaging the capacity and support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in dealing with disasters. More specifically, I mean the system and standards especially created for disaster response, including financial support from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund and the activities of special units like the Emergency Response Unit.

Given the good partnership between the Bulgarian government and the Bulgarian Red Cross in addressing urgent humanitarian needs in regions affected by disasters – not only on the State's territory but also outside its borders – we support the efforts of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to promote and develop an international mechanism, to ensure efficient and energetic humanitarian aid, through the Draft Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance.

Provided that the Guidelines are based on existing international legal rules and practical experiences, we support their adoption as a demonstration of international consensus, and for providing guidance concerning the steps that each State should undertake in order to improve its national legislative framework so as to guarantee the quality, efficiency, timeliness and good coordination of international aid for disaster response.

Madam Chairwoman, allow me in conclusion to express my firm belief that the 30th International Conference will be successful and will further the mission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

**H.E. Ms Colette Samoya Kirura, Counsellor,
Department of International Organizations,
Ministry of External Relations and Cooperation,
Burundi**

(Original French)

“Together for humanity”: What could be more evocative than this general theme for Burundi, a country that has been experiencing war for the past ten years? Even as I speak, peace has not been fully restored because the rebels have not yet laid down their weapons. The questions on the agenda are meaningful indeed.

A civil war means massive displacement of people, both inside and outside borders, the arrival of refugees from neighbouring countries, the re-entry of returnees, and so forth. Climate change has also made itself felt: over the past two years, Burundi has experienced torrential rains alternating with drought, to catastrophic effect in the form of floods, famine and forced population movements. Their impact has been compounded by recurring diseases such as tuberculosis or epidemics of diseases such as cholera, not to mention the AIDS pandemic in high-risk

population groups. What can we say of violence in general – urban violence in particular – and violence against women? Burundi has had its share: large-scale massacres of civilians, insecurity, all sorts of human rights violations and impunity, which exacerbates the situation.

Despite these many challenges, Burundi is moving towards peace and development and has had some success with the establishment of democratically elected institutions and cross-cutting policies based on partnership.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Burundi Red Cross are key members of this partnership, especially when it comes to humanitarian work. Burundi greatly appreciates the dedication of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to their guiding principles, as well as their exemplary behaviour in advocating the spirit of the Geneva Conventions.

As for commitments relating to the objectives of this Conference, the Government of Burundi will spare no effort to support and promote the operational partnership with a view to taking up the various challenges. Cooperation agreements between the Burundi Red Cross and various ministerial departments are reflected in this management of humanitarian affairs, which is very encouraging. Promotion of international humanitarian law will take concrete form with the incorporation of its provisions into local legislation. The draft revised Penal Code includes an adequate number of provisions of international humanitarian law. Madam Chairwoman, I cannot conclude without mentioning the presence of Burundi Red Cross volunteers throughout the country. Their status, of auxiliaries to the authorities, will be expanded to include those at the grassroots level because we saw, during the war, that volunteers visited even high-risk sites; they criss-crossed the country with the emblem. And that will always command our respect. That is why my Government will do its utmost to foster this ethic.

**Mr Bosse Hedberg, Deputy Director-General,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden**

(Original English)

Madam Chair, like several delegations before us, my delegation warmly welcomes the focus of yesterday's and today's debate on four fundamental challenges to

our common humanitarian agenda. The overarching theme of this Conference, “Together for humanity,” reminds us that we cannot even begin to address those challenges unless we act in full partnership: governments, National Societies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the United Nations, regional organizations and civil society at large. To borrow some words from President Kellenberger’s impressive statement yesterday, an investment in the remedies to the challenges before us is an investment in future security.

The overarching theme of this Conference, “Together for humanity,” also reminds us of the principle of the responsibility to protect – a principle to which Sweden attaches great importance – which emphasizes human dignity and which places the rights of the individual at the centre. Although the primary responsibility to protect lies with the State itself, all participating States agreed at the 2005 UN Summit that the international community not only has the right but also an obligation to react when a State is unwilling or unable to protect its population.

We need to be aware that conflict not only leaves physical scars, but also destroys social infrastructure, which in turn undermines development. Security, development and human rights are mutually reinforcing. Societies that do not have democratic and accountable institutions, and that are unable to deal with crises in a peaceful manner, will also have no possibility of developing and prospering.

We continue to observe, on a daily basis, serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law that we – the international community and, in particular, governments – must address in a much more concerted way. Our efforts against impunity must continue, through further support for the International Criminal Court, the strengthening of universal jurisdiction for such crimes and through other appropriate measures.

Madam Chair, it is both timely and appropriate that climate change has been put on the agenda for this Conference. We have already begun to experience the direct humanitarian consequences of climate change, most of all among poor communities in developing countries.

As a sign of how seriously we take this issue, the Swedish government recently launched an international commission on climate change and development. It comprises 12 distinguished international personalities representing different regions, constituencies and range of experience,

and is chaired by our Minister for International Development Cooperation. Supplementing the processes that are already under way, *inter alia* within the UN, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the EU, the new commission will focus on the links between climate change and development in poor countries. It will present proposals for how development assistance can be ‘climate-proofed’ by integrating risk reduction and adaptation to climate change in the development and poverty reduction plans of poor countries. The commission will deliver its report in the spring of 2009, a few months before Sweden assumes the Presidency of the European Union.

Ms Loveleen Rihel Brenna, Member of the National Board, Norwegian Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair, the auxiliary role of National Societies constitutes one of the defining characteristics that distinguish us from national non-governmental organizations and from the UN system. In order to obtain access to vulnerable people, the Red Cross and Red Crescent need to be perceived and to operate as neutral and independent actors. It is essential that States and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies work together for humanity in order to assist people in need. The Norwegian Red Cross thus very much welcomes the initiative to discuss how this cooperation should be organized. Together with the Norwegian government, we present a joint pledge to this end.

The Norwegian Red Cross strongly supports the proposed resolution regarding the reaffirmation and implementation of international humanitarian law. The main problem in armed conflicts is not a lack of rules, but a lack of respect for the rules that exist. It is therefore of vital importance that we promote respect for the emblems providing protection for the victims of violence. In this regard, we also refer to the unanimous resolution of the Council of Delegates that addresses the humanitarian consequences resulting from the use of cluster munitions. This is an important contribution to the Oslo process in terms of working towards a treaty prohibiting the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions that cause harmful consequences to civilian populations. We urge National Societies and governments to secure their commitment to the Oslo process.

The Norwegian Red Cross strongly supports the initiative to highlight the humanitarian consequences

of migration as one of the Movement's most important priorities. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have a responsibility to provide humanitarian assistance to all human beings in need, including migrants, regardless of their legal status. The discussion and the subsequent unanimous decision of the General Assembly and the Council of Delegates demonstrate the commitment by 186 National Societies to address the humanitarian consequences of migration.

We urge governments to study the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council of Delegates, and to work with us in collaboration and partnership to address these important humanitarian challenges.

Mr Vladimir E. Tarabrin, Deputy Director of the Legal Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation

(Original Russian)

First of all, I would like to welcome all the participants to this august assembly and wish you every success in your work.

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is rightly regarded as the principal forum for humanitarian cooperation: it draws up an account of the reporting period and identifies strategic tasks for the future.

The current forum could well become a milestone, given the scale and importance of the tasks facing us. It is important to define the role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in global efforts to counter such new and dangerous challenges as the deterioration of the environment, climate change, the adverse effects of migration, and the spread of violence and epidemics. At the same time, it is also important to avoid wasting financial and human resources, or duplicating work being done by other international organizations, in particular the United Nations.

In the aftermath of a natural or man-made disaster, a well-honed interaction mechanism, a State emergency prevention and response system, and appropriate legislation are all vital if remedial action is to be successful. The primary responsibility in these areas lies with States. In Russia, all these issues are given the attention they deserve.

The contemporary era represents a serious test for international humanitarian law. I would like to

express our gratitude to the ICRC for a report that contains an in-depth and interesting review of the current status of international humanitarian law.

There is no doubt that it is extremely important that States observe their obligations under international humanitarian law. This is an area in which there is still work to be done. Nevertheless, the tendency towards unjustified extension of bans on the use of entirely legitimate military methods is of doubtful legitimacy.

In recent years, there has been a rise in the number of domestic armed conflicts. Needless to say, this requires an appropriate response in terms of the development of international humanitarian law. Nevertheless, we are concerned by efforts to extend the whole body of legal rules traditionally applicable to international armed conflict into the realm of internal conflict. This approach seems to us too simplistic.

The ambitious tasks facing the Red Cross community cannot be accomplished without close, partnership-based interaction between States and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other components of the Movement. We are confident that our Conference will contribute to the strengthening of the potential of the Red Cross community and the development of contemporary humanitarian law.

Thank you.

Mr Kasidis Rochanakorn, Director, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

(Original English)

Madam Chair, it is a privilege and pleasure for me to be here representing the Under-Secretary-General, Mr John Holmes. This International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is an important event. It is taking place at a significant moment in the history of humanitarian endeavour. We look forward to benefiting from your deliberations in the coming days, and hope to contribute to the implementation of its outcome.

We value the opportunity given us to participate and to express our appreciation of the critical role played by all the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in alleviating human suffering all over the world. The universal recognition of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent is a tribute to

your important work and invaluable experience in helping those in need. OCHA, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, stands ready to contribute to these endeavours together for humanity.

In situations of armed conflict around the world, UN agencies often work alongside the International Federation, the ICRC and National Societies. We value our practical engagement with the ICRC in the field and appreciate its leadership in developing the theory and practice of humanitarian action in an environment where it is constantly facing new challenges.

We are also keenly conscious of the need for all actors to adhere, and to be seen to adhere, to humanitarian principles. We work in an interconnected world. Perceptions of one actor can all too easily affect the operations of others. We are aware of, and respect, the specific mandates and operating modalities of the various components of the Movement. We are firmly committed to finding modalities for working alongside each other so that we do not compromise core principles that are critical for effective action to address the plight of persons affected by armed conflict.

With specific reference to disasters, it is worth noting that disastrous events associated with natural hazards do not make international headlines. As the International Federation reminds us, over 80% of natural hazard events are addressed by those who are directly affected, without recourse to international assistance. The support that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies provide to governments and communities is a critical cornerstone of this effort.

It is also worth recalling that even though the number of recorded disasters has doubled over the past two decades, the number of people killed and affected has not grown at the same pace. This clearly indicates that investment in the reduction of risk, including mitigation and preparedness measures, is paying off.

However, as a humanitarian community, we are also increasingly aware that factors such as rapid and unplanned urbanization present new challenges that are changing the nature and scope of vulnerability. As people seek an escape from rural deprivation, they often end up in shanty towns or locations that increase their vulnerability. Climate change is also set to increase the frequency and volatility of hazard events. It is essential that gains in reducing risk are not reversed as communities struggle to cope with

the recurrent and more volatile disasters that threaten to erode the coping capacity they have worked so hard to build and maintain.

OCHA strongly supports the initiative of the International Federation and the National Societies to help countries strengthen their legal preparedness for disasters through the IDRL programme, the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles programme. We recognize the importance and usefulness of this work, which has led, among other things, to the elaboration of the draft Guidelines that are being presented at this Conference for adoption. We look forward to continuing to work together in this important area, which is crucial for effective disaster preparedness and response.

In accordance with our distinct and complementary mandates, the United Nations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent community have developed good working relationships in the field over the years. This is critical to effective humanitarian action. Recent experiences in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Central Asia and Peru are testimony to the fact that we need to continue our respective work to prevent and reduce loss of life and avoidable suffering. We need to do this in so-called mega-events, such as the Asian tsunami, as well as in those settings confronted with frequent and highly destructive, small and medium-scale hazard events.

In this context, let me express our appreciation for the constructive role played by the International Federation in helping to ensure more predictable and accountable response in the field, in particular in the area of emergency shelter. At the global level, we appreciate that the International Federation takes its role regarding emergency shelter very seriously and professionally. This is reflected in the response at the field level and in their support for National Societies.

To conclude, we need to redouble our efforts to give effect to existing frameworks such as the Hyogo Framework for Action. It means increasing our investment in the development, or strengthening, of national and regional capabilities, paying attention to early warning, alert, evacuation and response systems. Efforts to increase resilience in the face of growing levels of risk and vulnerability demand that we work together in a manner that maximizes the benefits for disaster-prone communities. We in the UN consider that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a vital and invaluable partner in facing this challenge. This Conference is evidence of the importance of facing up to new challenges. Your contribution is timely and effective humanitarian action is indispensable.

**Mr Sergei Savieliev, Deputy Director,
Department of International Organizations
and Multilateral Cooperation, Kazakhstan**

(Original Russian)

One important condition for the stable development of any country is the ability of the government to ensure the safety of the population, hence the significance attached by Kazakhstan to matters relating to the possible prevention of emergencies and the alleviation of their consequences.

Kazakhstan rigorously implements decisions adopted in UN forums and those of other international organizations and is a fervent supporter of the UN Millennium Development Goals. The global priorities for the agenda, on which Mr del Toro dwelt at length yesterday, are extremely relevant for the Central Asian region.

Under the “Programme for the development of a State emergency prevention and remediation system for 2004-2010,” approved by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, cooperation is being developed in the field of emergency prevention and remediation with a number of international organizations, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

One urgent issue for Kazakhstan is the need to step up intergovernmental cooperation on scientific research and exchange of information and technologies, to prevent industrial accidents and coordinate remedial action in their aftermath, particularly in connection with the harnessing of natural resources in Kazakhstan’s section of the Caspian Sea.

There is also a need to draw attention to the issue of migration, which has become one of the most serious humanitarian problems in today’s world. The refugee problem has acquired global dimensions and represents a new challenge for the whole of the Central Asian region. Kazakhstan has been no exception and the government is keeping a close eye on the problem. Specific methods have been developed to provide the necessary support for refugees. However, the problems associated with the creation of stores of essential supplies, for the sustenance of refugees, have still not been entirely resolved.

The Government of Kazakhstan greatly appreciates the role played by its National Red Crescent Society, which is the only non-governmental organization in the country performing auxiliary functions that complement the government’s activities in a wide

range of areas. The Government of Kazakhstan is endeavouring to create favourable conditions for the development of the National Society.

The Draft Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance drawn up by the International Federation are important, timely and much needed. Kazakhstan recognizes the urgency of the issues raised in the document related to the improvement of the legal framework for joint remedial action in the aftermath of various disasters at international, regional, and national levels.

The UN Regional Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which opened recently in Kazakhstan, will also contribute to further improvements in regional cooperation.

In this connection, we feel it is useful to continue cooperating with UN agencies on the question of establishing a regional transit base for the storage of international humanitarian assistance and a regional emergency prevention and remediation coordination centre in Kazakhstan.

In conclusion, allow me to stress that the Government of Kazakhstan takes a positive view of the proposal to form a new kind of partnership with all components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, especially since this will also help to promote regional stability.

Thank you for your attention.

**Mr Rudolf Seiters,
President, German Red Cross**

(Original English)

The International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is holding its 30th International Conference at a time when the new challenges before it require new and innovative action by the Movement, and when emerging challenges are presenting themselves in a new context. Our aim and objective is not to create an enlarged, or even a new, mandate for the Movement or for any of its components, but to elaborate on the humanitarian consequences of the new challenges we are facing.

Environmental change, international migration, violence, disease and public health challenges are not new as such. But they require stronger responses and increased action from the International Red Cross

and Red Crescent Movement to fulfil its components' mandates.

Violence in all its forms is not only a cross-cutting challenge with particular consequences that are social and economic, and that also affect public health. It is also a challenge that touches upon the very essence of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, i.e. it touches upon humanitarian values and the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Promotion and dissemination of international humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles is a key activity aimed at reducing armed violence, both on the domestic and on the international level. An exemplary manifestation of this is the initiative to reduce availability of small arms and light weapons. The initiative is based on the recognition that an increased availability of such weapons leads to an increased level of armed violence and, thus, to an increased likelihood of violations of international humanitarian law.

I am convinced that we will be able to be successful in our efforts to reduce the humanitarian consequences of violence in our communities only if we are willing to distinguish the application of international humanitarian law from the implementation of the rule of law. A clear distinction is essential in order to prevent the dilution of the unique characteristics of both approaches, and of the reasons for their acceptance and effectiveness within their unique contexts.

At the same time, a clear distinction between the rule of law and international humanitarian law is a prerequisite to avoid diminishing the agreed upon and universally accepted scope and content of international humanitarian law. That is a risk we simply cannot afford, not even in the fight against terror. There is no room for something like an 'anti-terror rebate.'

To address the humanitarian challenges of violence in all its forms is a serious concern for National Societies operating within their mandates and in accordance with the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is one of the key areas where National Societies, in their function as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, have a unique opportunity to build on their access to vulnerable communities to make a difference.

**H.E. Mr Ichiro Fujisaki,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Japan, Geneva**

(Original English)

Japan believes the four topics are adequate. No one country or National Society can cope with these issues alone. We have to face them together. We also support Mr Kellenberger's statement yesterday that respect for human rights and dignity is a long-term investment for security. We also think it is important to enhance the auxiliary role as well as the independence of National Societies. The fact that people have faith in the Red Cross/Red Crescent will make this possible. We hope all the resolutions, including the Guidelines, will be adopted in this commemorative 30th Conference by consensus. Japan will do its best to this end.

Let me briefly touch upon Japan's efforts on two accounts.

Natural disaster: the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, which was adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction hosted by Japan in 2005, is proceeding as we envisaged. We hope that this Framework will continue to be implemented without delay.

Public health: Japan has taken leadership, and will continue to do so, in the area of infectious diseases. Two days ago, Foreign Minister Komura of Japan called for the strengthening of efforts in this area by the international community as a whole.

Given this opportunity, I would emphasize that we believe in strengthening Red Cross and Red Crescent partnerships and consultations with other international organizations. We see room for this. We call upon not just the Red Cross and Red Crescent side, but the other international organizations as well. We look forward to seeing tangible results.

On the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom, it is our view that the parties concerned should cooperate for its full implementation.

Lastly, as the host of the G8 Summit and the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, TICAD IV, next year, Japan will see to it that the valuable discussions that are taking place are reflected in our preparations. Environmental and health issues may become especially important topics in these meetings.

**Mr Freddy Karup Pedersen,
Danish Red Cross**

(Original English)

Madam Chair, on behalf of the Danish Red Cross, I would like to share with the audience the following observations on global child health.

HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB have received much attention, large funds have been set aside for combating them and much effort has been expended to curb their spread, and certainly with good reason. That said, however, it should not be forgotten that while approximately three million deaths annually can be attributed to HIV/AIDS, three to four times as many children below five years of age – 10 million annually – die from other causes, most notably malnutrition, diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory track infections, conditions that are either easily prevented or treated with simple, inexpensive means documented to be effective. And the physical and mental development of many more than the 10 million children is affected, with long-term consequences for their future.

In its 2006 report on the state of the world's children, UNICEF estimates that unless additional efforts and resources are made available, Millennium Development Goal 4 – to reduce by two-thirds under-five mortality by 2015 as compared to 1990 – will not be reached, throughout the world, for the next 25-30 years. But the knowledge and the technologies to attain MDG 4 and to alleviate the main problems affecting child health are available. What is needed is political will and resources to develop and support the infrastructure needed to address this limited number of common diseases.

I would like to urge governments to do so, not at the cost of the efforts directed against HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB, but in addition to these. I believe this is a field where partnerships between governments and NGOs can be extremely useful, notably between government health systems and Red Cross/Red Crescent grassroots volunteers with their ability to establish contact, educate and train mothers at the village level. Madam Chair, today's children cannot wait. Their future physical and mental development and their potential are being shaped now.

**H.E. Mr Jean Feyder,
Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission
of Luxembourg, Geneva**

(Original French)

Madam Chairwoman, Luxembourg wholeheartedly endorses the statement made by Portugal on behalf of the European Union. My country welcomes the choice of the topics for this Conference and shares the concerns of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The hard fact is that reality is staring us in the face.

For some years now, Luxembourg has backed the humanitarian programmes implemented by these national and international partners, in particular the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in behalf of refugees and displaced people and for the restoration of family links. Luxembourg also supports programmes that promote international humanitarian law.

Clearly, climate change has hit fragile countries – those that are least able to cope with increasingly frequent and severe crises – hardest. In accordance with Millennium Development Goal No. 7, Luxembourg's plan for cooperation in the area of development includes sustainable development among its cross-cutting priorities. This question is examined both in policy and strategy discussions with our special partners – with their authorities – and in the implementation of our cooperation programmes.

In 2006, Luxembourg drew up a new humanitarian aid strategy. Its components aim to improve the quality of our emergency aid and help us comply more fully with the principles of good humanitarian donorship. In application of this strategy and in order to make our support more flexible and reliable, we signed a multi-year financing agreement with the International Committee of the Red Cross this year. With this new strategy, five per cent of our humanitarian budget will be earmarked to fund disaster prevention, risk reduction and preparedness activities. Finally, our new strategy also calls for the allocation of 20 per cent of our humanitarian budget for transition activities aimed at establishing a link between emergency humanitarian aid and development. We believe that even though the very complex causes of the crises we must face are linked, the consequences are not solely humanitarian.

Luxembourg supports the resolutions put forward by the Council of Delegates. We are convinced of the

need to strengthen cooperation between the various actors, to ensure greater coherence.

Finally, my delegation wishes to reiterate its commitment to and respect for international humanitarian law, particularly in armed conflicts. It wishes to pay tribute to the International Committee of the Red Cross's unflagging efforts in this field, which were also highlighted by President Kellenberger the previous day in his speech.

Mr Markku Niskala, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

(Original English)

The work of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as well as that of our whole worldwide Movement is based on collaborative action and partnerships. Wherever there is suffering in the world, the components of our Movement set out to tackle and alleviate it. But the humanitarian challenges that we all face today are too complex and far-reaching for any one State or organization to meet them alone. Therefore, we are working on a global humanitarian platform to build the concept of partnership between the three pillars, or families, as we call them – the UN/government pillar, the Red Cross and Red Crescent pillar and the NGO pillar – in order to improve the coordination and the complementarity among the international humanitarian community, which will help country-level coordination as well.

To address the issues of environmental degradation – including climate change – international migration, violence and emerging and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges, we must all pool our resources and work together, as highlighted by the Conference theme. The fact that the Movement works in almost every country in the world gives us access to people in crisis. When a natural disaster strikes or a conflict breaks out, Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and staff are the first to respond to the needs of the community because they are already living in the heart of the community and are the last ones to leave. But access is not only a privilege; it is a responsibility as well.

Our response to the challenges being debated at this International Conference must begin at the community level if it is to be successful, sustainable and accountable. The Movement's emphasis on disaster risk reduction and preparedness, the promotion of international humanitarian law and

respect for human dignity, and our extensive help-and-care work, can and already do build much-needed resilience at the community level.

Good progress has been made on the implementation of the 28th International Conference's agenda for humanitarian action, as you will hear later this week, but we must continue to move forward, to build new partnerships, to share our knowledge and to establish a new consensus on collaborative action. The Movement is united in its determination and enthusiasm to work with new and existing partners worldwide. Today, I call on the governments present to harness the power of humanity by working with the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in their countries. The declaration drafted jointly by the International Federation and the ICRC contains all these measures. By adopting the declaration, we shall demonstrate not only a wish but our ability and readiness to work *together for humanity*.

Mr Jaroslav Horák, Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic

(Original English)

As the head of the Czech government's delegation, I would like to emphasize, once again, the importance of humanity and solidarity today, in a world governed predominantly by economic relations.

The Czech Republic welcomes the idea to hold this Conference under the theme, "Together for humanity." After all, we have learnt from our own experience and we are aware of the importance of subscribing to the ideas of humanism, especially in times of crisis caused by war, oppression by a non-democratic regime or by natural disaster.

In our world today, we are faced by many challenges related to human suffering. Forced migration, the spread of contagious diseases, natural disasters, and terrorism: all this only shows how vulnerable we still are and how difficult it is to seek effective instruments to cope with these old/new problems.

Madam Chairwoman, on behalf of the Czech Republic, I would like to express here the great admiration and gratitude of my country for the commitment of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to reducing and alleviating human suffering. After all, the fact that all countries of the world are today party to the Geneva Conventions testifies to the success of this work and the activities that are undertaken to further it. However, a law by itself is pointless if it is not implemented and

enforced. It is therefore we, the individual States, who should see that it is respected and enforced. I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you that the Czech government decided last week to allocate 50,000 US dollars for the work of the Lebanon Court. We hope that sufficient funds will soon be available for the purposes for which this Court has been established.

**Mr Fredi Mayer, President,
Austrian Red Cross**

(Original English)

The humanitarian challenges due to climate change, migration, violence and health threats are evident and exceed the coping capacities of individual States and humanitarian organizations. Thus, joint efforts by all actors are needed if we do not want our darkest fears to be realized. Time does not permit me to cover all four topics, but please allow me to highlight some thoughts that we consider of primary importance.

The Austrian Red Cross recognizes the value that migrants add in the social, cultural and economic context, as well as the challenges associated with migration. We have developed and increased our migration activities over the past years, particularly in the fields of restoring family links and integration. These activities include, for example, the “connecting people” project where youth team up in peer groups with young migrants and the “buddy system” in our family reunification activities. Both activities are geared towards bridging gaps and creating mutual understanding. At the same time, we think that education and qualification play a key role in enabling migrants to exercise their rights; therefore, such measures are also given priority.

A second remark I would like to make relates to the current discussion regarding political migration, both at our national and at European Union level. In this context, migration is directly linked with security issues and fighting terrorism. We need to counter this very limited discussion and increase our advocacy work to ensure that the humanitarian dimension of migration does not fall behind. In this respect, we also advocate for National Societies’ full access to all vulnerable migrant groups, regardless of their legal status.

My third comment relates to countering violence in all its different forms. In this area, it is mainly our Youth Red Cross that has further developed adequate measures. We, our National Society as well as the public authorities, need to promote diversity, fight discrimination in all regards and scale up our social

inclusion activities. As a grassroots organization, the Red Cross is excellently positioned to provide support for reaching these objectives through its extensive volunteer and youth networks.

There is not enough time left to me to discuss the measures necessary to cope with these challenges. As I pointed out earlier, it is uncontested that these challenges require joint efforts by all actors. National Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities, have a key role with regard to those who are vulnerable. National Societies cannot take on States’ responsibilities, but they can, and should be given the mandate to, contribute to their governments’ humanitarian services according to their strengths.

**H.E. Mr Nick Thorne, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom,
Geneva**

(Original English)

The United Kingdom has long valued the important role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in seeking to prevent and alleviate human suffering, to protect those in need of assistance and to ensure respect for the human being, particularly during armed conflict. Its continued work to promote adherence to international humanitarian law, in principle and in practice, is of vital importance and will continue to have our strong support.

We welcome the opportunity afforded by this 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to examine, in a spirit of openness and cooperation, some of the most challenging humanitarian issues we face today. Climate change and other environmental concerns, international migration, violence in urban areas and the consequences of emergent and re-emergent diseases require our urgent attention. The United Kingdom stands ready to play its part. As numerous, varied and complex as these challenges are, we believe that through cooperation at the local, regional and international levels, we can make considerable strides towards overcoming them. We place great emphasis on the supporting steps to further develop the capacities of both the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and to strengthen their impact.

In addition, we recognize and greatly appreciate the role played by National Societies, as auxiliaries to government in the humanitarian field. It is our sincere

hope that as we move forward, their experience will continue to unfold the response of States and other actors to these challenges. And we will continue to commit resources to such partnerships.

Enhancing adherence in practice to international humanitarian law has long been and remains one of the United Kingdom's key priorities. We are confident that the actions we have pledged to take over the coming four years will help to bring us closer to achieving the same.

The UK government has made 17 pledges, including four joint pledges with the British Red Cross, and a number of joint EU pledges. These pledges include the expansion of existing provisions for the promotion of international humanitarian law instruction in our educational system, promoting respect for diversity and reducing exclusion in our society, and supporting implementation of the ICRC's restoring family link strategy through liaison of those considerations in United Kingdom disaster preparedness and contingency planning.

We are committed to confronting, in partnership with others, the threat to peace, security and development posed by the uncontrolled spread and accumulation of small arms and light weapons, and believe that progress on this front, then automatically linked, can make an important contribution towards wider efforts to support the UN process working towards an international arms trade treaty covering all conventional weapons. We also commit to the ratification of Protocol III additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and to continue our activity in support of wider ratification and implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. In all our efforts we look forward to continuing our close working relationship with all the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

**Mr Edmond Bradshaw, Director-General,
Barbados Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, the BRC in supporting the resolutions of this International Conference, wishes to call for greater initiatives in sharing and collaboration, both between governments and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and among partner donor societies and National Societies that traditionally have difficulty getting any support. There are still among us many National Societies that do not receive subventions or other forms of assistance from their governments

whom they serve as auxiliaries. There needs to be a greater focus within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on the most vulnerable people wherever they are, rather than just focusing on traditional country names that are the buzz words of international assistance. Madam Chairwoman, the most vulnerable are in most countries, whether those countries are rich, middle-income or poor.

In the words of the President of the International Federation, Juan Manuel del Toro, in his opening remarks to this Conference, "as citizens of the world we all have a shared responsibility to combat sources of extreme vulnerability."

With regard to disasters, health issues and climate change, the Red Cross is competing with other international agencies for major funding. It needs to take on the lead role in certain areas, whether it is shelter management or something else. If it does not, more recently formed organizations will, as in the past, take the Red Cross's plans, take on the lead roles and receive the bulk of international funding.

On the matter of migration, I have already spoken to the challenges faced: legal migration is being used by governments and the private sector to get cheap labour, and this is lowering wage levels worldwide and placing masses of workers in greater poverty, as well as undermining the viability of the international labour movement.

I want also to address the matter of illegal migrants caught up in disaster situations. I am glad to hear of the efforts of the American Red Cross in this regard, resulting from its experience in Hurricane Katrina. In many parts of the world, illegal migrants are afraid to come forward for assistance during disasters, even after they have lost all their possessions. They are afraid of being criminally charged or being deported.

**Mr John Hannaford, Director-General and
Deputy Legal Adviser, Legal Affairs Bureau,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Canada**

(Original French)

Canada is a proud partner of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. As one of the oldest humanitarian institutions in the world, the Movement is a cornerstone of humanitarian action. Given the Movement's ability to gain effective access to populations in need, and commitment to neutral and impartial humanitarian aid, the Movement is more important than ever.

(Original English)

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is global in reach, with a vast network and a profound capacity to mobilize responses to crises. The Geneva Conventions enjoy universal ratification and provide an essential basis for the protection of civilians in armed conflict. Canada is pleased to be ratifying Protocol III additional to the four Geneva Conventions, which will support the Movement's efforts to enhance its universality.

Canada is concerned by the frequency and increasing impact of natural disasters around the world, including extreme weather events. The humanitarian consequences of recent storms, floods and earthquakes are vivid reminders of the need to implement the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action. To this end, Canada continues to invest in disaster risk reduction, both at home and abroad, as a key component for effective governance. In addition, we must collectively continue to address the broad range of issues that can exacerbate the impact of natural disasters.

We recognize the complex and cross-cutting nature of migration in our globalized world. Canada is committed to building partnerships to address the multi-faceted consequences of people being on the move. To this end, we welcome the Movement's pledge to provide humanitarian assistance to those individuals who may find themselves in vulnerable situations as a result of migration.

We particularly welcome the Movement's decision to highlight the issue of violence in urban settings, as more than 50% of the world's population now live in urban areas.

The consequences of urban violence are especially pernicious for children, who are often recruited by highly-organized and well-armed urban gangs and militias. At this Conference, Canada has submitted a pledge on children and organized armed violence, demonstrating a commitment to the prevention of violence against children in urban settings. The Government of Canada in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross, and the governments of Switzerland and Brazil, is organizing a workshop on armed violence in cities, with a special focus on children.

Canada recognizes and advocates for the active engagement of civil society in the design and implementation of health policies and programmes that include people vulnerable to, and infected

and affected by, emergent and recurrent diseases. Partnerships are essential, as these threats can strain health-care systems, governance and socio-economic networks.

In closing, Madam Chairwoman, Canada stands ready to build effective partnerships to address these complex, multi-faceted and evolving issues. We look forward to discussing these key challenges throughout the course of the Conference. Together, we can develop sustainable strategies to address further challenges and, most importantly, help those in need.

**Ms Nomsa Mbere, President,
Botswana Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

I speak on behalf of a National Society that values collaborative action and partnership with our government. Even though sometimes we might not agree with their policies on some issues, we have been able to keep the channels of dialogue open and to eventually find acceptable solutions to the humanitarian problems we face, thus maintaining our independence, neutrality and impartiality.

In looking for solutions, we have stressed the point that our success in meeting these humanitarian challenges will reflect on them as also their success, our failure also reflect on them as their failure. And we have therefore called upon them to share with us, the National Society, the collective responsibility for our success in delivering humanitarian services, be it in health, climate or migration issues. This approach calls upon States to transcend all that divides us and stands in the way for all that unites us in humanity.

We may all come from different cultures, traditions, religions and political systems, but at a very basic level, we are united by a very strong bond that calls us to work together in humanity. It has been said that "you cannot solve a problem from the level of consciousness that created it." Therefore we all have to shift our consciousness to this very basic level in order to work together to find solutions to the challenges that face us.

I ask and plead with the governments here today to respond to this call and assist us, National Societies, in reaching our goals. This may even mean that in their diplomatic fora, while not violating the respect that is owed each State's national sovereignty, our governments can assist us in providing solutions to

deadlocks that stall processes that would result in our sister National Societies fulfilling their mandates as per the Movement's Fundamental Principles. I am pleased to have heard, from the interventions made by governments today, that we are indeed on the same page on this issue.

The vulnerable people, children and youth out there are looking up to us to work together to bring wisdom and thoughtfulness to the social, political and environmental challenges that are having the devastating consequences that they face, day in and day out.

So, I again ask us all to take a chance, and to have courage in our leadership roles in assisting each other to collectively meet these humanitarian challenges and to do the right things for the right reasons. Henry Dunant and the leadership of that time took this risk. They had courage and provided the vision and the leadership that allow us today to be sitting here, party to the Geneva Conventions. We, like them, owe it to future generations to keep the flame of hope burning and overcome whatever obstacles may lie in the way.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is indeed a formidable movement to be part of, not only for us, the National Societies, but for our government partners as well, and I believe we all have the wisdom and will to enable it to continue to fulfil its mandate.

H.E. Mr Idriss Jazaïry, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Algeria, Geneva

(Original Arabic)

I wish to endorse Egypt's statement on behalf of the African Group.

This Conference is being held at a time when mankind is threatened by many challenges that can be overcome only through intensive endeavours by all those engaged in humanitarian action.

In this regard, I commend the valuable work being undertaken by the National Societies of the Movement.

The humanitarian field of action should not be understood to be confined to the four issues that will be discussed at this Conference, namely the environment, international migration, urban violence and emergent diseases. On the contrary, it is far

more comprehensive and, therefore, we hope that, in future, the issues of highest priority will be chosen on the basis of broader consultation.

The convening of this Conference coincides with a dangerous weakening of the concept of humanitarian assistance and the occurrence of unprecedented violations of humanitarian law. Accordingly, there is a need to review the concept and ethical principles of humanitarian assistance in order to avoid further deterioration in this regard. Some humanitarian situations are being blown out of all proportion by the media, and vulnerable persons in urgent need of genuine humanitarian assistance – and who fall into certain categories – are being exploited in an unethical manner.

The concept and principles of humanitarian assistance will be forever stigmatized by the child-trafficking operation conducted by the "Zoë's Ark" Association. The reputation of other well-intentioned humanitarian organizations can be cleared only after responsibility for this has been established and deserved penalties imposed on the guilty parties.

The situation in the occupied Arab territories provides another example of violations of international humanitarian law, since the reports received from the region confirm the Israeli side's failure to honour its obligations.

In her commendable address yesterday, the President of the Swiss Confederation emphasized that the Government of Israel had an obligation to take all the measures needed to facilitate implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, including compliance with resolution XI of the 1921 Conference, since the Israeli National Society was admitted to the Movement on the basis of its commitment thereto.

In order to monitor implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, the Conference should adopt a draft resolution reaffirming that obligation, strengthening the mandate of the independent monitor and establishing a time schedule for the submission of annual reports in this connection.

The adoption, by consensus, of a resolution on this issue would constitute the best message that could be sent not only to the region, but to the entire world.

In conclusion, I hope that this Conference will provide an opportunity to heal the rift resulting from the previous Conference. Thank you.

Professor Stephen Adei, President, Ghana Red Cross Society

(Original English)

On behalf of the Government of Ghana and the Ghana Red Cross Society, I want to thank the International Federation and the National Societies that came to help Ghana during the recent floods. We want to assure you that that has put the Ghana Red Cross in good shape and that we will continue to appreciate your continued support.

Let me take the rest of my time to comment on issues relating to international migration. Apart from fugitives who want to escape the long arm of the law, most people under normal circumstances will want to stay in their own communities and within their national borders. It takes very serious factors to compel people to break these types of bond in their countries and the push and pull factors that force them to go across their national boundaries are worthy of note. They include national disasters and armed conflicts. Sometimes it is the prospect of economic betterment that leads them to leave their countries. Those forced out by disasters or conflicts may do so because the conditions that prevail might be life-threatening, the very foundations of their livelihood and existence might be shaken and all they might have left to protect is their dignity. In other circumstances, responsible and mostly well educated young people – to better their social and economic conditions and to fulfil their dreams – venture out of their countries, using unorthodox methods and plying dangerous routes, either by sea or by land, to reach their destinations. Sometimes, economic migrants are tempted to leave their countries by the improved lifestyles of returnees and the stories they tell; and there are their own fantasies, which lead them to embark on such adventurous journeys.

Madam Chair, it is worthy of note that the majority of economic migrants would not endanger their lives. They are lured into doing so by unscrupulous agents whose sole aim is to make a handsome living out of the fees they charge these unsuspecting young people, only to abandon them midway in transit countries. Here, these unfortunate victims are left stranded, at the mercy of thieves and of the immigration and custom officials at borders. And, sometimes, they must endure the hostility of communities in their host countries.

The wish of most of these unfortunate migrants would be to go back home if they had the means to do so. It is often the case that they have been so traumatized

by fear and helplessness that they resign themselves to fate and, thus, tend to become a nuisance to their host community.

Yes, these migrants may have used irregular and unlawful methods. But, it is important, I think, that host countries treat them with dignity. At least, we have one thing in common: our common humanity. We think the Red Cross must work to reduce the push factors, by preventing and resolving conflicts, and by improving the living conditions of people in their home countries through sustainable development. Also, our common humanity demands that host countries accord basic dignity and human rights to refugees. It is important to note that, as conditions in their countries improve, significant numbers of displaced people desire to return home. We in Ghana have had to welcome refugees during conflicts in neighbouring countries. We found that as these conflicts drew to an end, they were willing to go back. Many have been assisted both by the Red Cross and the country to go back. In the light of this, we support the resolution that is before us.

H.E. Mr Guy-Alain Emmanuel Gauze, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Côte d'Ivoire, Geneva

(Original French)

Côte d'Ivoire, which I have the honour of representing at this major International Conference, at the head of a large delegation, is delighted to be part of this great family of humanitarian actors whose vocation is "protecting the dignity of the human being." We fully support the theme of this Conference, "Together for humanity," because it is inspiring, it brings hope and it fosters unity.

In our view, this is only natural, in the light of the humanistic values that have inspired and guided the formation of our nation. Peace – but, above all, the unending quest for happiness for each and every one in a Côte d'Ivoire that is diverse yet united and indivisible – has always been uppermost in the minds of the people, the government and the leaders of Côte d'Ivoire. Thus, after several years of unrest marked by a military and political crisis, Côte d'Ivoire is firmly back on the road to peace and harmony, thanks to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement fathered by President Laurent Gbagbo and signed on 4 April 2008 by the ex-combatants. In addition to its peacemaking role, this Agreement is a favourable framework for action promoting the implementation of international humanitarian law in Côte d'Ivoire.

Madam Chairwoman, Côte d'Ivoire, which has been a party to the Geneva Conventions since 1960, has made the implementation of humanitarian law one of the pillars of its peace and security policy. The many different steps taken in this connection – ratification of the relevant instruments of international humanitarian law, provision of training for the national armed forces in the values and principles of international humanitarian law, and the establishment of a national commission for its implementation – are known to all.

Environmental problems, migration, violence and emerging and recurring diseases are some of the challenges facing modern States. They require appropriate responses that guarantee world harmony and meet the need for protecting the world and the human race.

These challenges are particularly daunting in our young democracies. In addition to environmental degradation, the occurrence and management of disasters involving toxic chemicals pose problems in our countries, which are modestly seeking solutions with the help of a few development partners. Populations are powerless in the face of growing environmental degradation. When major disasters like the one we experienced in Côte d'Ivoire in August 2006 strike, action aimed at protecting the population is complex and costly and cannot counteract the effects of pollutants.

Furthermore, migration remains an ongoing challenge for our countries, and Côte d'Ivoire is no exception. Accordingly, to facilitate the integration of foreigners and to prevent them from feeling excluded, the president of Côte d'Ivoire has proposed doing away with residence permits for other African nationals living in our country. Nevertheless, migration-related problems remain acute in our country: we wish to make a resounding appeal to the International Committee of the Red Cross for increased assistance in transit and destination countries such as Côte d'Ivoire to help protect the dignity of migrants. Protecting internally displaced people and refugees is therefore key if we are to overcome this crisis.

Violence between communities, often stemming from artificial or superficial causes, has considerably worsened the social climate in Côte d'Ivoire. Fortunately, restoring the dialogue between the communities of Côte d'Ivoire remains one of the priorities of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

Environmental challenges and the menace of climate change in these primarily agricultural States, coupled

with the increasing scarcity of arable land, pose a growing threat to the economic stability of these States and, above all, limit their prospects for security and growth. We wish to share these concerns that will determine the future of humanity so that our children will be heirs, not survivors.

In addition, mindful of the adverse effects of emerging and recurring diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, to mention only a few, Côte d'Ivoire has taken steps, which, albeit hampered by the crisis, have yielded universally recognized results, sharply reducing the cost of anti-retrovirals, for example. Yet much remains to be done in order to ensure genuine protection for people. Our country also wishes to make the international community aware of the consequences of another debilitating disease, namely Buruli ulcers. In Côte d'Ivoire, hundreds of children have no choice but to remain in treatment centres that are far from classrooms and families have no choice other than to stay at the bedside of sick family members, with incalculable socio-economic consequences.

Allow me to take this opportunity, on behalf of my government, to thank the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their support. I urge them to continue disseminating the minimum assistance and relief operation standards, thereby making it possible to strengthen the overall perception of the specific nature of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in action. In this connection, the Government wishes to welcome the Movement's contribution to the various emergency situations our country has faced in recent years. As far as prompt and effective intervention is concerned, the new guidelines, the legal framework that is applicable to international intervention in case of disasters, will spell out each party's responsibilities relating to the facilitation and national regulation of international relief and assistance operations in the initial post-disaster recovery phase. There is no doubt that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will remain a key partner.

Côte d'Ivoire has faith in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and we would like to take this opportunity to support the efforts of the Red Cross of Côte d'Ivoire, as an auxiliary to the authorities, in strict compliance with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Cooperation mechanisms will round out and strengthen partnerships between the two parties – as is already the case with the Ministry of National

Education within the framework of the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme – in order to ensure the earliest possible adoption, by the Parliament of Côte d'Ivoire, of laws relating to the protection of the emblem and sanctions to punish infringements of international humanitarian law.

Finally, I would like to join you in hoping that the work of this Conference will enable us to find the right answers to the problems thwarting efforts to protect human dignity.

Ms Rachel Nygard-Taxell, President of the Council, Finnish Red Cross

(Original English)

We would like to take this opportunity to look at the possibilities and challenges that National Societies have in their migration activities. Over 30 years ago, the Finnish Red Cross assisted the Finnish government to establish the system for the reception of refugees and, later on, for the reception of asylum seekers. This was the beginning of a close partnership in which the National Society has assisted the State in meeting its international obligations to assist and grant protection to people in need. Our partnership in the area of migration is based on an agreement that defines our roles and responsibilities.

In addition to being prepared for the reception of asylum seekers, the Finnish Red Cross has an important role in supporting the integration of refugees and other migrants, to help them to start a new life in a northern country, and also to reduce the risk of their becoming marginalized.

Our key task is to train and activate volunteers to support the integration of newly arrived people and build bridges between migrants and the local population. Local contacts with migrant communities also bring to light problems caused by the vulnerability of the migrants and by obstacles to their integration. We believe that Red Cross action to support integration is a way to promote democracy and human rights, especially in a country where the numbers of migrants and ethnic minorities are still rather small.

Even if authorities in our countries implement an official integration programme for newly arrived migrants, it will always be necessary for civil society to be open to new residents in our societies. National Societies, with their capability for mobilizing volunteers, have a big role to play in promoting true

diversity within our own organizations and in the surrounding society.

Madam Chair, as an auxiliary to the government, the Finnish Red Cross has a defined role in assisting the government based on an agreement and on long-lasting cooperation. We will also sign a common pledge at this International Conference in order to reaffirm our commitment to cooperation in responding to the needs of migrants and in promoting diversity.

Still, in order for our roles and mandates to be clear and balanced, an ongoing and open dialogue with the government is essential, both about the role of the National Society and the challenges related to migration and migration policies – while keeping in mind that these issues can easily become extremely politicized.

Even though migration can be a sensitive issue in national and international politics, it is important for National Societies to actively advocate for the rights of migrants, knowing that various circumstances and actions can make them extremely vulnerable. Ensuring the humane treatment, and protecting the human rights, of migrants and acting against discrimination and racism is a way of fulfilling our duty to the principles of the Movement.

We truly hope that this International Conference will clarify the role of the Movement in the field of migration, and provide it with the necessary guidelines, including a common understanding between governments and the Movement of its mandate to assist and protect migrants, regardless of their status.

H.E. Mr Reinhard Schweppe, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Germany, Geneva

(Original English)

The Portuguese Presidency has delivered a statement on behalf of the European Union to which Germany fully subscribes. Allow me, however, to address a few additional issues on behalf of my government.

The Hague Convention of 1907 contains a clause that is the core principle of international humanitarian law: “... inhabitants and belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations, as they result from the usages established among civilized people, from the laws of humanity,

and the dictates of the public conscience.” The year 2007 also marks the 30th anniversary of Protocols I and II additional to the Geneva Conventions, which reaffirmed many existing rules.

Madam Chair, acts of terrorism, especially the callous terrorist attacks against the US on September 11, 2001, have shocked the dictates of the public conscience. It is not easy to find the right response to such terrorist attacks. Germany is convinced that we can meet this challenge within the legal framework provided by the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, and other relevant rules of international law.

The dictates of the public conscience also require us to address another issue of concern: the use of cluster munitions. It is our aim to shoulder our responsibility in this regard by promoting the global prohibition of cluster munitions whose indiscriminate and long-term effects cause unacceptable harm to the civilian population. Germany has submitted a draft instrument on cluster munitions that takes up the urgent call for action by the International Committee of the Red Cross; it will be discussed in detail at the upcoming negotiations in the context of the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Germany will also issue a pledge at this Conference in this respect. We hope that this Conference will further our efforts to protect the civilian population from the dangers of cluster munitions.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, together with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as a whole, has a major impact on progress in the field of humanitarian law. However, their activities go beyond this framework as they address many new issues of concern to humanity.

In recent years, natural disasters have occurred with an ever-growing frequency and with an increasing number of fatalities. The adoption of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief will provide us with a tool to raise the level of preparedness for providing humanitarian assistance for people affected by disasters.

Further challenges such as environmental degradation and recurrent diseases also require a cooperative effort by States and the members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is my wish that we all keep this in mind while debating the topics on our agenda, an agenda that addresses many current challenges to humanity.

**H.E. Mr Jean-Baptiste Mattéi,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of France, Geneva**

(Original French)

Madam Chairwoman, as I take the floor, allow me to express my country’s satisfaction. The objectives of the 28th International Conference were met successfully, as illustrated by the following examples.

The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance that was adopted by the United Nations in 2006 defined enforced disappearance as a crime both in times of war and in peace. This Convention in particular prohibits secret places of detention and recognizes victims’ rights. France, which hosted the signing ceremony of this Convention in Paris, calls for swift ratification with as many signatories as possible.

Protocol V – on Explosive Remnants of War – to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects was ratified by France and many other States, enabling its entry into force in November 2006. This Protocol is the only legally binding instrument negotiated in the area of disarmament in recent years. France, of course, favours the universal ratification of the Protocol.

France committed itself to joining the Tampere Convention on Emergency Telecommunications aimed at mobilizing telecommunication resources in times of natural disaster. The Convention defines a framework for cooperation between the States Parties and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as with other partners, such as non-governmental organizations. Adhesion to this Convention is part of the commitment, made at the 28th International Conference, aimed at preventing disasters and mitigating their human and economic effects.

This leads me to speak of the 30th International Conference, which brings us here today. Objective 1 highlights the common challenges facing humanity so that all States, as well as National Societies, can agree on priority actions. When confronted with challenges as daunting as emerging diseases or environmental degradation, States cannot act alone. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must act in partnership with States if these challenges are to be met. Such action should be part of the mandates provided for in the Geneva

Conventions. In this regard, I would like to express our great satisfaction at the cooperation between the French Government and the French Red Cross, showing respect for the independence of National Societies in line with the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

France and the French Red Cross will, during this Conference, make joint commitments for the next four years: a commitment to reinforce the protection for the emblems of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement under French law; a commitment to working in the health sector, with the means provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Development Agency for the least developed countries and developing countries, to boost their medical structures and quality of care; and a commitment to protect journalists.

Madam Chairwoman, the French Government fully endorses the objective of this Conference: to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law – too often flouted in theatres of conflict. We attach particular importance to respect for the basic rules of international humanitarian law, including the protection of humanitarian workers and journalists, the principle of proportionate attacks and fundamental guarantees for the treatment of civilians. With regard to prisoners of war, France pledges to set up a national information bureau, which would become operational upon the outbreak of a conflict. As for the use of weapons, the French Government supports the International Committee of the Red Cross's concerns about the indiscriminate effects of cluster bombs and welcomes the European Union's decision to set up a legally binding instrument on submunitions by the end of 2008.

Madam Chairwoman, earlier I mentioned the French Government's undertaking, given at the 28th International Conference, on natural disasters. I would like to stress our dedication to the work of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies that, with the active participation of States and National Societies, led to the drafting of an important document, Guidelines on the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, also known as the IDRL guidelines.

In conclusion, Madam Chairwoman, I wish to assure you that the French Government will make an active contribution to the work of this Conference. I am sure that the relevant, current themes of the Conference, like the quality of the discussions before us, will allow us to strengthen our joint endeavours on behalf of the victims of conflict and natural disaster.

**Mr Jean-François Mattéi,
President, French Red Cross**

(Original French)

I am especially pleased to speak on behalf of the French Red Cross, because there are not many opportunities for the world of associations to gather with governments in order to explore together the necessary solutions to a host of humanitarian problems, whether urgent or long-standing, linked to development.

I fully support the statements of the representatives of France and Portugal on behalf of the European Union. I would like to focus on three areas that I believe to be essential for our Movement in the years that lie ahead.

First: health. On the basis of undertakings given at our meeting in Istanbul in May 2007, the French Red Cross is more determined than ever to commit fully to the fight against emerging and recurrent diseases. It is also determined to meet other public health challenges such as access to care, thereby contributing to the achievement of three health-related Millennium Development Goals.

More specifically, the French Red Cross's initiatives in this area are based on three premises: first, strengthening the capacities of National Societies to improve response to health needs wherever public health structures are inadequate, or even non-existent. We will develop the health project proposed primarily for the French-speaking National Societies, as a follow-up to our present work. Second, reinforcing access to care by rehabilitating infrastructures and providing regular supplies of medicines, as we do, particularly in our HIV/AIDS centres. I would also like to mention the HIV/AIDS and drug addiction programme we are launching in Ukraine with the National Societies of Italy and Ukraine. It could be duplicated elsewhere to intensify the fight against drug addiction and reduce the risks of transmission of HIV and hepatitis C. Thirdly, training paramedical staff, which is a prerequisite of any health policy. The French Government and the French Red Cross have decided to focus on health over the next four years, because we are strongly convinced that a satisfactory state of health is vital to a country's development. Health is a factor of development and of economic and social progress and an essential factor in social cohesion and citizenship. Further, it puts into practice our role as an auxiliary to the public authorities, a role we claim as our own.

Another essential area is international migration. It is up to governments to take the necessary measures

to manage migration and combat human trafficking. Our Movement must provide a humanitarian response that seems to me highly complementary to the action of governments: assistance and protection for all migrants, whatever their status. We also agreed to do this when we met in Istanbul. In the same spirit, the French Red Cross, which fully supports the Movement's strategy on restoring family links that was just approved by our Council of Delegates, will seek, to that end, the best possible synergies with the competent State services and bodies in that area, not only to make the strategy more effective, but especially to make it benefit migrants, who are all too often separated from their families.

Lastly – and this is the third area – international humanitarian law. I wish to reiterate how deeply the French Red Cross is committed to producing a sound resolution on the third objective of our Conference, which relates to international humanitarian law. The gradual establishment of a genuine international criminal justice system can now begin reining in impunity, but that does not suffice on a global scale. It is regrettable that the international community has not done more to make international humanitarian law a priority. I believe that our Conference is an excellent forum for deploring the lack of enforcement of international humanitarian law and denouncing the great many violations thereof. Therefore, it also seems important to support the International Committee of the Red Cross in its mission to promote and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all armed conflicts.

**H.E. Mr Mohammed Loulichki,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Morocco, Geneva**

(Original French)

Of course, my delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Egypt on behalf of the African Group. The Kingdom of Morocco seizes the opportunity offered by this Conference to offer its deepest sympathy for the loss of human life caused by the cyclone that hit the border areas of Bangladesh. A disaster of this magnitude, which is unfortunately not the only one to strike the world this year, should be a lesson to us and a reminder that international solidarity is the best way to cope with the scourges affecting humanity.

The slogan of the Conference, "Together for humanity," is one of the most eloquent and most fitting. This is an opportunity for my delegation to endorse the noble

objectives of the Conference and to affirm its conviction that concerted action based on partnership among States, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other humanitarian actors, is necessary to overcome the common challenges threatening humanity. The role of National Societies, as auxiliaries to States, cannot be denied. The concerted action of States and of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement should continue to focus on protecting human dignity and human rights through international humanitarian law.

Madam Chairwoman, the vulnerability of people, especially in developing countries, has been exacerbated because of environmental degradation, characterized by deforestation, soil erosion, population growth and global warming. Migration has increased as never before, spurred on by a combination of socio-economic factors and the blatant imbalance in the distribution of wealth. This situation, coupled with the emergence of recurring pandemics, beckons us all, encouraging us to deploy further efforts in order to alleviate the suffering of people staggering under these scourges.

In this connection, the Moroccan Red Crescent has continually striven, since its establishment by His Majesty, the late Mohammed V, to tackle the needs of the poor under the leadership of Her Royal Highness Lalla Malika, by carrying out comprehensive campaigns such as the distribution of food and medicines, and vocational training.

Since Morocco has become a transit and host country, in addition to its former status as a country of origin, the Moroccan Red Crescent has worked to help illegal immigrants enter Morocco through its southern and eastern borders. All of them benefit from the Moroccan Red Crescent's work, regardless of their legal status or origin.

Nevertheless, the migratory pressure on Morocco in recent years has made it necessary to manage migration on a more global scale. The Government of Morocco, which has made migration a part of its national strategy, hosted the Ministerial Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development in July 2006.

Launching what is considered to be the first thematic initiative of the kind, linking migration to the development imperative, this Conference spearheaded cooperation between Europe and Africa and adopted the Rabat Plan of Action. It highlighted the converging views of the countries of origin, transit and destination, based on a novel partnership involving an overall view of development.

Madam Chairwoman, the preservation of life and human dignity during armed conflict still depends on respect by all for international humanitarian law. Morocco wishes to take the opportunity lent by this forum to reiterate its conviction and to affirm its commitment to the principles driven by international humanitarian law and to congratulate the Secretariat on its compilation of customary law.

Lastly, my delegation cannot conclude without giving its full support – and that goes without saying – to the draft resolution on the application of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel.

**Ms Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann,
Order of Malta**

(Original French)

For nine centuries, the Order of Malta has carried out its humanitarian and hospital activities throughout the world. Our ties with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement go back many, many years and our affinities are as numerous as they are significant: ethical considerations and moral values that place a premium on relieving human distress. The principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence guide our actions.

The theme of this Conference, “Together for humanity,” fully reflects the Order of Malta’s commitment, as well as the four objectives put forward to achieve that theme. Stressing the need to participate broadly in campaigns based on solidarity, in keeping with which the vocation of caring for and helping human beings in distress, is also a way to help consolidate peace.

The Order of Malta is especially happy to take part in the consideration of humanitarian challenges that are likely to have a significant impact on the world in the coming years, since its work in 120 countries targets those suffering from environmental degradation, emerging and recurring diseases, international migration and violence. Through its 58 national institutions and its emergency international relief and rehabilitation agency, Malteser International, the Order of Malta acts promptly during natural disasters and armed conflict, wherever they occur. It is currently providing assistance to victims of the recent floods in Mexico, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Uganda, India and Pakistan, and to earthquake and tsunami victims in Asia, as well as to those struck by hurricanes in North and South America and by drought and famine in Africa.

Because of its vocation and expertise, the Order of Malta is able to put its medical activities at the heart of its humanitarian programmes. In emergency situations, priority is given to restoring water supply systems and rebuilding sanitary installations to ensure access to care and to prevent epidemics. For several years, the Order of Malta has been fighting the diseases – malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, HIV/AIDS and dengue – that affect Myanmar refugees in Thailand. In addition, the Order of Malta continues to provide assistance to people traumatized by the violence raging in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Darfur.

Providing assistance to migrants is also part of its mission: relieving their plight during massive population displacements triggered by disasters and/or helping to reduce their marginalization within society. The Order strives to meet their humanitarian needs regardless of their legal status. In order to increase its support to migrants, the Order of Malta recently signed a cooperation agreement with the International Organization for Migration.

Since partnership is a vital component of swift, effective response to conflict, disaster and disease, the Order of Malta is constantly broadening its partnerships and cooperation with international organizations, States, non-governmental organizations in the field, local communities and civil society. As we carry out the Agenda for Humanitarian Action, we stand committed to relieving the suffering caused by family separations, the tragedy of missing persons or the abusive use of weapons, and to better responding to disaster.

By reaffirming and applying international humanitarian law, we seek to overcome the challenges posed by today’s armed conflicts; the preservation of life and human dignity is the fundamental mission of our Order, which cannot rest as long as assistance, in particular medical assistance to civilians, is thwarted, as long as humanitarian workers are denied free access to victims and as long as its role is not respected and protected. The principle of fundamental guarantees whereby “no one can be outside the law” is a pressing need that the Order of Malta recognizes.

With regard to natural disasters, and despite the commitments already made by the international community and progress achieved to date, the institutional and national legislative frameworks are not always consistent with international law. The Order of Malta approves and thus supports the proposed adoption of the Guidelines on the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance.

Permanent Mission of Austria, Geneva

(Original English)

The Austrian delegation aligns itself with the intervention made by the Presidency of the European Union. I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Austria welcomes this Conference's focus on the increasingly important humanitarian challenges of the 21st century: environmental degradation, climate change, migration, violence, and epidemics. Due to time restraints, I will focus on climate change.

Climate change and environmental degradation are global phenomena affecting every region and every country; the poorest and most vulnerable people are the most affected. There are encouraging signs that the international community is finally willing to act. However, this requires addressing a wide range of issues connected with climate change in a global and comprehensive manner. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a crucial role to play in this endeavour. Since the UN is the only framework in which a truly global agreement can be developed, Austria, nationally and in the EU framework, fully supports the UN-led process aiming at addressing all aspects of combating climate change: mitigation, adaptation, financing, technological innovation.

The humanitarian consequences of climate change, such as rising sea levels, desertification, loss of biodiversity and increased incidence of disasters, have already become a dire reality around the globe. So we have to join forces to adapt to these changing realities and to make climate change a mainstream issue in the humanitarian field.

Austria attaches great importance to all initiatives aimed at addressing environmental problems at an early stage and in an integral manner. In particular, Austria puts special emphasis on adaptation support for the most vulnerable countries, especially SIDS (Small Island Developing States), LDCs (Least Developed Countries), and LLDCs (Landlocked Developing Countries): for example, support for the Caribbean Disaster Response Agency, for a project on renewable energies led by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in SIDS or for the LDCF (Least Developed Countries Fund) of the Climate Change Convention. Austria also supports the ENVSEC (Environment & Security) Initiative, which constitutes an excellent example of comprehensive preventive action bringing together organizations like the United Nations Environment

Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The humanitarian challenges of climate change require the comprehensive approach of human security: "freedom from want, freedom from fear." As one of the members of the Human Security Network, Austria welcomes the Greek initiative to focus her chairmanship of the Human Security Network on the effects of climate change on vulnerable groups: for example, children, women and persons fleeing their homes. Each of these groups will be addressed at a series of conferences, one of which will be hosted in Vienna in early 2008.

Finally, let me underline that Austria has always been committed to strengthening her humanitarian commitments and, therefore, presents also at this Conference, as in previous ones, a number of pledges. Let me just highlight one of these pledges. It is related to the topics of our general debate. Austria commits herself to further strengthening educational assistance for migrants in order to ensure their better integration in the Austrian educational system. This will be achieved, *inter alia*, by enhancing the inter-cultural competence of pedagogical staff and developing new training material.

Mr Khaled Erksoussi, Member of the Board of Directors, Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society

(Original Arabic)

The discussions in the General Assembly, in the Council of Delegates and at this 30th Conference, to which I wish every success under your chairmanship, revolve around four general issues. I would like to focus on the issue of migration, which in my country, Syria, differs from the situation in other countries. In fact, Syria has been hosting more than 450,000 Palestinian refugees for over 50 years and, in recent years, this number has been swollen by another type of migration: the arrival of more than 1.5 million Iraqi refugees as a result of the security situation and the war in Iraq. These now constitute more than 10% of Syria's population and require urgent humanitarian assistance. The Syrian government has played a leading role in providing this assistance through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, which is coordinating all the assistance dispatched to our Iraqi brothers through the International Federation, the ICRC, friendly associations and international organizations. However, the extent of this assistance has not been commensurate with the large number

of Iraqi refugees, who have had a considerable impact on Syria's infrastructure. By way of example, although the Syrian government has absorbed more than 80,000 Iraqi children in its educational system, more than 200,000 are still in need of schooling.

I would also like to refer to the important issue of the plight of Syrian citizens in the occupied Golan territory, where they are suffering from a lack of health care, subjection to social and economic pressures and maltreatment of prisoners. In this regard, I wish to thank the ICRC for its assistance in arranging the transport of agricultural produce purchased by the Syrian government and for its help in handling social problems in that territory by supervising the transport of students and the organization of weddings to unite families in the occupied territory with those in Syria. I am also grateful to the ICRC for supporting the Syrian National Committee on International Humanitarian Law, which, I am proud to say, has played a major role through the establishment of the Higher National Committee on International Humanitarian Law and through lectures that have begun to highlight the need for compliance with international humanitarian law. In this connection, I also wish to thank all the friendly National Societies that are assisting and cooperating with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. All NGOs throughout the world now have an opportunity to provide assistance, in collaboration with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, for our Iraqi brothers. In this regard, I am particularly grateful to the Red Crescent volunteers and all the other volunteers from the Movement.

H.E. Ms Erlinda Basilio, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Philippines, Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, the theme of our Conference, "Together for humanity," is indeed very apt. The establishment of humanitarian partnerships comes at a most opportune time, as the global community works in the nexus and confluence of important humanitarian initiatives, addressing challenges in the spheres of environment, migration, violence and public health.

Madam Chairwoman, these are areas of great concern to our country, the South-East Asian region and the international community. Each of these subjects is of vital and particular importance. In the realm of the environment and climate change, the Philippines is visited regularly by the fury of Mother Nature in the

form of typhoons and torrential rains, and earthquakes. As more than one out of ten Filipinos work overseas, the effects of migration are felt intimately in every Filipino family. We try our utmost to keep our country and our people out of harm's way by taking effective measures to ensure peace and stability in our country. The various pandemics and related health crises that have made their presence felt in some parts of our region have been contained and properly addressed through regional and international cooperation. But in terms of safeguarding our people from the consequences of these challenges, it is the Red Cross Movement that does this, represented by our National Society, the Philippine National Red Cross, which is led by its dynamic and able chairman, Senator Richard J. Gordon.

It is the Philippine National Red Cross that without fail is the first or among the first on the scene whenever a humanitarian situation breaks out in the Philippines, and is seen everywhere in my country conducting people-centred advocacy and working with people to alleviate their suffering.

The Philippine National Red Cross is a welcome and needed partner to our national human services agencies whose capabilities and resources are often taxed to their limits. This is the experience, throughout the world, of our sister National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation – the entire Movement – as they help to prevent and alleviate human suffering, in line with the great vision of Henry Dunant. The significance, usefulness and achievements of the Red Cross Movement at the global, regional and national levels can hardly be overstated.

It is therefore, Madam Chairwoman, of the highest importance that we, representatives of national governments, take this invaluable opportunity to reinforce and re-invigorate our relationship, our partnership, with the Red Cross at all its levels during this Conference. The Philippine government therefore urges that we give full support to the four resolutions before us, namely (1) the Declaration "Together for humanity" (2) the Specific Nature of the 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 (3) Reaffirmation and Implementation of International Humanitarian Law: Preserving Human Life and Dignity in Armed Conflict and (4) Adoption of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance. Member States and National Societies have had ample opportunity to review and deliberate on the

draft resolutions in consultations held regionally around the world and in Geneva over the past year. The subject matter of the resolutions essentially points to the need for renewed partnership between governments, the Red Cross Movement, the UN system and international organizations and civil society.

I would like to take this opportunity, to highlight the work of the Red Cross Movement in the field of migration. The Movement helps to provide a safer and more welcoming environment for migrants in countries of transit and destination, and gives a certain measure of comfort to migrant workers and families left behind, particularly through the various Red Cross and Red Crescent programmes for advocacy, family welfare and connection, integration and re-integration. I would like to cite in particular the great value of the fraternal relations between and among National Societies. A recent example that comes to mind is the assistance obtained by the Philippine National Red Cross from the Kazakh National Society for Filipino workers stranded in Kazakhstan last year.

In line with my country's advocacy in this sphere, the Philippines will be hosting the Second Global Forum on Migration and Development to be held in October next year in Manila. I would like to invite fellow governments and the Movement to send representatives to the upcoming Friends of the Forum meeting that will help shape the agenda of the Forum. The meeting will be held here in Geneva on 17 December. The meeting will be held here so that we are able to develop the partnership between and among migration stakeholders and the Movement.

I would also like to welcome the new Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, or IDRL. The Philippines itself is a recipient of external aid, and, thanks to the efforts of the incumbent National Society leadership, a donor as well. While we are grateful for the assistance of our brothers and sisters overseas, we have often encountered first-hand the counter-productivity of inappropriate assistance. Recently, the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, concluded an agreement for our embassies and consulates to provide mutual emergency assistance to our nationals overseas. The IDRL thus provide a needed body of international standards for assistance that will guide our diplomatic missions, disaster management authorities and other concerned entities accordingly in the matter of relief operations and donor assistance.

We have also worked with members of the international community and with the Red Cross and

Red Crescent in assisting those who are victims of natural disasters. The Philippine National Red Cross is a donor Society and the Philippine government has also contributed to various UN agencies to alleviate the suffering of victims of natural disasters.

**Mr Raphael Codjo Mensah,
Director of Decentralized Cooperation
and Humanitarian Action, Benin**

(Original French)

I endorse the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the African Group. Referring to the statement by an eminent international figure at the opening of this Conference, the Government of Benin recognizes that the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is always a good opportunity to exchange thoughts on various humanitarian issues with those who support the principles and work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This is also an excellent opportunity for the delegation from Benin to exchange ideas in order to truly work "Together for humanity," the slogan of the Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Government of Benin is pleased to have taken part in these important meetings and, especially, to have taken action to recognize the Red Cross of Benin as an auxiliary to the authorities by sending agents to work with the National Society, adopting a law on respect for the Red Cross emblems and by conferring responsibility on the Red Cross of Benin as a lead agent in providing assistance to Togolese refugees in Benin. On the basis of lessons learned at these meetings, the Government of Benin pledges to further support the National Society so that it can provide a more effective response to the most pressing needs of the most vulnerable, particularly through community services and emergency relief operations in accordance with its mandate.

Before concluding, I would like to thank the National Societies of Spain, France, Germany and Belgium, and especially the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for all they are doing to lift the Red Cross of Benin out of its institutional crisis and for that which they are continuing to do to put it back on its feet. On my word of honour, I assure you that the newly elected Bureau is firmly committed to making the Benin Red Cross known, respected and supported by its beneficiaries. The government is its partner in ensuring that the National Society provides quality community services and transparent management. This is especially clear today in Benin.

The Benin Government has already been reassured that to create the conditions for this to come about, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement shall spare no efforts to provide technical, and if need be, financial, support to the National Society.

H.E. Mr Zdzislaw Rapacki, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Poland, Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, my delegation fully associates itself with the EU statement delivered by Portugal this morning. As of April 1992, Poland has been party to Protocols I and II additional to the Geneva Conventions. Additional Protocol III, which concerns additional distinctive emblems, was signed by Poland and its ratification procedure is now being launched. We believe that ratification of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, and incorporation of their provisions into domestic legal systems by all States party to the Geneva Conventions, should be achieved as quickly as possible in order to fully reflect their universal character. I am also pleased to inform you that the amendment to Article 1 of the Convention on Prohibition or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons entered into force with regard to Poland on 15 March 2007.

In order to facilitate dialogue with the National Society on the implementation of international humanitarian law, an inter-ministerial panel of government experts and representatives of the Polish Red Cross was created in 2005. The establishment of the panel fulfilled the pledge made by Poland at the 27th International Conference.

Please let me apprise you of the extremely valuable contribution made by the Polish Red Cross to the dissemination of international humanitarian law in my country. The Polish Red Cross and the Polish government have been collaborating on a special educational programme for Polish schools called Exploring Humanitarian Law. The Polish Red Cross also annually organizes the International Warsaw School of Humanitarian Law for young lawyers from Europe, Central Asia and North America. Jointly with the Ministries of National Defence and Culture, the Polish Red Cross has established the Polish School of International Humanitarian Law, which addresses itself to the military as well as to the academic and humanitarian communities. In 2006, the Polish Red Cross teamed up with Warsaw

University and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organize an international conference on “custom in international humanitarian law of armed conflicts.”

Poland fully recognizes the competencies of the fact-finding commission, as elaborated in article 90 of Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions. We are convinced that it is essential to strengthen the position of the commission and to support its activities.

Poland reiterates its strong support for the International Criminal Court and the role it plays in promoting the observance of international humanitarian law. In this context, Poland has amended its national legislation in order to achieve even better cooperation with the Court. A pivotal role in attaining the goals of the Court is played by the board of directors of the Court’s Trust Fund, which rules on compensation for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. This highlights the importance of the financial support granted by States to the Fund, allowing it to demonstrate that justice means not only punishment for the criminals but also restoration of dignity to the victims.

Ms Naglaa Rashwan, Youth Representative, Egyptian Red Crescent Society

(Original English)

We have been discussing humanitarian consequences in the four core areas and we have been discussing the issue of capacity building. Here I would like to focus on the capacity building of one of our unique resources – the youth, the youth volunteers.

Normally, in our humanitarian work, we emphasize the importance of assessing the needs of our beneficiaries and of vulnerable groups, but have we assessed the needs of our youth volunteers in order to achieve better implementation of our humanitarian work? As a youth volunteer, I am always asking myself how to keep myself motivated to do more and more. And I also ask myself whether, at the Movement level and the State level, we think about the needs of volunteers. Do we think about what they need? We are always asking them to implement things and to be on the ground, helping the vulnerable people, For them to do that, we should think of what they need.

From my point of view, as a youth volunteer, empowerment is our first need. We need to be empowered to help you better. From my point of view, empowerment can be created by involvement.

We need to be involved in the planning and implementation of all interventions. We need policies, at the Movement level and at the State level, that enhance our involvement. Also, I would like to remind you of our psychosocial needs. We volunteers are care-givers; we need some form of psychosocial support. This can take the form of recognition, for instance, or some other kind of support.

So I call upon all those in attendance here to support the youth. I would like to say, in conclusion, that we have the chance to start today. Our future starts today. I encourage all the National Societies, the States, and the youth organizations in the private sector, to sign the youth pledge prepared by the youth commission for the International Conference. It can be a very good start to facing the challenges posed by the humanitarian consequences of the problems that we have raised here.

**H.E. Ms Maria Nzomo,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Kenya, Geneva**

(Original English)

Allow me at the outset, Madam Chair, to associate my delegation with the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the African Group. The theme of this Conference, in our view, is very pertinent considering the innumerable humanitarian challenges facing the world, which can be addressed only through concerted efforts. All the evidence shows that humanitarian needs, particularly those associated with natural disasters, are on the rise due to both increased vulnerability to disasters and the effects of climate change. My delegation is in favour therefore of enhancing effectiveness in preparation and response to humanitarian challenges through the broadening of collaboration and the development of partnerships.

My delegation in this regard strongly supports the Conference goals, including the need to decrease the vulnerability of communities to environmental degradation and climate change and to enhance their ability to adapt and respond to the humanitarian consequences of those changes. We also support the issue of helping migrants who are without any suitable form of protection and assistance. We also support the prevention and alleviation of suffering caused by violence in urban settings. Further, we also support the improvement of access to vulnerable people, including those who have been marginalized, stigmatized, caught up in situations of violence or lack health care.

We believe that the establishment of partnerships and the creation of capacities at all levels are critical to addressing humanitarian vulnerability in the coming years. Therefore, while building on existing partnerships and collaborations, it must be kept in mind that there is also a need for improvement in service delivery aimed at fulfilling the dual targets of efficiency and reduction of transaction costs.

We encourage all governments, National Societies, the ICRC, and the International Federation – in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement – to coordinate their work so as to benefit people in need. In this regard, in my country, the Kenyan Red Cross Society and the ICRC have continuously worked in close partnership with the government in carrying out humanitarian work when natural disasters such as droughts, floods and famine affected the country.

Finally, my delegation wishes to thank the governing board and General Assembly of the Movement for approving the decision to hold the 2009 General Assembly in Kenya. This decision is not only an honour for the people and government of Kenya, but also for Africa as a whole. It is also a demonstration of the universality of this Movement. It is our hope that when this General Assembly is held, it will focus more particularly on issues of relevance to the African continent.

My delegation looks forward to a positive outcome for this Conference, and, especially, to a convergence of views in defining and adopting a Declaration that will foster concerted strategies and partnerships within the broader “theme”, “Together for humanity.”

**Mr Antoni Bruel,
General Coordinator, Spanish Red Cross**

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chairwoman, the delegation of the Spanish Red Cross wishes to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to affirm that it is committed to meeting the challenges raised at this International Conference. The theme adopted by our National Society for the coming years, “Reaching out to people,” is fully in line with the proposals put forward at this Conference.

Clearly, the humanitarian challenge posed by migration is a great opportunity for us to reach out to migrants. Beyond the humanitarian assistance we can give in our own country, we deem it indispensable to have a clear, practical commitment to the countries

of origin and their National Societies, which can alleviate suffering caused by migration and identify development opportunities in their own communities of origin.

Another aspect of the Spanish Red Cross's engagement is its continuing efforts to give a comprehensive response to migrants in our country to facilitate their full integration in society, promoting their participation in the labour market and combating every form of racism and xenophobia. Regarding this last point, the Spanish government and the Spanish Red Cross have pledged jointly to mount a campaign to drive home the reality of migration, fight against stereotypes and spread the concept of equality among people, preventing stigmatization and discrimination.

Having dedicated ourselves to spreading awareness of the importance of peaceful coexistence based on the values enshrined in our Fundamental Principles, we are launching broad-based activities aimed at youth and gender violence. These endeavours will rely on campaigns and awareness programmes, drawing on the interactivity of new technologies that target young people using specially designed Internet portals.

As regards international humanitarian law, we plan to continue working together with the Spanish Government, through an agreement with the Ministry of Defence, to increase the number of people in the armed forces and security forces who will receive special training in international humanitarian law. Universities and the civilian population will receive special attention and will continue to be at the top of our agenda in order to facilitate research and spread the importance of international humanitarian law.

The use of the emblem, property of the people on whom it confers its protection, will be another priority. We will dedicate ourselves to disseminating its importance and find ways to prevent its inappropriate use at all times.

Since we have become increasingly aware of the importance – on the national and the international scene – of health, we propose to do the following: actively identify needs in disease prevention and community health promotion, increase the number of international cooperation projects containing health components, turn a large number of our volunteers into community health agents and support other National Societies so that they can do the same in their own countries.

With regard to the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on people, particularly

those who are most vulnerable, in 2006 the Spanish Red Cross set up a department to develop a plan of action aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change and environmental degradation through specific projects. The action plan will cover activities on the domestic front with a view to creating awareness of the problem, reducing carbon emissions and introducing carbon offsets, and ensuring more effective use of water that reflects its intrinsic value and its value as an instrument of solidarity among communities.

Since 1998, our international cooperation projects have featured components that make it possible to evaluate, reduce and compensate for any adverse impact that the projects might have on the environment. The same year, we carried out an assessment of the housing and building projects that we have implemented over the past ten years, focusing on environmental factors and related health aspects.

**H.E. Mr Sergei Aleinik,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Belarus, Geneva**

(Original Russian)

The Government of the Republic of Belarus attaches great importance to its membership of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the delegation from Belarus considers the topics and issues planned for discussion at this Conference to be of the utmost urgency and importance.

The resolution of problems relating to the environment, natural disasters, migration, violence, health care, and to compliance with the rules of international humanitarian law, affects everyone on our planet and should act as an incentive for us to unite our efforts at both national and global levels. Belarus has made significant progress and achieved important results in relation to virtually all of the items on the agenda of the Conference.

First, we would like to point out the progress made by the government in introducing the rules and principles of international humanitarian law into domestic legislation.

In 1997, the government set up an inter-departmental commission on the implementation of international humanitarian law in Belarus. Since then, the commission has been working towards its goal. With its assistance, a number of laws have been drawn up

and adopted in the field of international humanitarian law: laws on “the Use and Protection of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Emblems” and on “the Belarus Red Cross.” Moreover, the criminal code of Belarus states that war crimes and other violations of the laws and customs of war are punishable offences.

Belarus was one of the first States to fulfil its obligations on the implementation of international humanitarian law in relation to the protection of cultural property.

On the recommendation of the inter-departmental commission, international humanitarian law is now studied in the country’s educational establishments. Great importance is attached to the need to disseminate knowledge in this field by means of publications and the organization of themed seminars. In relation to this point, we would like to thank the Kiev regional delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross for its assistance.

The primary aim of Belarus’ state policy in the field of health is the preservation and improvement of the nation’s health. In Belarus, we have secured the stable operation of a State-run health-care system based on the fundamental principles of accessible, free medical care for all. In many health indicators – child and maternal mortality, universal access to medical services, the fight against HIV/AIDS and the proportion of qualified medical staff available – Belarus consistently achieves some of the highest rankings among the countries in our region.

One of the main areas of focus for the health-care system in Belarus is State support for mothers and children. Activities in this area have resulted in Belarus being ranked among those countries with a low level of infant and child mortality, according to the WHO’s estimates.

A responsible State approach to the problem of HIV/AIDS and interaction with international organizations, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, has enabled Belarus to develop an effective system for the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS that is already producing tangible results. According to international experts, if the present trends in Belarus continue until 2010, the spread of the epidemic may be halted and even reversed.

In Belarus, we attach great importance to ensuring the rights and protection of migrants and refugees and to countering illegal migration. An effective legislative and institutional basis has been created in

the country to guarantee the legal status of migrants, protect their rights and counter illegal migration.

To meet the challenges of our times, a legislative basis has been created in Belarus for issues relating to the management of natural disasters.

Belarus is also an active participant in the international rescue movement. In the last five years, Belarus has provided humanitarian assistance to countries requiring emergency responses on 21 occasions. This has included the provision of assistance to Iran, Pakistan, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and, this year, to Greece.

Belarus therefore welcomes the Movement’s initiative in drafting the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance. In fact, we would point out that many of the provisions and rules set out in the draft Guidelines are already reflected in our national legislation.

We wish to note that the positive results achieved in our country in tackling contemporary humanitarian challenges would not have been possible without the close cooperation and support of participants in the Movement. Another important element in the successful resolution of humanitarian issues in Belarus is the close interaction between the government and the Belarus Red Cross.

The delegation from Belarus expresses the hope that in future there will be even greater interaction between our country and the Movement on a wide range of humanitarian issues, particularly on the problem of remedial action in the aftermath of the greatest man-made disaster of the 20th century, the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

We are convinced that Belarus’ participation in the Movement can serve as a successful example of the way in which the fundamental principles of the contemporary humanitarian movement can be established and implemented.

**H.E. Mr Sameh Shoukry,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Egypt, Geneva**

(Original Arabic)

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election as chairman of this important Conference. I also congratulate the other members

of the Conference Bureau on their election. I wish to express the Egyptian delegation's appreciation of the endeavours made by the ICRC and the International Federation in furtherance of their noble task of preventing and alleviating the suffering of victims of wars, natural disasters, diseases and social injustice. Egypt welcomes the slogan – "Together for humanity" – that has been chosen for the Conference and emphasizes the importance of highlighting the need for joint action and partnership between States and the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in meeting common humanitarian challenges. With regard to the issue of international migration, my country's delegation believes that due attention should be paid to the need to explore various ways to enhance the positive effects of migration on development while, at the same time, diminishing its adverse effects, particularly those related to the dispossession of migrants' minimum social rights. Egypt is in favour of strengthening the role of National Societies, as partners of governmental authorities, in the performance of humanitarian activities, and believes that they should act as liaison points between governments and the International Federation, taking into consideration the differing needs and capacities of governments and National Societies in meeting common humanitarian challenges. In this context, National Societies should develop their functions in the light of changes in the current situation. For example, National Societies and the ICRC should monitor the activities of private associations operating in areas of armed conflict with a view to ensuring that those associations respect the principles of international law and international conventions and do not exploit the deteriorating security situation in areas of armed conflict by engaging in illicit activities such as trafficking in women and children.

My country's delegation wishes to emphasize the need for our Conference to monitor the effective implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Palestinian National Society and the Israeli National Society in 2005. All the participants in the Conference, without exception, have a responsibility in this regard, especially in the light of the resolutions adopted on this issue. We have followed, with grave concern, the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories and the increasing daily suffering of the Palestinian people due to the illegal practices of the Israeli occupation authorities. In such a situation, mounting concern is felt at the manner in which the Palestinian Red Crescent is still being prevented from discharging its humanitarian task of reaching victims and persons in need in various parts

of the occupied Palestinian territories as a result of the Israeli National Society's non-compliance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding and the agreement on practical arrangements signed in November 2005. The report of Mr Pär Stenbäck, the independent observer appointed by the ICRC and the International Federation to monitor implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, which is due to be discussed after tomorrow, unequivocally affirms that the greater part of the Memorandum of Understanding has not been implemented and that the Israeli occupation authorities have consistently obstructed its implementation. In this connection, the Egyptian delegation wishes to endorse the recommendation made yesterday in the address by the President of the Swiss Confederation. She said that the Israeli government should do more to facilitate implementation of the Memorandum and that the States party to the Geneva Conventions, as well as National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC, should assume their responsibilities with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the Memorandum since this would guarantee the Movement's humanitarian credibility and promote its principles of universality and impartiality.

Egypt attaches special importance to the Conference's sixth objective of reaffirming the need to apply international humanitarian law in order to safeguard human life and dignity in armed conflicts. In this regard, we wish to emphasize the need for the ICRC to play a greater role in protecting prisoners of war, gathering information on the situation of prisoners of war from the parties involved in the conflict, verifying such information provided by the parties to the conflict, laying down clear and specific criteria for qualifying for prisoner-of-war status, and establishing a time schedule for all this in view of the difficulty of investigating crimes when they are committed in areas where hostilities are taking place and which, consequently, are not easily accessible. Finally, we wish to affirm the need to build on the proposals made during a number of regional workshops organized by the ICRC in 2003, on the subject of the need for stricter compliance with international humanitarian law and the ICRC reports in this regard, including the study on customary international humanitarian law. To this end, the Conference should request the ICRC to prepare a comprehensive report on possible options to ensure the closer monitoring of compliance with international humanitarian law, including specific recommendations for consideration by all the States Parties and the Movement with a view to the implementation of additional measures in this connection. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I apologize for speaking at such length.

**Dr Larry Winter Roeder, United Nations Affairs
Director, World Society for the Protection of
Animals**

(Original English)

WSPA, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, is the largest federation of its kind, with over 800 member societies, mostly in the southern hemisphere. Why is this relevant to you? Well, of the world's one billion poorest people alone, over 850 million totally depend on animals for a living, for food or cultural identification. These poor generally live in southern economies, like Darfur and Bangladesh. In a disaster, if all you do is provide a camp and safety for the human victims, unless their animals are also protected, often the people will remain victims after the crisis is over: their food supply imperiled, their poverty worsened and, often, their cultural identification shattered.

WSPA proposes, with its large federation, to work with the International Federation and its National Societies on a practical, science-based harmonization of the animal welfare and traditional humanitarian agendas so that relief and development are sustainable. We and our societies propose working with you not only in crises like the one in Bangladesh today, but also before such events occur, by crafting ways of reducing risks in the first place, as we are doing now in Argentina, in keeping with the 2005 Hyogo Framework on disaster risk reduction.

Ladies and gentlemen, 21st century humanitarian relief requires new ideas and the preservation of a human being's entire cultural and economic environment. WSPA stands ready to help you do that through modern science-based animal welfare.

**H.E. Ms Marta Altolaquirre Larraondo,
Vice-Minister for External Affairs, Guatemala**

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chairwoman, I wish to begin by sharing a few of the Guatemalan International Humanitarian Law Commission's accomplishments; they went towards fulfilling its mandate in several areas, including the approval and ratification of the most recent instruments of international humanitarian law, which I will not list for lack of time. Working groups have been established to develop strategies and measures relating to care for victims of anti-personnel mines and for missing persons.

With regard to the environment, Guatemala is a country that is highly vulnerable to natural disasters because of its geographical location and social composition. We have an early warning system and an emergency operations centre for the coordination of services, bringing together institutional resources and international cooperation. In all the areas mentioned in the programme of this Conference, there is an urgent need to foster inter-agency partnerships and promote across-the-board international cooperation to enhance results and support for victims of natural disasters and other humanitarian emergency situations, as mentioned in the draft Declaration.

In relation to international migration, Guatemala is a sending, transit and receiving country. Some 1,300,000 Guatemalans live abroad, 97 per cent of them in the United States of America. Of these, some 80 per cent find themselves in precarious situations because of their irregular status. In this respect, the least I can do is to point to the human factor and recall our Conference slogan, "Together for humanity." Among the government measures for dealing with the humanitarian problems of migrants is a repatriation fund for deceased and vulnerable people. This year, 20,721 people have already been deported from the United States and more than 150,000 people have been deported from Mexico by land. A programme is being set up to provide care for deportees who return by air from the United States. Services include food distribution, telephone calls to relatives, transfer to their places of origin, mobile banking for foreign exchange, information on employment opportunities, and health assessments. Further, in connection with the fight against human trafficking, another topic mentioned in the presentations, the Guatemalan government has signed bilateral cooperation agreements with its neighbours, Mexico and El Salvador, aimed at protecting trafficking victims. Another achievement worth mentioning is the development and implementation of a public policy that includes a strategy and plan of action aimed at preventing human trafficking and providing protection to victims.

Guatemala pledges to keep its promises to promote the enactment of legislation on the implementation of international humanitarian law. Aware of the consequences of cluster munitions, it will actively support the Oslo Process that aims to ban the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of these weapons that indiscriminately affect civilians.

Lastly, we recognize the work carried out by the Guatemalan Red Cross through its programmes for disaster management, community health,

dissemination of principles and values, and through its comprehensive community programmes, with a view to achieving sustainable development in our country. We hope that coordination with State institutions will be broadened to facilitate progress in the theme areas of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and that the goals that have been established will be reached.

**H.E. Mr Kristinn F. Árnason,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva**

(Original English)

The theme of this debate is well chosen. Major humanitarian challenges can be effectively addressed only through collaboration and partnership. Climate change is a prime example of the key lying in working together.

The latest report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change sheds light on the scale of the impact. Climate change is already devastating the lives of millions. The most vulnerable in developing countries tend to be hardest hit, those who are least responsible for causing changes to the climate.

While mitigation of climate change is an urgent matter to be addressed, in the first instance by governments, adaptation is an equally urgent task to which the Red Cross already makes vital contributions. Effective adaptation entails human development and humanitarian support, to preserve what has already been achieved in development. In many instances, adaptation is a matter of survival.

The values enshrined in humanitarian law, and upheld and promoted with vigour by the Red Cross for many decades, cannot be taken for granted. Governments need to be constantly on guard against erosion of this body of law. Terrorism has in recent years posed a major security challenge; it is also responsible for atrocious acts against humanitarian and human rights law. Nevertheless, the struggle against terrorism and violence should never be waged at the expense of fundamental human rights and humanitarian law. I would like to pay tribute to the leadership of the Red Cross Movement in this area.

Key to maintaining humanitarian standards is the raising of awareness among all actors in all countries. In Iceland we are, together with the Red Cross, in the process of establishing a National Committee on Humanitarian Law, which is intended to advise the

Government of Iceland on the interpretation and implementation of international humanitarian law and to disseminate knowledge of this law.

Iceland would like to express support for the violence prevention programmes that the Red Cross has initiated, as well as for the psychosocial programmes in conflict areas, particularly among children.

The Government of Iceland recognizes the indispensable work carried out by organizations in humanitarian and development work. The Government of Iceland has therefore decided to double the contributions in 2008 allocated to humanitarian and relief operations through the Red Cross as well as Icelandic NGOs.

At this Conference, the Government of Iceland and the Icelandic Red Cross will make joint pledges for the years 2008-2011, on cooperation and on a joint initiative for increasing knowledge of international humanitarian law at the national level.

There is a high level of public support in Iceland for the work of the Red Cross Movement. This is not least due to the visible commitment over many years of the Icelandic Red Cross to humanitarian work both at home and abroad.

On behalf of the Government of Iceland, I would like to pay tribute to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for their untiring and devoted work and their noble mission.

**Mr Habib Ahmed Makhtoum,
President, Sudanese Red Crescent**

(Original Arabic)

Our National Society strongly supports the concern that the International Movement is showing for the issues of migration, violence, environmental degradation and emergent diseases and, on this occasion, wishes to commend our partners who are helping us to alleviate the suffering of displaced persons in all parts of our country. The adverse effects of environmental degradation are being felt throughout the world where manifestations of climate change, such as floods and hurricanes, are evident. Rising temperatures also forebode difficult conditions in other areas likely to experience low rainfall, desiccation and desertification, heralding large-scale famines and a devastating humanitarian disaster. If we do not work together to halt this environmental degradation, address its consequences

and assist and relieve the afflicted persons, especially in poorer communities, these communities will be the victims of the present century.

Many regions of the world are unquestionably suffering from conflicts, disasters and poverty, which give rise to large-scale migration and flows of refugees and displaced persons. Although international organizations, and primarily our International Movement, have provided substantial assistance to alleviate the effects of these conflicts, we must exercise prudence and take every precaution against those seeking to profit from the opportunity to fish in troubled waters, such as the “Zoë’s Ark” organization, which abducted more than 103 children living in camps for displaced persons from the Sudan and Chad, not for humanitarian reasons but solely for purposes of trafficking. This occurrence should be condemned and all organizations engaged in refugee-related activities should be required to observe a code of conduct and comply with international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the protocols additional thereto.

At this Conference, we in the International Movement have called upon governments to participate in our plans and programmes as an indication that we are all working to achieve common objectives and implement integrated plans for the benefit of the vulnerable and needy. We hope to find, on the part of governments, the material and moral support and solidarity needed to give practical effect to our slogan, “Together for humanity.” Thank you very much.

**Mr Oleksiy Gromazyn,
Director of the Department for Health
Protection, Ministry for Emergencies, Ukraine**

(Original Russian)

The Ukraine has first-hand experience of a global man-made disaster – here I am referring to the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station – and is now facing the threat of emergencies resulting from global warming in the form of forest fires and floods. We are firmly convinced of the need for international organizations and governments to cooperate on remedial action in the aftermath of the many man-made and natural disasters that we face today. We therefore give our full support to the conference motto, “Together for humanity.”

In this connection, I would like to point out that the Government of the Ukraine, represented by the Ministry for Emergencies and Protection of the

Population from the Consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster, has been cooperating closely with the Ukrainian Red Cross Society and the National Societies of other countries on effective emergency response.

In 1997, the Ministry for Emergencies set up a mobile hospital. Under a cooperation agreement with the Ukrainian Red Cross Society, the mobile hospital uses the Red Cross emblem in its logo and one member of its staff is a representative of the Ukrainian Red Cross Society. When the mobile hospital is called upon to provide international humanitarian action, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society also supplies the hospital with medicines and dressings.

Today, the Ministry’s mobile hospital is an independent, multi-profile medical facility that can be mobilized anywhere in the world. In a 24-hour period, the hospital can provide medical assistance for up to 400 victims and in-patient assistance for 160 non-transportable patients.

States that have experienced the consequences of major earthquakes have been able to appreciate the work of the hospital at first-hand. The Ukrainian Ministry’s mobile hospital has provided humanitarian medical assistance in Turkey, India, Iran, and Pakistan. Over 29,000 people received medical assistance from the hospital in the aftermath of natural disasters in these countries. The work of the hospital has been appreciated by State organizations, international NGOs and ordinary citizens alike. The Government of the Ukraine is ready to respond at any time to requests for humanitarian assistance from those States requiring it.

To conclude, I would like to stress once more that an effective response to man-made and natural disasters and the prevention of humanitarian consequences is only possible by combining the efforts of governmental and humanitarian organizations at both the national and the international level. The delegation from the Ukraine therefore supports the adoption of the draft resolution on “Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance.”

**H.E. Ms Alicia Martin,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Nicaragua, Geneva**

(Original Spanish)

Our world is more unstable, insecure and interdependent than ever before. The response of

States to ensure human security and sustainable development should, therefore, be comprehensive. At the same time, individual actions are no longer relevant and it is necessary to forge partnerships and rely on the cooperation of various players to deal with the humanitarian consequences of this new context. Therefore, the Conference slogan, “Together for humanity,” takes on a crucial meaning.

Nicaragua’s experience after the passage of Hurricane Felix is a clear example of joint action by the government, the National Society, various United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, which worked together to reach the affected areas and bring relief to the most vulnerable people.

Although the disaster was unexpected and developed in a few hours, the government’s response materialized when it declared a state of emergency in the affected area, mobilizing all the country’s productive forces, and launched an appeal for international cooperation. A special emergency plan providing humanitarian assistance for those affected – some 190,000 people – was immediately set up, and a working commission led by local city governments was established in coordination with the Executive Secretariat of the National Disaster Care and Prevention System. Other national institutions, such as the National Army, the National Police, Health Ministry, the National Firefighter Force and the Nicaraguan Red Cross, also contributed to the Executive Secretariat’s efforts.

International cooperation was crucial. The most remote communities were reached with the help of the United States Army and planes of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation, which set up an airlift to deliver humanitarian aid to the affected areas. Some 84 days into the disaster, aid is still flowing, and the Government of National Reconstruction and Unity is working on a programme that will turn the disaster area into a sustainable development hub and enable it to join the ranks of the local, regional and global economies.

Madam Chairwoman, my government is aware that poverty is the main factor in the exclusion, marginalization and social discrimination that force people to migrate in quest of better opportunities, often without any guarantee that their human rights will be respected or that they will receive recognition for the positive contributions they can make to the development of destination countries. Environmental degradation and its adverse effects on the climate are increasingly becoming some of the most daunting challenges worldwide. In this respect, Nicaragua

thanks the Conference for having included these topics in its discussions.

**Ms Katherine Ngo, Youth Representative,
Australian Red Cross**

(Original English)

The Australian Red Cross would like to comment on public health and especially on mobilizing young volunteers for public health. When we see someone suffering, the human reaction is to want to help and we don’t need to be professionals to be able to do this. Let me give you an example from Australia.

A major global health challenge for young people is the use of illegal drugs, which cause bodily and mental harm. To minimize the harm caused by illegal drugs, we have Australian Red Cross youth volunteers like me mingling with crowds at rock concerts and music festivals giving out information on first aid, safe partying, health and safety, mental health, and about the Red Cross in general. And it is very, very well received. This is called the Save-A-Mate programme. So, essentially, this is a peer-to-peer education model and it is very, very popular, not only with the young volunteers like me but also the youth recipients. I recall one night when I was volunteering: a young girl, just younger than me, came up to me and said, “Thank you.” She said that she had been having some difficulties with a guy who had been drinking too much alcohol and the Red Cross had really helped. This story is very, very common.

So involving volunteers, and particularly young volunteers, is very important, and it is so effective. And to do this, we must have measurable outcomes. Like my Egyptian friend Naglaa, I would like to urge everyone to sign the youth pledge because the youth pledge provides these measurable outcomes for us to evaluate ourselves as National Societies. By signing the youth pledge, we are putting our hands up to support the new generation to carry out the mission of Red Cross, to continue it and also to allow this new generation to stand on the shoulders of giants – yourselves. So, thank you very much. Please sign the youth pledge.

**Mr Seymour Mardaliyev, Second Secretary,
Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan, Geneva**

(Original English)

We are gathered at this Conference to have important and timely deliberations on a number of serious

humanitarian challenges humankind faces. The focus of this Conference could not be more appropriate as we are all deeply concerned about the impact of climate change, international migration, and public health problems, as well as armed conflicts with their devastating consequences in all parts of the world. Today, the complexity and magnitude of humanitarian challenges require the strengthening of partnerships and cooperation between States, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, international organizations and civil society. Only through common efforts, coordination and burden sharing will we be able to effectively target existing challenges.

Every year, more than 200 million people are affected by various types of natural disaster. Increased population densities, environmental degradation and global warming, added to poverty, make the impact of natural disasters worse. The devastating consequences of natural disasters can be prevented through disaster risk reduction initiatives. Therefore, we reaffirm the importance of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, which remains a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts.

Widespread violations of international humanitarian law during armed conflicts still occur all too frequently. Civilians continue to bear the heavy burden of the grave consequences of armed conflicts. Large numbers of displaced people, both refugees and internally displaced persons, in many corners of the world – and Azerbaijan is not an exception in this context – find themselves in protracted mass displacement situations for many years. This deepens even further their despair over the lack of tangible progress in the search for durable solutions to their plight.

The problem of missing persons remains one of the most sensitive and painful consequences of armed conflicts. Identification of the fate of missing persons cannot depend on the settlement of political issues, and this work should be carried out on a daily basis in accordance with international humanitarian law. The humanitarian dimension of this problem should, in all instances, prevail over the political one. In this matter, the role of the international community, particularly that of the ICRC, remains important.

The protection and promotion of all human rights, including cultural rights, both in times of peace and in situations of armed conflict, must be ensured and strictly observed by all States and other relevant stakeholders. Unfortunately, we still witness situations in conflict zones and, particularly, in occupied

territories where ubiquitous and abhorrent practices of destruction of cultural property have a severe detrimental impact on the enjoyment by the affected populations of their inherent cultural rights.

We are strongly convinced that international humanitarian law remains as relevant in armed conflicts, and in situations of occupation resulting from armed conflicts, as never before. International humanitarian law continues to provide valuable legal protection for victims of armed conflicts. No perpetrator of this body of law should escape with impunity.

Allow me, Madam Chairwoman, to conclude by expressing our satisfaction with the ongoing high level of cooperation with the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan. We do believe that the recently adopted law on the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan will further strengthen its important auxiliary role, streamline its cooperation with the national authorities, coordinate it and, of course, bring many new success stories in our fruitful and result-oriented partnership for the benefit of all those in need in Azerbaijan.

**Mr Ómar Kristmundsson,
Chairman, Icelandic Red Cross**

(Original English)

Mr Vice-Chairman, let me start by thanking the youth representatives from Egypt and Australia for their timely reminder of the needs of volunteers and the important role of youth in our Movement. Out of the four highly important humanitarian challenges being discussed, the Icelandic Red Cross wants to specifically address two of them, not to undermine the other two: the humanitarian consequences of climate change and international migration. These challenges require a collective response. We are especially concerned as those who are hit the hardest by disasters are those who are the most vulnerable in our community. We also believe that the migrants in the greatest need of our combined efforts are those without legal protection and access to basic health and social care.

Climate change is happening now. It is the duty of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as of the governments of States to do everything possible to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of climate change. This, we believe, can be best done by strengthening the risk reduction component in our disaster management programmes in order to curb the effect of environmental disasters on vulnerable communities. We need to support Red Cross and

Red Crescent activities throughout the world that are aimed at risk reduction, disaster preparedness and response at community level in countries facing increased risk due to environmental degradation. As the Icelandic Red Cross acts as auxiliary to the government in disaster preparedness and response, we will take the consequences of climate change into consideration in our common planning.

We have, in the meetings running up to this International Conference, discussed and adopted an important resolution on international migration. The Icelandic Red Cross has a long experience in programmes aimed at assisting and protecting refugees and asylum seekers, and we have worked in close cooperation with our government in this field. The Icelandic Red Cross has taken steps to ensure the participation of migrants in decision-making, as well as their participation in the domestic programmes of the Icelandic Red Cross. We would like, as a National Society, to pledge to conduct a study, in order to have a clear picture of the scope and the nature of the problem in Iceland, on trafficking and domestic slavery. We will, based on the results, develop appropriate services and protection for vulnerable migrants in Iceland, especially women who are victims of sexual violence and trafficking.

**H.E. Ms Laura Thompson,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Costa Rica, Geneva**

(Original Spanish)

International migration, environmental degradation, urban violence and recurring diseases in society lead us necessarily to refer to the factors that cause them and continue to prevent adequate treatment.

Costa Rica, a well-known receiving country, shares the concern of those present to ensure the appropriate treatment of migrants as human beings. To that end, Costa Rica has made a commitment, through its National Development Plan 2006-2010, to the establishment of a migration model based on the integration of migrants and refugees by means of its participation in community development projects. As it applies these policies, my country wishes to express its appreciation to the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for its support in its migrant workers' integration programmes in Costa Rica.

Likewise, current environmental issues are directly related to natural disasters affecting our citizens.

To tackle these problems adequately, we welcome and fully endorse the policy lines established in the Guidelines on the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance developed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Because of its geographical location and environmental conditions, Central America is prone to natural disasters. Climate change has exacerbated this situation and the consequences are being felt dramatically in our region year after year, especially during the rainy season. In fact, the Costa Rican Red Cross, as a member of the National Emergency Commission, via its National Relief Management, has carried out important operations not only to respond to this crisis but also to warn and empower the most vulnerable communities. To develop the theme and facilities and comparative advantages of the Costa Rican Red Cross, as well as of the country, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has set up a reference centre that covers the entire region. Our country is grateful to all the governments and National Societies that have lent us assistance during all the emergencies we have experienced.

As regards recurring public health problems, my country has a tradition of commitment to social investment programmes focussing on health and education. One of the most daunting challenges before us is to control the spread of dengue and malaria. Although these diseases do not affect large numbers of Costa Ricans, they are a constant threat that should be eliminated; substantial resources are being earmarked for their prevention and treatment.

Lastly, we feel that it is important to mention in this context the illegal arms trafficking throughout the world and point out the connection between this scourge and the problems we are facing. The lack of common international rules for the transfer of arms is a contributing factor to conflicts, crime and terrorism, culminating in the displacement of people. It undermines peace, security, stability and sustainable development.

It is estimated that more than 45 million people are affected each year by the ravages of war, and armed violence claims some 1,000 lives daily. The arms trade, a budding business, brings in profits in excess of 40 million US dollars. While the gross domestic product continues on average to decline in the region, arms expenditure continues to rise. That is why Costa Rica and 13 co-sponsoring countries are actively

promoting the establishment of a legal instrument to govern the arms trade at the international level. We bring this initiative to this forum because we know that, as the moderator stated yesterday, those present here seek a better world. Perhaps we cannot achieve utopia, but we are certain that the control of arms transfers and respect for international arms trade restrictions are the best way to ensure that weapons do not fall into dangerous hands.

Likewise, and taking into consideration the need to tackle this situation from a global perspective, my country has presented in various forums the Costa Rica Consensus, a project that aims to draw attention to the importance of directing international cooperation to the countries that place their resources mainly in social investment programmes and development instead of competing in an arms race.

**H.E. Mr Omar Dahab Fadol Mohamed,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Sudan, Geneva**

(Original Arabic)

I wish to add the following to the statement delivered by Egypt on behalf of the African Group.

With regard to the attempted abduction of children from the area of conflict in Darfur and on the eastern borders of Chad, in addition to the statements made by a number of delegations – including the delegation from Algeria – we also wish to express our strong condemnation of this crime which endangers the principles on which the International Movement was established. The suffering of the population and their urgent need for assistance were exploited in this attempt to traffic in young children whose ages ranged from six months to ten years.

The 30th Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference should learn the lessons that will enable them to punish those involved and prevent the exploitation of the principle of humanitarianism in the form of such crimes as trafficking in children, selling them, and uprooting them from their mothers and fathers, with the use of fraud and deception.

We are pleased to see full solidarity on the part of States and the specialized agencies of the United Nations in the condemnation and punishment of this crime and the clarification of its circumstances. We must also point out that 74 of the children taken by the “Zoë’s Ark” organization – which was involved in the commission of this crime – are still missing.

Urgent and decisive measures should therefore be taken in this connection.

With regard to environmental degradation and climate change, the African continent’s suffering has now been increased by the effects of environmental degradation, which have resulted, *inter alia*, in an aggravation of conflicts such as that in Darfur. In this connection, we wish to refer you to the statements of the Secretary-General of the United Nations this year, the report of the United Nations Environment Programme on the Sudan and the reports issued by numerous scientific and academic bodies throughout the world, including Columbia University’s Earth Institute in New York, all of which indicate that the fundamental cause of the conflict in Darfur is related to climate change, which has led to the depletion of natural resources and, consequently, to the outbreak of conflict over these resources which are diminishing year after year.

In this connection, it might be appropriate to note, with great optimism and satisfaction, the increasing global awareness of the dangers of environmental degradation and its effect on world peace and security. We also note, with equal optimism and satisfaction, the attempts that some United Nations agencies, States and scientific and academic institutions throughout the world are making to curb environmental degradation in Darfur by exploiting extremely large quantities of groundwater to halt desertification and enable displaced persons to return from their camps and resume normal lives.

Finally, we note the ongoing total failure to apply the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Israeli National Society, which was the sole condition and *quid pro quo* for admitting the Israeli National Society to the Movement. Thank you.

**Mr Dimitry Fedotov, Vice-President,
Russian Red Cross Society**

(Original Russian)

I would like to address the issue of labour migration on behalf of the National Societies of Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Moldova. Because of enormous differences in the economic situations of our countries, a growing number of migrants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Moldova are seeking work in Russia.

Although the Russian State is working hard to provide assistance to legally registered migrants, many people,

for various reasons, do not know how to register their stay in our country properly, and often do not even try to do so.

Therefore, in the course of preliminary negotiations with the National Societies of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Moldova, we decided to focus on organizing a joint programme to provide legal and psychological assistance, offer information on the risks of illegal migration and organize reception services for migrants of any status in border territories, in major cities and at railway stations. In addition, many migrants find it impossible to maintain links with their families, usually for economic reasons, and some simply disappear, which causes a breakdown in family relationships.

This too is an area in which we are able to assist by combining the efforts of our National Societies, thus exploiting the unique potential of our Movement to resolve these problems in a more integrated manner. This enables us to examine the problems both from the perspective of the country abandoned by migrants and the country to which they head, thereby working *together for humanity*.

We support the draft resolution currently under consideration.

**Mr Branko Sočanac, Chargé d’Affaires,
Permanent Mission of Croatia, Geneva**

(Original English)

We have already aligned ourselves with the statement of the European Union given earlier this morning. In our national capacity, allow us at the outset to welcome all State and National Society delegations, as well as the distinguished representatives of the ICRC, the International Federation and other international organizations whose work is focused on the humanitarian field. We would also like to congratulate the organizers on the successful preparations for the Conference.

Our delegation expects this Conference to bring about mutual understanding between governments as well as the components of the Movement. We are hopeful that the well-known “spirit of consensus” that has been the tradition in humanitarian work, will again serve us as a powerful tool, especially when it comes to addressing the problems faced by some of the most vulnerable people on the planet. We strongly support the Red Cross Movement in motivating National Societies to accept the auxiliary

role in their countries, especially in the fields of social welfare, health, education and prevention and in preparing their members and the general population for catastrophe response.

The issues of climate change, international migration, urban violence and recurrent diseases represent challenges for every country in the world. No one country could alone protect itself from these threats. Therefore, we need to build global partnerships and cooperation on all levels in order to be better equipped to face these complex and difficult challenges. We also have to learn from and draw on the experiences of other relevant initiatives, such as the Millennium Development Goals or the United Nations’ High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

Allow me to begin by focusing your attention on the issue of the environment and the various problems that we face in this domain. Environmental degradation, and climate change in particular, will have the most disastrous consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world. Drought, floods and similar natural disasters exacerbated by climate change directly affect the development, and present a daily threat to the safety and livelihood, of some of the most marginalized populations. All of this calls for more focused action on our part when it comes to dealing with issues linked to the environment.

Another issue that deserves our attention is that of international migration. Migrants are one of the most vulnerable groups, susceptible to all kinds of exploitation. We therefore need to address the migration issue seriously and appropriately, namely by ensuring humanitarian assistance, protection, advocacy and reintegration for the migrants.

Madam Chairwoman, another significant problem that the world faces today is the increase in urban violence, which is one of the consequences of rapid urbanization combined with a lack of adequate infrastructure and public services. Much more needs to be done to combat the “culture of urban violence,” particularly through prevention and public awareness schemes. Here, we would like to commend the important and useful work in this field of ICRC-trained volunteers.

Another serious threat that faces the world today is the recurrence of diseases that continue to cause millions of deaths every year, particularly among the poorest and most marginalized populations. This is despite the fact that many of them are preventable and treatable today. One of those diseases is leprosy. This disease was not included in the Conference papers, but we thought we should nonetheless mention it

because it raises a serious human rights issue, given all the discrimination and stigmatization that still comes with it.

Allow me, at the end, to once again stress the importance that we attach to this Conference. It presents a unique opportunity for us to strengthen our collaboration and partnership, which will allow us to be more effective in addressing the many humanitarian challenges that we face.

**H.E. Mr Moussa Burayzat,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Jordan, Geneva**

(Original English)

Humanitarian action has never been as vital as it is today. Man has made great advances in both exploring and exploiting nature while establishing human settlements on this globe; yet these great achievements unfortunately have their drawbacks. Disasters – both natural and man-made – have become more recurrent and invariably destructive. Of course, the international humanitarian movement has adapted its efforts according to the rising challenges. The role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is no longer limited to caring for the wounded on the battlefield, but has gone beyond that in addressing the pressing needs of the most vulnerable.

148 years after Henry Dunant and the battle of Solferino, we are meeting in Geneva again with a new agenda that outlines actions from now until the year 2011. Working effectively *together for humanity* requires that we devise effective and creative approaches and initiatives in order to enhance humanitarian action, to adequately tackle the mounting challenges in various spheres. Disasters and relief efforts are now high on the list of international action.

Climate change is a major global challenge for humanity in the 21st century. The humanitarian consequences of this phenomenon are indeed alarming, as acknowledged by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Group II 2007 report. Clearly, the effects of climate change will impact different regions differently, which means that the international community should adapt its contingency plans accordingly.

Similarly, population movements worldwide have indeed become a major challenge for individual countries and the international community as a

whole. The phenomenon has positive and negative consequences. One of the major dimensions that we would like to highlight is the legal categorization of human influxes across borders. This will enhance international cooperation in dealing with the negative consequences of this phenomenon.

Jordan's experience shows that a humanitarian challenge can have an unsettling impact on certain host countries. That is why symbolic contributions by the international community in such cases no longer suffice. Therefore, we hope this Conference will recognize the negative consequences of certain kinds of international influx on host countries. We mentioned this and underlined it in the preparatory meetings before this Conference and we should like to reiterate it here.

Urban violence is yet another humanitarian challenge, given the extraordinary rate of global urbanization. The statistics for 2007 indicate that over 50% of the world's population dwell in cities. Many of those people live in "megacities" with a population of over 10 million. In this context, the correlation of violence – whether within communities or between communities – with the problems associated with extreme urbanization, such as unemployment, social exclusion, discrimination and xenophobia, cannot be ignored. Nor can the involvement of the National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC be disregarded.

Another important field to concentrate on is coping with new health and life-endangering challenges posed by the spread of diseases. The spread of HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria and avian flu can no longer be addressed individually by States. A cornerstone of the Movement's mission and of the guidelines for its action is to "protect life and health and ensure respect for the human being, in particular in times of armed conflict and other emergencies" and "to work for the prevention of disease and for the promotion of health and social welfare." Epidemics and pandemics are no longer a national or even a regional concern. Their impact is a transnational one and so must be the response. The Declaration and Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2003 can serve as a general guideline in this respect. Jordan calls for renewed commitment to the recommendations contained therein.

The four challenges to be dealt with by this Conference are not totally novel, but they share one common feature: they are all invariably man-made. The progress achieved by humanity has, at one level,

resulted in increases in threats and suffering for mainly the most vulnerable among us.

Madam Chairwoman, we call for the faithful implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Israeli Magen David Adom, which is both crucial and significant for the credibility of this Conference. Equally, we call not only for an effective mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, but also for one that is result-oriented.

Finally, Madam Chairwoman, new challenges call for new and adequate measures and long-term policies. It is in a spirit of cooperation to alleviate human suffering, in all its forms and at all levels, that the work of this international gathering should be conducted. Civil society and national humanitarian societies continue to play a central role in this endeavour. In this context, I would like to underscore the complementarity between the efforts of Jordanian government institutions and the National Red Crescent Society in dealing with the humanitarian challenges emanating from many disasters, mostly man-made disasters, that have afflicted our region in recent years. I must say that the leadership role played by the President of the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society has been instrumental in making that possible.

**Mr Mohinder Singh Grover,
Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of India, Geneva**

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, the achievements of the Movement in alleviating human suffering in situations of armed conflict, strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles, and mobilizing and coordinating international relief efforts to address situations created by disasters, are remarkable. The international community is appreciative of the Movement's noble mission and its adherence to its Fundamental Principles. While we are supportive of the Movement's efforts to equip itself to respond to potential disasters in an efficient and effective manner, we also realize that, apart from the Movement, there are other organizations and stakeholders engaged in similar efforts. Coordination among various players therefore assumes importance, particularly as all of them intend to reach the same target constituencies of affected populations and also draw on the same resource base of the international

community. Efficiency would be enhanced, in our view, if the respective organizations took advantage of the core competence of related organizations.

Madam Chairwoman, the Declaration seeks to address a number of issues such as migration, climate change and public health challenges, which are far broader and complex in their scope and content. In our view, it is imperative that the Movement focus on, and address itself to, the relevant aspects of these issues to enable it to respond effectively to disasters that are either caused by or arise as a consequence of these phenomena.

Globalization and migration are two sides of the same coin. While disasters do lead to migratory movements, which need humanitarian intervention, all migration does not flow from disasters. The assimilative Indian civilization and heritage has been receptive to and hosted diverse streams of migration over the millennia. It is our view that our efforts should be to turn international migration into a win-win situation for the sending, transit and receiving States, to mitigate irregular migration and its adverse impact, and to promote regular migration. This issue is being addressed at a number of fora – national, regional and international – both within and outside the UN framework. While the efforts of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress is laudable, it is felt that such activities should be in accordance with domestic laws and regulations, and complementary to, not duplicative of, the work of the State and other agencies. The humanitarian intervention of the Movement should address itself to the effects of forced migration as a consequence of disasters.

Madam Chairwoman, I will just conclude shortly. Likewise, climate change is too complex an issue and is the subject of serious and intense deliberations at various international fora. An international conference is just around the corner in Bali. 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 to respond to such eventualities as and when they occur.

Madam Chairwoman, we admire the efforts and the dedication of the staff of the Movement in their noble mission, often in difficult and dangerous situations. India is committed to the lofty ideals and noble objectives of the Movement and to working in concert with the Movement and the international community to address the emerging humanitarian

challenges caused by disasters. We would like to convey once again our best wishes for the success of this Conference.

**Mr Abdullah bin Mohammed Al-Hazaa,
Secretary-General, Organization of Arab Red
Crescent and Red Cross Societies**

(Original Arabic)

The Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization takes pleasure in expressing its gratitude and appreciation for this humanitarian forum at which issues of concern to mankind and entailing baneful consequences for human beings are being discussed. These issues of which we are speaking are migration, the flow of refugees and climate change. We at the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization truly appreciate the support that governmental delegations have expressed for these humanitarian issues, as well as their solidarity with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies at the global level. Notwithstanding the considerable optimism to which this gives rise, we also feel a certain degree of despair, particularly when we observe the recurrent human tragedies in some parts of the world. In the Arab region, we have been confronted with the problem of repeated flows of refugees brought about by the suffering of the Palestinians; and, more recently, similar tragedies have been observed in Iraq, Somalia and the Sudan. Consequently, we wish to emphasize the need for a concerted international humanitarian alliance to put an end to these disasters. Although these disasters are attributable to a variety of causes, through resolute joint humanitarian action we should be able, God willing, to aid their victims. Accordingly, the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization is calling for an intensification of endeavours to ensure that the substance of international humanitarian law is applied, thereby permitting the detection of violations, the assurance of international criminal justice and harmonization of domestic legal systems with the international system of criminal justice. The Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization believes that governments and National Societies should work together in partnership to disseminate and teach international humanitarian law, utilize the capacities of the information media to promote social awareness of this law and support the project for the formulation of domestic legislative frameworks consistent with this increased awareness and with the need to alleviate human suffering. Three fundamental axioms should be taken into consideration, namely the fact that a collapse of national sovereignty creates scope for the commission of violations of international

humanitarian law, that the application of data systems plays a major role in the implementation of international humanitarian law, and that application of the provisions of international humanitarian law also furthers the course of justice. The Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization is working within the framework of the endeavours being made to promote and protect the principles of international humanitarian law and avert the tragic disasters resulting from violations thereof. Thank you.

**Ms Leda Koursoumba,
Law Commissioner,
Office of the Law Commissioner, Cyprus**

(Original English)

I would like, at the outset, to indicate that Cyprus fully subscribes to the EU statement delivered this morning by Portugal on behalf of the EU. The Government of Cyprus much appreciates the focus on some of the major challenges before the international community, including environmental degradation, international migration, violence in urban settings and matters related to public health.

The Government of Cyprus commends the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for having, through the Council of Delegates, proposed an agenda that centres our attention on the humanitarian consequences of these phenomena, thereby allowing us to discuss what can be done for the victims and those most vulnerable, and not get side-tracked by more general political issues.

The four reasons of concern identified in the agenda for this item are all highly relevant to the situation we experience in Cyprus. In consequence of its location, Cyprus shares the same climatic conditions as those obtaining in most of the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, and, as an island, it is especially vulnerable to the vagaries of the weather, including droughts, forest fires and similar natural disasters. In meeting the needs of the persons affected by such disasters, the auxiliary role of the Cyprus Red Cross Society is essential. In this context, Cyprus fully supports the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and its disaster preparedness strategies.

Cyprus, like many other countries, has rising crime rates associated with violence in urban settings, the result mainly of rapid socio-economic change and changes in the patterns of family formation and life. It is a matter that deserves the utmost attention.

Likewise, Cyprus is concerned about the threat of old and new diseases. In relation to HIV/AIDS, government policies, strategies and programmes aim at preserving the low prevalence of HIV infection and the very low prenatal transmission of HIV, as well as the high sex ratio of HIV in the country. Cyprus Red Cross Society activities are focused on disseminating information targeted at groups vulnerable to the consequences of unsafe sexual practices, particularly youth in their formative years. Last year, there were avian flu incidents in the region, causing concern in our country and demonstrating that geographical isolation is no protection against such phenomena. Preventive policies were adopted by the government and the National Society circulated a trilingual (Greek, Turkish, English) informational leaflet prepared on the basis of information supplied by the International Federation and in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of the Republic.

Cyprus has been and remains committed to the implementation of international humanitarian law and will continue to support the work of the ICRC in this sphere. We are pleased to inform the Conference that Cyprus has already deposited its instrument of ratification for Protocol III additional to the Geneva Conventions.

The issue of international migration is one that has been receiving increasing attention in Cyprus as well. The steadily increasing number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers poses a number of policy challenges to the government, challenges that we endeavour to address as an individual country, but also in the framework of the European Union's initiatives. We firmly believe that managing international migration requires close and confident cooperation between all concerned, ranging from countries of origin, via transit countries, to countries of destination.

Our topic today, however, is the humanitarian consequences of international migration. These are matters which resonate strongly with all Cypriots, a very large proportion of whom were obliged to leave their homes and settle elsewhere within our country or abroad. Although the majority of these might technically be classified as internationally displaced persons, the actual experience of being uprooted and having to adapt to a new life in unfamiliar surroundings is not dissimilar to what many international migrants go through.

We commend the International Federation and the ICRC for producing such a comprehensive background paper, which sets out with great clarity

both the nature and the magnitude of the problems faced by many migrants, and also directions for addressing their needs. We welcome the analysis in the background document, and for that reason support the idea expressed in the draft Declaration that we should "take into account the considerable Red Cross and Red Crescent experience that has been already acquired" in humanitarian assistance, protection, advocacy and integration.

Cyprus has already begun that process, in that the Cyprus Red Cross Society recently organized a seminar, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, on the issue of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, in an effort to identify its role, as an auxiliary to the public authorities, in responding to the needs of these vulnerable groups. The government was very pleased that the Cyprus Red Cross Society did not involve only their own volunteers, office bearers and staff, but also invited representatives from a wide range of government authorities and agencies to participate in a process of mutual consultation with a view to developing new approaches, and to take on responsibilities based on a well-defined auxiliary role.

It is as a result of the experience of this seminar that the Government of Cyprus has decided to undertake, in addition to the EU pledges, a national pledge that commits it to support the Cyprus Red Cross Society in its efforts to meet the needs of migrants who find themselves in our country.

**Mr Massoud Khatami, President,
Iranian Red Crescent Society**

(Original English)

I would like to point out some main causes of major global health challenges. Over the past years, the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the components of the Movement, and with good contributions from other national organizations, has developed a national HIV/AIDS programme with a special emphasis on risk reduction, training and behavioural consultation and information for three main groups: the general population, volunteers and the main target groups, which include high-risk persons, patients and their relatives.

Because of the large number of volunteers at our disposal, we have been able to recruit thousands of volunteers trained for at least 40 hours per person. This large group is, in turn, involved in supportive programmes targeting patients and their family.

However, our goal is to stop and reverse the process by 2015. Meanwhile, we should remember that HIV/AIDS is not a simple health problem. Indeed, it is almost always a sign, a sign of other social, economical and cultural problems that affected persons are suffering. Like other major health problems such as recurrent diseases, the most important and effective preventive approach is to eradicate the basic problems of the community.

And finally these are our suggestions: First, planning national and worldwide programmes to fight and eradicate basic problems like poverty and illiteracy; second, improving the cultural and ethical status of target populations and persons by emphasizing religious beliefs; third, paying special attention to unsupported groups like women and children in unsafe or conflict situations; fourth, considering fighting drug abuse and the illegal transportation of drugs as an important cause of IV transmission of diseases like HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. In all the above-mentioned activities, the Iranian Red Crescent has been supported strongly by the Iranian government.

Madam Chair, in response to human woes and by way of fulfilling our duty, we are ready to promote our partnership in regional and worldwide health programmes and share our experience, especially in fields such as training – from the basic to the professional level – and raising public awareness. We hope working together can make a difference in the lives of vulnerable people, and lead to a healthy and peaceful world.

Mr Mohamed Assouali, Head of Projects Division, Moroccan Red Crescent

(Original Arabic)

On behalf of the Moroccan Red Crescent, I would like to contribute to the discussion on the topic of international migration and its humanitarian consequences by drawing attention to three aspects:

First, I wish to refer to the nature of the resolutions adopted at the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Conferences held in 1981, 1986, 1995 and 1999, as well as other resolutions adopted by the components of the International Movement at its international, regional and local meetings, which, in my view, identified both the causes and the consequences of this migration.

Second, I wish to refer to the need to consider the legal and institutional framework of international

migration, including the provisions of local legislation and the extent to which resolutions adopted by the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are mandatory.

Finally, I would like to refer to the tremendous changes in international migration with regard to Morocco.

Quite apart from the fact that the political, economic, social and security-related aspects of migration are common phenomena affecting all States, I would like to acquaint you with the dilemma facing Morocco by virtue of its distinctive geographical location as a convenient passageway between Africa and Europe.

1. The Moroccan Red Crescent finds itself increasingly between the hammer and the anvil: government policies and the State's sovereign right to regulate migration, and the obligation to assist clandestine migrants and maintain the National Society's independence and neutrality vis-à-vis the public authorities.
2. In spite of its modest financial and human resources, the Moroccan Red Crescent has become obliged, as a result of the upsurge in international migration, to adapt its strategy to the requirements of this migration:
 - As a migrant-exporting country
 - As a country of transit for large numbers of young persons from the African continent
 - As a country in which clandestine migrants choose to settle after failing to reach the hoped-for "El Dorado"

Faced with this complex situation, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Moroccan Red Crescent find themselves called upon to play a greater role in meeting the tremendous challenge of catering to the needs of all categories of clandestine migrant, including the provision of humanitarian assistance, protection, aid and support, integration and reintegration.

As members of the international community, we must all consider the most effective ways to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of this deplorable situation:

1. By developing formal mechanisms to regulate migration, which is highly beneficial to the wealthier migrant-receiving countries
2. By promoting and strengthening North-South cooperation mechanisms for sustainable development and local development programmes

3. By acknowledging the gulf between the rights of migrants and positive law, strengthening legal frameworks to meet the implications of international migration, and moving from the stage of diagnosis to the stage of solutions based on principles and objectives
4. By making the public authorities aware of the major role played by National Societies in the provision of humanitarian services

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the Spanish, French and Netherlands Red Cross Societies, the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates, the Regional Office of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Tunis, and the ICRC, with which we have links of cooperation in the following fields:

- Institutional capacity building
- Training and further training
- The training of first-aid workers and volunteers
- The promotion of public and community health awareness
- The international humanitarian law programme

These and other programmes will undoubtedly help to strengthen the ability of the Moroccan Red Crescent to meet the four challenges on our agenda.

Finally, the Moroccan Red Crescent declares its support for the draft resolution presented by the Republic of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on behalf of the Arab Group and the Organization of the Islamic Conference Group concerning the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Israeli Magen David Adom Society, and also endorses the statement of the African Group delivered by the Arab Republic of Egypt.

In conclusion, in order to achieve the objective and safeguard the principle of working *together for humanity*, at future Conferences we must turn our attention from diagnoses to solutions. Peace be with you.

**H.E. Ms Mabel Gómez Oliver,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Mexico, Geneva**

(Original Spanish)

The celebration of the 30th International Conference is of special importance for it takes place at a time

when the humanitarian world has made significant contributions to humanity, such as a comprehensive solution to the emblem issue and a stronger legal regime applicable to the provision of assistance in case of disaster.

The former was made possible by the firm commitment of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and I renew my delegation's endorsement of and support for its components.

Clearly, much remains to be done to meet the challenges posed by acts that are contrary to all the rules of the civilized world. Therefore, Mexico welcomes the opportunity to discuss situations of common concern to the international community that require joint strategic action.

The devastating force of Nature often overwhelms the capacity of individual States; at the same time, its effects are felt by more than just the State that is most directly affected. This situation calls for a type of response based on international cooperation at all levels, as shown recently in southern Mexico. I would like to share with you the initiative put forward by President Felipe Calderón in the frame of the 25th Ibero-American Summit held in Chile. It aims to establish a simple mechanism to deal with emergencies, such as the creation of a disaster solidarity fund.

A country of origin, transit and destination, Mexico is no stranger to the humanitarian consequences of migration. In addition to recognizing our responsibility at the domestic level, we are, together with the Mexican Red Cross, convinced that it is vital to take steps to strengthen the international framework for the protection of migrants, regardless of their status. Mexico is delighted to find migration on the Conference agenda and supports the four areas of action identified in this respect in the draft statement. It is imperative that governments and National Societies, and National Societies among themselves, work together to rise to the challenge of international migration.

HIV/AIDS is irrefutably one of the most serious threats to human dignity. To tackle the problem, the Government of Mexico has implemented a comprehensive, three-pronged strategy: promotion of prevention, universal access to care and combating stigmatization and discrimination.

Mexico is aware that violence denies societies their right to live in peace and tranquillity. In addition to poverty, the unlimited availability of small and light

weapons is another contributing factor. We must redouble our efforts to achieve strict and responsible trade in these weapons.

My delegation wishes to express its deep concern over the continuous targeting of civilians in armed conflict, including through the use of indiscriminate weapons. For my delegation, this is unacceptable. Neither the fight against terrorism nor sectarian friction justifies action that is contrary to the rules of international humanitarian law. This infringement should be investigated and punished according to applicable law, and victims should be entitled to redress. As part of the effort to strengthen international humanitarian law, Mexico attaches the greatest importance to concluding in 2008 a legally binding instrument calling for a total ban on cluster munitions and fully resolving the plight of victims and affected communities.

My delegation unequivocally supports the relevance of international humanitarian law and the outcomes of the International Conferences, which should be fully observed by States and components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement alike.

Madam Chairwoman, my delegation cherishes the hope that this Conference will culminate with renewed momentum to act responsibly, strategically and *together for humanity*.

**Mr Abdul Aziz Yusuf,
Deputy Minister for Health, Maldives**

(Original English)

The Government of the Maldives would like to congratulate the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for using this Conference to focus global attention on the humanitarian implications of climate change.

The Maldives, an archipelago of low-lying coral islands in the middle of the Indian Ocean, is often cited as one of the countries most at risk from the perils of climate change. Indeed, we in the Maldives are very conscious of our own vulnerability and, consequently, have spent much of the past twenty years leading calls for international action.

Madam Chair, too often in the past, climate change has been portrayed as a collection of statistics, a kind of future projection measured in parts per million or degrees centigrade. The world has therefore often failed to grasp the magnitude of the human dimension

of global climate change: the undeniable fact that global warming is already destroying lives around the planet and that its effects are getting more and more pronounced. The Maldives therefore believes that it is high time to move beyond science and to look at the human dimensions of climate change, including health and humanitarian concerns and human rights implications.

Madam Chair, in the Maldives we are already faced with the consequences of the humanitarian reality of climate change. A few months ago, unprecedented tidal surges swept across many of our inhabited islands: a grim reminder, if one were needed, of the devastating impact of the 2004 tsunami. Yet this was but one sudden example of the human cost of climate change in the Maldives. Every day, our fresh water reserves are being threatened, coastal zones and beaches are eroded, our corals and fish stocks and the communities that rely on them are being undermined, and our health is being put at risk. Our national development strategy is heavily focused on disaster prevention considerations. We are constantly reminded of the threat of sea levels rising as a result of global warming, and are therefore left with a very sinking feeling.

Madam Chair, in addition to climate change, I would also like to briefly focus on two other issues, namely migration and emergent and re-emergent diseases, which this assembly has recognized as important. As the Maldives depends to a significant degree on expatriate labour, and has a large amount of internal migration in the tourism sector, the topic of migration is very relevant to us. We are determined to focus more on the humanitarian issues related to these trends. Emerging and re-emerging diseases: as in most of our neighbouring countries, HIV, dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases plus the acute menace of substance abuse, are a constant threat. Both the government and the future National Society can work closely to face these humanitarian challenges and mitigate them.

Madam Chair, the Maldives is in the process of forming the Maldives Red Crescent Society and the government is fully committed to its successful establishment. We are very grateful for the assistance extended to us by the ICRC and the International Federation. They have guided the government and the working group in the formation of the National Society. We hope that early next year there will be a functioning Maldives Red Crescent Society in the country. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the ICRC, the International Federation, national associations and other members of the

international community for the help and support received following the devastating 2004 tsunami.

H.E. Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Holy See, Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, beyond the tragedies and shortcomings of man-made conflicts, and the tensions and natural disasters, that deface the dignity of every person, a realistic and long-range solution to enhance humanitarian protection rests on the realization that the human family is really one. Solidarity within the human family finds concrete expression in collaborative action and in openness to dialogue and partnerships, a perspective summed up well in the theme of our Conference, "Together for humanity." Among today's global concerns, this 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has signed out for discussion particularly threatening developments: pandemics, international migration, urban violence and environmental degradation. The Mission of the Holy See recognizes in these challenges a reminder that coexistence among social and political communities, and the construction of a peaceful world order, are possible only on the basis of upholding the fundamental value of every person's dignity.

The four areas that call for our immediate attention have serious humanitarian consequences, for contemporary society as well as for future generations. The will to work together to find adequate solutions for all cannot be shirked since upon it depends the material and ethical survival of humanity. Partial solutions that neglect a group of countries, or one part of a national community, are myopic, besides being unjust and unacceptable. A sound globalization will include the humanitarian imperative and thus avoid the uneven reality of the creation of regions of prosperity and peace and regions of poverty and conflict. When this happens, it is a political as well as an ethical failure.

Madam Chairwoman, it is only on the basis of such values that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – all its components – can muster the forces necessary to establish effective and lasting partnerships, respectful of differences and appreciative of the talents of each. In this context, the Holy See and the numerous Catholic aid agencies and organizations are ready to work together with other countries and parties in order to offer the international community the wide experience acquired alongside the most vulnerable in every corner of the world. It is also vital

to realize that the solution to complex problems and emergencies concerning all of humanity are not only of a technical nature and cannot be reduced to mere assistance. In this instance, however, victims, both direct and indirect, deserve particular attention and care. In fact, it is the most vulnerable who suffer the worst from natural disasters, conflicts and violence, from the consequences of underdevelopment, poverty and pandemics. These persons, their families and communities, have rights and we need to do everything to respect them. Moreover, they deserve our human closeness, our psychological, moral and spiritual support, not as condescending pity, but as an expression of our solidarity. We constitute together one human family. Aid should be given as self-help in order that local people may strengthen their own capacities and in this way fully exercise their freedom and responsibility.

My delegation takes good note of the resolutions before us, and hopes especially that the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom may soon be fully implemented. It supports any effort directed at family reunion, re-establishment of lost contacts, and the gathering of information about missing family members due to conflicts and disasters. It favours the adoption of a legally binding instrument for the prohibition and elimination of cluster munitions. It sees with satisfaction the return of the ICRC to the issue of protection for people caught up in population movements, who are, in different degrees, vulnerable to discrimination, marginalization and family separation. Humanitarian and human rights instruments have been developed, but political will and the very complexity of the phenomenon of human mobility stand in the way of adequate implementation, especially when intergovernmental conferences and events keep prioritizing only the economic and productive dimensions of migration, leaving in the shadows the fact that migrants are persons, with inalienable dignity and rights, even when they are kept in detention centres.

The different religions alongside other institutions can and must play a positive role. For its part, the Holy See has promoted initiatives of inter-faith dialogue, which it considers a fundamental component in the construction of peace and the realization of the common good. It has, as it pledged to do in 2003, organized an inter-faith scholarly event to promote the defence of human dignity and respect for humanitarian law during armed conflict. It looks forward to further initiatives to promote the ethical foundations of humanitarian law and the defence of

human dignity also during armed conflict involving non-State actors.

In conclusion, the exemplary approach of the Red Cross and Red Crescent rests on the ability to break down barriers and to build bridges across conflicting partners, aware of the common humanity that binds us together and demands we move forward to the future together. The international community has the responsibility to prevent conflicts, to provide protection, and to build peace in a world in which a decent life is possible for present and future generations.

**Mr Mannon Rakhimov, President,
Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan**

(Original Russian)

We have already become accustomed to the issue of climate change and its consequences for the environment being discussed at every forum – which is how it should be. Only in this way will we be able to draw people's attention to the problem.

At the same time, however, we need to move from making statements – merely reiterating the facts of climate change and its consequences – to taking concrete action.

The Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan has been dealing with the question of climate change for around a year now. As an auxiliary of the State we can contribute to resolving the problem by establishing how climate change affects the most vulnerable sectors of the population, and what assistance is needed to alleviate the difficulties caused.

This is particularly relevant in today's world where climate change is often the underlying cause of emergencies, and where it exacerbates the problems associated with the increase in infectious, endocrinal and oncological diseases mainly affecting women, children and the elderly.

We are aware that without the support of the State the National Society's work on climate change would be ineffective.

We would, therefore, like to urge States to include National Societies in programmes related to climate change, which, by definition, can never be a local problem in an individual country. When drawing up programmes the interests of neighbouring countries must also be taken into account.

In our view, the role of the International Federation should be to provide assistance in the form of methods, information and coordination. In addition, the International Federation could involve other international organizations, including international financial institutions, in joint activities related to this issue.

The time has come to create a vision, an approach to the problem of climate change that involves the entire international community. This vision will help to focus the strengths, resources and potential of all those involved in work on climate change.

Only together will we be able to achieve our goal: to protect those most vulnerable in society, in the name of humanity and compassion.

**Mr Syamsuddin Sinaga, Director-General of
Administration and Law, Ministry of Law and
Human Rights, Indonesia**

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, as a country that was severely affected by the 2004 tsunami, Indonesia very much welcomes the discussion of environmental degradation and its contributing causes. Our country is prone to environmental disasters. Over the years, there has been an increased incidence of natural disasters related to climate change, such as floods, erosion and drought. Therefore, we believe that environmental degradation contributes significantly to the increase in natural disasters that is felt by countries throughout the world, especially Indonesia. It is for this reason that my government intends to put forward a number of goals to be achieved at the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference from 3 to 14 December 2007 in Bali, Indonesia. In light of this, allow me to seize this opportunity to invite governments and international and environmental organizations to take part and to come up with proposals that will preserve the environment from further natural and climatic catastrophes.

Madam Chairwoman, international migration has become a growing phenomenon, both in scope and in complexity, affecting countries throughout the world, including Indonesia. Since the economic crisis in 1998, the number of Indonesian migrant workers has risen steeply; transplanted Indonesian workers are in more than 90 destination countries now, in the Asia Pacific region, the Middle East, North America and Europe. The issue of international migration and development requires the strong participation and commitment of all countries and

relevant agencies. In this regard, Indonesia supports the continuation of the dialogue on international migration and development to increase promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families.

Madam Chairwoman, my government also puts a strong emphasis on emergent and recurrent diseases and on all the public health challenges, such as access to health care. Indonesia contributes to fighting and combating diseases before they reach pandemic levels. The battle we have to wage against the pandemic threat is indeed challenging and life-threatening. Therefore, the containment of any epidemic virus will require action at all levels: using all the resources available, sharing information and enabling access to all technologies, including the importation of vaccines.

Before I conclude, Madam Chairwoman, may I commend the International Federation for proposing the Draft Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance. Based on our experience of the 2004 tsunami and the devastating earthquakes in 2006 and 2007, the Government of Indonesia has developed a national action plan for disaster reduction for the period from 2006 to 2009. Disaster mitigation and management has also become one of the nine priorities of the Indonesian national development plan. Therefore, Indonesia endorses the Draft Guidelines. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mr Robert Ssebunya, Vice-Chairman, Central Governing Board, Uganda Red Cross Society

(Original English)

The Uganda Red Cross Society and the Government of Uganda acknowledge the devastating effects of climate change worldwide, and, especially, our recent experience in the north and north-eastern parts of Uganda, with floods affecting over 300,000 people. I am happy to tell this august assembly that, together with the Government of Uganda, UN agencies, National Societies and other humanitarian agencies, the livelihood of these people has been brought out of danger, although the scars left by the disaster will take time to heal. The Government of Uganda and the Uganda Red Cross Society are now working out plans to resettle these people; substantial sums of money will be required to meet these challenges.

The Uganda Red Cross Society is committed to the community-based reduction activities. It has already signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the

Centre for Climate Change in the Netherlands and will work with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement worldwide in promoting any initiatives on climate change.

In this connection, Madam Chairwoman, the ICRC, National Societies, the International Federation, and governments are challenged to start thinking seriously about building capacity in their National Societies and governments to start making budget provisions to support their National Societies in building capacity and also in developing a network of volunteers.

Madam Chairwoman, the lessons learned from the floods we had in Uganda will, together with the Government of Uganda, facilitate the finalization of a national disaster management policy in Uganda. At the moment, we do not have a national disaster management policy. We hope the experience that we have gone through will help us put this in place. We do hope that a bill will be presented to the parliament for discussion and approval, possibly during the year 2008.

Madam Chairwoman, in conclusion, I just want to say a little about violence. Many speakers have talked about this, but I would like to mention that the National Society, and indeed the Government of Uganda, would like to challenge in terms of what measures can be taken by our government to reduce violence. I would like to list the following questions. I want the National Societies and the heads of government to think about them. Are we doing enough to involve young people and women in decision-making across the board? Are parents doing their best to mould our young people to be good citizens? Have we looked at the serious problems that young people are burdened with as a result of family breakdowns? Are we instilling values and virtues in our children that will make them respect humanity? Are our governments providing enough social security and educational benefits to our young people? Have National Societies, the ICRC, the International Federation and governments taken initiatives to provide for enough youth activities in their programmes?

H.E. Mr J. Delmer Urbizo, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Honduras, Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chairwoman, the Government of Honduras is attending this forum to reaffirm its commitment

to ensuring respect for international humanitarian law, which, by means of the executive agreement of 20 April 2008, set up the Honduran International Humanitarian Law Commission. Through this commission, the State commits itself to carry out and follow up on the engagements that it has taken in the conventions to which it is party.

The State of Honduras has made significant progress with regard to adhesion and ratification and participation in international humanitarian law treaties. Nevertheless, it is clear that a major effort must be made to promote a process whereby international humanitarian law can be incorporated into domestic legislation; this option will be explored by examining its compatibility with the said legislation.

Among the various topics to be discussed at the Conference, I wish to refer in particular to the conviction and political will shown by the Honduran government to focus on the fight against poverty, insecurity, climate change and social exclusion, among other pending problems that remain a priority for the State and its inhabitants.

The State of Honduras is fully aware that it can effectively meet our citizens' demand through social programmes. The eradication of poverty is a fundamental objective of my government, which meets the challenge of job creation by sustainable action, producing quality education in a healthy environment and promoting decent work.

Climate change is also on the agenda of this august meeting. Climate change has, in recent years, had an enormous impact on a number of countries, the hardest hit being developing countries, particularly the poorest; climate change adversely affects the masses and is responsible for the degradation and destruction of ecological and environmental resources.

The current trend is for destination countries to take different measures to tackle migration flows to their countries. Although they have the right to take precautionary measures to prevent undesired migration, we feel that they are focusing only on the effects and not on the real causes behind the departure of a country's nationals from one country to other, more developed countries. Migration has become a crucial issue in today's world. Countries that in the past took advantage of the work force and cultural heritage of migrants are now turning their backs on this socio-economic phenomenon. It is crucial that developed countries, the United Nations system, international organizations and similar bodies

craft a comprehensive strategy to tackle head-on the causes of the aforementioned migration flows. These causes are the lack of opportunities, education and employment, which cannot be provided by States and their economic agents for lack of sustainable social and economic development.

Last week, I had the high honour of attending the eighth meeting of the States party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, where it was made clear that anti-personnel mines have undoubtedly become faceless assassins and instruments of terror in local and foreign wars; however, they kill and maim innocent people – many of them children – who are, by a sinister blow, doomed to chronic suffering that prevents them from leading a normal life.

The use of landmines is a never-ending global tragedy, despite the huge efforts of States and the international community. Widespread mine clearance should be coupled with an ongoing worldwide campaign to eliminate the causes of present and past internal strife and wars between States. Only by achieving world peace can we be sure that we will be rid of the lethal landmines. We are all convinced that anti-personnel mines are a constant threat to peace and security, and a clear obstacle to the social and economic development of large swaths of affected countries.

Madam Chairwoman, at my side is the president of the Honduran Red Cross, a person I deeply admire and respect for her steadfast commitment to the most needy in my country. The Honduran Red Cross works tirelessly to ensure that vulnerable groups can start anew and lead a life of dignity. Through her efforts, she has opened up new horizons of hope for the most destitute in our society and helped put human beings at the heart of all development.

Therefore, Madam Chairwoman, I strongly urge National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to continue to support the president of the Honduran Red Cross in all her endeavours, since the outcomes and assessments have been positive and tangible.

Honduras is the current chair of the Geneva Chapter of the Group of 77 and China, and is promoting, with the organization, the development of a common strategy and a joint agenda to deal comprehensively with the fundamental problems afflicting developing countries today: migration, humanitarian issues, human rights, decent work, health and all that relates to the right to development of our peoples. With this core message, we stress our renewed commitment to

ensuring that “Together for humanity” will become a worldwide commitment, a universal banner promoting the final achievement of the noble aims set by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

**Mr Christian Sedar Ndinga, President,
Congolese Red Cross**

(Original French)

The Congolese Red Cross endorses the statement made by the Egyptian delegation on behalf of the African Group and wishes to stress the importance of climate change and its humanitarian impact. The state of the world, as we see it each day, shows us that we live in a world that is increasingly at risk; we must rise to myriad challenges each day.

We live in a country subject to periodic flooding and recurring erosion, exacerbated constantly by the attendant burden of pathologies and fragility. Giving credit where credit is due, our National Society appreciates the valuable support of its partners, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, participating National Societies and the Congolese government, in our attempts to eliminate these scourges. We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to them. We also thank our National Society volunteers for their deep commitment to reducing the vulnerability of the people during these disasters.

Today, the magic of globalization has shrunk our planet to a global village. Disaster management thus implies greater responsibility on an international scale, increased solidarity and sharing with the vulnerable populations, which we actively support.

There is a clear connection between disasters and human dignity, which is a constant concern of the Congolese Red Cross. The lack of respect for human dignity appears in shapes and forms that we need not recall here. However, we urge our community to focus more closely on these issues and to provide responses that are ever more concerted and more streamlined, striving for greater human fulfilment.

The Congolese Red Cross has adopted this approach to its work. In conclusion, we draw the attention of this distinguished assembly to the need to have an African member on the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, in order to achieve balance.

**H.E. Mr Clodoaldo Hugueney, Permanent
Representative, Permanent Mission of Brazil,
Geneva**

(Original English)

Brazil believes that this meeting offers a privileged venue for dialogue and cooperation, and the discussion of the international agenda for humanitarian action. The role played by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is unique in its relevance and its universality. Against the backdrop of growing humanitarian needs, increased complexity of armed conflicts and new challenges caused by natural disasters, the Movement acts as a global catalyst of initiatives. Therefore, we need to strengthen and amplify cooperation between the ICRC, National Societies and national governments.

Madam Chairwoman, as a party to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the promotion of respect for international humanitarian law and its implementation continue to be the main goals of Brazil's activities in this field. This commitment is particularly reflected in the establishment in 2003 of the National Commission for the Diffusion and Implementation of International Humanitarian Law. The commission is composed of representatives of the government, the parliament, the ICRC and the Brazilian Red Cross. Besides the diffusion of international humanitarian law, this commission has taken as its priorities the implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the adoption of a related piece of legislation and the conclusion of the parliamentary procedures for its integration into Brazilian law.

Madam Chairwoman, we have been constantly reminded that our planet has been increasingly affected by environmental imbalances. In that regard, the 29th Conference was a landmark: it stressed the concern over the threats posed by environmental deterioration to sustainable global development. Brazil favours an approach to this issue that takes into account its manifold aspects, such as the relationship between climate, energy and humanitarian crisis.

In our view, this problem should be dealt with at international fora with universal representation. My government supports efforts aimed at reducing its security and humanitarian impact. This calls for resolve and political will. We urge governments to live up to the commitments made within the international regime on climate change.

Madam Chairwoman, the humanitarian implications of international migration and the displacement of people also deserve our careful attention. Since 1991, Brazil, along with its Mercosul partners, has been trying to devise policies to collectively tackle this issue. Among other initiatives, it is worth mentioning the 2004 Santiago Declaration, the Agreement on Residence for Mercosul Member States' Nationals and the South American Conferences on Migration, as well as other legal instruments related to the strengthening of cooperation and to combating the illegal traffic of migrants.

With regard to the question of disaster response, I should like to refer to the resolute efforts made by the Brazilian government to be able to respond to appeals for help from areas with urgent needs. We have been supportive of humanitarian operations in many countries, both in our region and elsewhere. So as to foster local economies and invigorate small agricultural entrepreneurs, Brazil favours the purchase of food in a disaster-stricken country.

Madam Chairwoman, distinguished delegates, *together with humanity*, Brazil wishes to keep on working for improved cooperation among all the partners of the ICRC, not only in the promotion of international humanitarian law, but also in the fields of peace and conflict prevention, climate change, emergency response to disasters and sustainable development.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Since we have no more speakers and are now at a stage where we can close this debate, allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to thank you, especially those of you who have stayed with the process until the last minute. I really appreciate the time you have made available and the resilience with which you have hung on to this process. Thank you very much. I also thank the delegations for sharing their valuable input, their experiences in a true partnership, and their work with the wide spectrum of humanitarian issues and concerns that we have dealt with today and in the days that have passed. Please remember that this is not the end of the discussions; it is just a change of format. When you go into the Commissions, you probably will also get a chance to say more of the things that I may have suppressed you from saying here because of the three-minute time limit. There, where you'll get a better chance with a smaller group of people, you can really be listened to and probably also be responded to. So I wish you all a good evening and may you have productive discussions until we meet in plenary again on Thursday.

4.7 COMMISSIONS

Wednesday 28 November 2007

4.7.1 COMMISSION A: THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF THE 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

Chairwoman:

Ms Jane McGowan, President of the Canadian Red Cross

Vice-Chairman:

Dr Makarim Wibisono, Ambassador of Indonesia

Panellists:

Mr Ibrahim Osman, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Federation

Ms Adriana Mendoza, Chargé d'Affaires of the Colombian Permanent Mission in Geneva

Dr Fernando Jose Gardenas Guerrero, Vice-President of the Colombian Red Cross

Ms Marja Letho and **Ms Ulla-Maija Finskas**, Ministry of External Affairs, Finland

Ms Kristina Kumpala, Secretary-General of the Finnish Red Cross

Rapporteur:

Dr Muctarr A.S Jalloh, President of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society

For further information, please refer to the report on the work of Commission A presented by the rapporteur of this Commission (section 4.8.4).

4.7.2 COMMISSION B: REAFFIRMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: PRESERVING HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY IN ARMED CONFLICT

Chairman:

Mr Nicholas Thorne, Ambassador of the United Kingdom

Vice-Chairwoman:

Ms Mabel Gómez Olivier, Ambassador of Mexico

Panellist:

Prof. Daniel Thurer, International Committee of the Red Cross

Rapporteur:

Mr Jeffrey Chan Wah Teck, Vice-Chairman of the Singapore Red Cross Society

For further information, please refer to the report on the work of Commission B presented by the rapporteur of this Commission (section 4.8.5).

4.7.3 COMMISSION C: STRENGTHENING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO DISASTERS

Chairman:

Dr Raymond Forde, President of the Barbados Red Cross Society

Panellists:

Dr Salvano Briceño, Director of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Mr Richard Gordon, Chairman of the Philippine National Red Cross

Dr Charles Agbo, Director of Planning, Research and Forecasting at the Nigerian Emergency Management Agency

Rapporteur:

Mr Ahmet Üzümcü, Ambassador of Turkey

For further information, please refer to the report on the work of Commission C presented by the rapporteur of this Commission (section 4.8.6).

4.8

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Thursday 29 November 2007
(2 p.m.)

Ms Anne-Marie Huber-Hotz,
Vice-Chair of the Conference

(Original French)

4.8.1 ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference

(Original English)

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. After a day in the Commissions, we can now start our plenary meeting, to which I warmly welcome all of you. If you look at the programme on your tables, you will note that there are slight modifications. The Bureau has decided as follows: immediately after the launch of the elections, we will go directly to agenda item number 10. The item will be dealt with in the following manner.

First, follow-up to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding of 28 November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel. In this regard, you will also find on your tables a draft resolution. If I can just make a correction: in the Arabic version of the resolution, the reference to the Memorandum says “2008” right on top of the green paper; it should say “2005.” I know we all would love to have until 2008 to reach the end of this agreement, but we have to take it the day it happened.

After this, we then carry on with the follow-up to the 28th International Conference before returning to the report on the general debate and on the work of the Commissions. These times are approximate. We hope that we will be able to fit everything into the little time available to us. Let us now start the election process. I would like to invite Madame Anne-Marie Huber-Hotz, who will explain to all of us how the election process will work, after which we will then proceed to do the roll call as required of us by Rule 21/3 of the Rules of Procedure.

It is a great privilege for me and for the Swiss Red Cross to chair the election of the Standing Commission and I would like to thank you for the trust you have placed in me by electing me as a Vice-Chair of the Conference. We can move on to the election of the Standing Commission.

You have received the documentation relating to the election of the Standing Commission, so we can proceed with the election. In accordance with Article 20, paragraph 6 of the Rules of Procedure, the election of the Standing Commission will start with the appointment of three tellers, who will be responsible for counting the votes. We shall then take a roll call so that we can calculate the number of votes required to obtain an absolute majority during the first ballot. Those candidates who obtain an absolute majority in the first ballot will be declared elected to the Standing Commission. If that is not sufficient to fill all the seats in the Commission, a second ballot will be held. That will be this evening if possible. Otherwise, the second ballot will take place tomorrow at 9 a.m. Following the second ballot, those candidates will be declared elected who have obtained the largest number of votes.

Following the roll call, we shall conduct the first ballot. The delegations have been divided into six groups and will be called to cast their votes in alphabetical order, as determined by their names in French. Each group will be called up to vote by a slide that will appear on the screens in the main meeting room. When your delegation is called, the head of delegation or the nominated delegate will go to Room 20, third floor, where he will cast a secret vote. Volunteers will be posted at the doors on your right. They will guide you to Room 20. We would ask that those casting votes wear their badges visibly. If the head of a delegation has nominated someone else from within his delegation to cast the delegation's vote, that person must show both his badge and a proxy form, duly completed and signed. You will find proxy forms in the election booklet that was left in

your pigeon-holes on Tuesday evening. This booklet also contains instructions for the election and the names and CVs of the candidates.

As you know, we have to elect five members to the Standing Commission. That means you can only choose a maximum of five names. You may also only vote once for a given candidate. Any voting slips on which more than five names have been chosen will be declared void.

I would remind you of the importance of a fair geographical distribution in your choice of candidates and I would draw your attention to the guiding principles on elections to the Standing Commission. We can now start the voting procedure. I shall start by reading the names of the nine candidates for the Standing Commission, by region and in alphabetical order. First of all the candidates for Africa: Mr Adama Diarra, H. E. Mr William Aurélian Edeki Moubouma; from the Americas: Mr Steven Carr, Mr Eamon Harrison Courtenay; from Asia: Mr Tissa Manilal Abeywickrama, Dr Mohammed Al-Hadid and Lady Jocelyn Margaret Keith; from Europe: Dr Massimo Barra and Dr Freddy Karup Pedersen. The Chairwoman has appointed three tellers from among the Conference delegates to count the votes. I would therefore ask Mr Carlos Garbanzo from the delegation of the Government of Costa Rica, Dr Wan-Sang Han from the delegation of the Republic of Korea Red Cross Society and Mr Omar Tasli from the delegation of the Turkish Red Crescent Society to act as tellers. They will be assisted by Ms Elyse Mosquini from the International Federation and Mr Laurent Gisel from the ICRC. We shall now call the roll. We will start with the National Societies, followed by the States party to the Geneva Conventions, then the ICRC and the International Federation. I shall hand over to Mr Frank Mohrhauer for the first part of the roll call and to Bruce Biber for the second part.

**Mr Frank Mohrhauer,
International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Madam Vice-Chair. I will start now with the roll call for National Societies, who are behind the red name plates, in alphabetical order in French. May I ask you to raise your name plates high, especially those who are in the upper ranks, so that we can really register your presence? I will start now with the roll call.

(Original French)

Afghanistan (here), South Africa (here), Albania (here), Algeria (here), Germany (here), Andorra (here), Angola (here), Antigua and Barbuda (here), Saudi Arabia (here), Argentina (here), Armenia (here), Australia (here), Austria (here), Azerbaijan (here), Bahamas (here), Bahrain (here), Bangladesh (not here), Barbados (here), Belarus (here), Belgium (here), Belize (here), Benin (here), Bolivia (here), Bosnia and Herzegovina (here), Botswana (here), Brazil (here), Brunei (not here), Bulgaria (here), Burkina Faso (here), Burundi (here), Cambodia (here), Cameroon (here), Canada (here), Cape Verde (here), Central African Republic (here), Chile (here), China (here), Colombia (here), Comoros (here), Republic of the Congo (here), Democratic Republic of the Congo (here), Cook Islands (here), Republic of Korea (here), People's Democratic Republic of Korea (here), Costa Rica (here), Côte d'Ivoire (here), Croatia (here), Cuba (here), Denmark (here), Djibouti (here), Dominican Republic (here), Dominica (not here), Egypt (here), El Salvador (here), United Arab Emirates (here), Ecuador (here), Spain (here), Estonia (here), United States of American (here), Ethiopia (here) Fiji (here), Finland (here), France (here), Gabon (here), Gambia (here), Georgia (here), Ghana (here), Greece (here), Grenada (here), Guatemala (here), Guinea (here), Guinea-Bissau (here), Equatorial Guinea (not here), Guyana (here), Haiti (here), Honduras (here), Hungary (here), India (here), Indonesia (here), Iraq (here), Islamic Republic of Iran (here), Ireland (not here), Iceland (here), Israel (here), Italy (here), Jamaica (here), Japan (here), Jordan (here), Kazakhstan (here), Kenya (here), Eritrea (here), Kiribati (not here), Kuwait (here), Lao People's Democratic Republic (here), Lesotho (here), Latvia (here), Lebanon (here), Liberia (here), Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (here), Liechtenstein (here), Lithuania (here), Luxembourg (here), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (here), Madagascar (here) Malaysia (here), Malawi (here), Mali (here), Malta (here), Morocco (here), Mauritius (here), Mauritania (not here), Mexico (here), the Federated States of Micronesia (not here), Moldova (here), Monaco (here), Mongolia (here), Montenegro (here), Mozambique (here), Myanmar (here), Namibia (here), Nepal (here), Nicaragua (here), Niger (here), Nigeria (here), Norway (here), New Zealand (here), Uganda (here), Uzbekistan (here), Pakistan (here), Palau (not here), Palestine (here), Panama (here), Papua New Guinea (here), Paraguay (here), the Netherlands (here), Peru (here), Philippines (here), Poland (here), Portugal (here), Qatar (here), Romania (not here), United Kingdom of Ireland and Great Britain (here), Russian Federation (here), Rwanda (here), Saint Kitts and Nevis (here), San Marino (here), Saint Vincent and

the Grenadines (here), Saint Lucia (here), Solomon Islands (here), Samoa (here), Sao Tomé and Príncipe (here), Senegal (here), Serbia (here), Seychelles (here), Sierra Leone (here), Singapore (here), Slovakia (here), Slovenia (here), Somalia (here), Sudan (here), Sri Lanka (here), Sweden (here), Switzerland (here), Suriname (here), Swaziland (here), Syrian Arab Republic (here), Tajikistan (here), United Republic of Tanzania (here), Chad (here), Czech Republic (here), Thailand (here), Timor-Leste (here), Togo (here), Tonga (here), Trinidad and Tobago (here), Tunisia (here), Turkmenistan (here), Turkey (here), Ukraine (here), Uruguay (here), Vanuatu (here), Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (here), Viet Nam (here), Yemen (here), Zambia (here), Zimbabwe (not here). That concludes the roll call for the National Societies.

**Mr Bruce Biber,
International Committee of the Red Cross**

(Original French)

Thank you. I will proceed in the same manner and will thus ask the governments to please raise their name plates as I read down the list.

Afghanistan (here), South Africa (here), Albania (here), Algeria (here), Germany (here), Andorra (here), Angola (here), Antigua and Barbuda (here), Saudi Arabia (here), Argentina (here), Armenia (here), Australia (here), Austria (here), Azerbaijan (here), Bahamas (not here), Bahrain (here), Bangladesh (here), Barbados (here), Belarus (here), Belgium (here), Belize (here), Benin (here), Bhutan (here), Bolivia (here), Bosnia and Herzegovina (here), Botswana (here), Brazil (here), Brunei (here), Bulgaria (here), Burkina Faso (here), Burundi (here), Cambodia (here), Cameroon (here), Canada (here), Cape Verde (not here), Central African Republic (here), Chile (here), China (here), Cyprus (here), Colombia (here), Comoros (not here), Republic of the Congo (here), Democratic Republic of the Congo (here), Cook Islands (not here), Republic of Korea (here), Democratic People's Republic of Korea (here), Costa Rica (here), Côte d'Ivoire (here), Croatia (here), Cuba (here), Denmark (here), Djibouti (here), Dominican Republic (here), Dominica (here), Egypt (here), El Salvador (here), United Arab Emirates (here), Ecuador (here), Eritrea (here), Spain (here), Estonia (here), United States of America (here), Ethiopia (here), Fiji (not here), Finland (here), France (here), Gabon (not here), Gambia (not here), Georgia (here), Ghana (here), Greece (here), Grenada (here), Guatemala (here), Guinea (here), Guinea-Bissau (not here), Equatorial Guinea (not here), Guyana (here),

Haiti (here), Honduras (here), Hungary (here), India (here), Indonesia (here), Iraq (here), Islamic Republic of Iran (here), Ireland (here), Iceland (here), Israel (here), Italy (here), Jamaica (here), Japan (here), Jordan (here), Kazakhstan (here), Kenya (here), Kyrgyzstan (not here), Kiribati (not here), Kuwait (here), Lao People's Republic (not here), Lesotho (here), Latvia (here), Lebanon (here), Liberia (here), Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (here), Liechtenstein (here), Lithuania (not here), Luxembourg (here), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (here), Madagascar (here), Malaysia (here), Malawi (here), Maldives (not here), Mali (here), Malta (here), Morocco (here), Marshall Islands (not here), Mauritius (here), Mauritania (not here), Mexico (here), the Federated States of Micronesia (not here), Moldova (here), Monaco (here), Mongolia (here), Montenegro (here), Mozambique (here), Myanmar (not here), Namibia (not here), Nauru (not here), Nepal (here), Nicaragua (here), Niger (not here), Nigeria (not here), Norway (here), New Zealand (here), Oman (here), Uganda (not here), Uzbekistan (here), Pakistan (here), Palau (not here), Panama (here), Papua New Guinea (here), Paraguay (here), the Netherlands (here), Peru (here), Philippines (here), Poland (here), Portugal (here), Qatar (here), Romania (here), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (here), Russian Federation (here), Rwanda (not here), Saint Kitts and Nevis (here), San Marino (here), Holy See (here), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (here), Saint Lucia (here), Solomon Islands (not here), Samoa (not here), Sao Tomé and Príncipe (not here), Senegal (here), Serbia (here), Seychelles (not here), Sierra Leone (not here), Singapore (here), Slovakia (here), Slovenia (here), Somalia (here), Sudan (here), Sri Lanka (here), Sweden (here), Switzerland (here), Suriname (here), Swaziland (not here), Syrian Arab Republic (here), Tajikistan (not here), United Republic of Tanzania (here), Chad (here), Czech Republic (here), Thailand (here), Timor-Leste (here), Togo (here), Tonga (not here), Trinidad and Tobago (here), Tunisia (here), Turkmenistan (not here), Turkey (here), Tuvalu (not here), Ukraine (here), Uruguay (here), Vanuatu (not here), Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (here), Viet Nam (here), Yemen (here), Zambia (here), Zimbabwe (here). That concludes the roll call for governments.

I will now proceed to the roll call for the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. International Committee of the Red Cross (here), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (here). That brings the roll call for the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to an end.

**Ms Anne-Marie Huber-Hotz,
Vice-Chair of the Conference**

(Original French)

I now suggest that we close the meeting. I think we have noted everyone in the room. I will give you the results of the roll call of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and of the States party to the Geneva Conventions. The result is as follows: 172 National Societies are present, 152 States as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, or 324 delegations in total. The absolute majority will be 163 votes. We will keep you informed as soon as the results of the first round become available at the end of the afternoon. We can now move to the vote. Would all the delegations whose names in French begin with 'A' and 'B' go to room 20, on the first floor? The first letters of the delegations invited to vote will be displayed gradually on the screen. We shall now resume consideration of the agenda. I have the honour to give the floor to the Chairwoman of the Conference.

4.8.2 FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS CONFERENCES

29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and follow-up to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding of 28 November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

To bring your attention again to a typographical error in the French version of the resolution. Point number 4, about authorities: in proper French, the letter 'A' should be capitalized. So, would you please take note of that in your French version of the resolution? Now, ladies and gentlemen, you will remember that a draft resolution was proposed by Pakistan. We are now dealing with item 10. The draft resolution proposed by Pakistan and Iraq in the name of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab League, respectively, was circulated

on Tuesday morning. Following this, the Bureau requested the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Van Eenennaam, to carry out consultations. But before we hear his report, I would first like to request Mr Pär Stenbäck, who is the Monitor of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom, to give us a short account of his observations. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr Stenbäck is the former Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He is also a former foreign minister of Finland.

Mr Pär Stenbäck, Monitor of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel

(Original English)

Last Friday I delivered a written and oral report to the Council of Delegates. The report has been available to you all this week. In my oral report I summarized my findings since taking up the task of independent Monitor in June and after my six missions in the region. Here I will only make a summary of the summary by offering you the conclusions.

First, the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society, two years and two days ago, is not yet fully implemented, but a start has been made. There is little reason to blame the two National Societies for this. On the contrary, I am giving them credit for their spirit of cooperation. The heavy burden of lobbying its government to achieve sustainable results has been with the Magen David Adom, which has been doing this courageously in an environment dominated by security priorities and political considerations. The leadership of the National Society should be commended for its efforts, even when they have not led to final implementation. Likewise, the Palestine Red Crescent Society has shown patience and goodwill, understanding double limitations caused by the absence of progress in the political sphere. Nevertheless, an agreement is an agreement and should be fully implemented.

This agreement was signed with the endorsement of the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority. Where do we stand today, two years later? Since the Diplomatic Conference in 2005, the ambulances to be stationed in East Jerusalem have become the

focal point of implementation. Therefore, strong efforts have been made to get these five Palestine Red Crescent ambulances running. However, during my last trip, I could not witness the running of these ambulances, in spite of the fact that both the Israeli prime minister and the foreign minister had assured the chairman of the American Red Cross in August that that it would happen. Somehow the Israeli administration failed to reach this fairly simple goal due to red tape and probably also to lack of coordination between different authorities. But a last-minute, almost dramatic effort has been under way this week here in Geneva to secure the implementation of this part of the Memorandum of Understanding. Only today, we have received news from Jerusalem that these five ambulances have entered into service. I take the opportunity to thank all those who have contributed, including the Israeli government authorities, for their absolute last-minute show of goodwill. The future smooth running of the ambulances will be monitored and reported in due time. And I invite other speakers, later on today, to inform the plenary about the outcome of this effort.

Full implementation demands progress on several other issues, which you will find described in my written report. You will see that some initial progress has been made related to checkpoints and access for ambulances at them. I could not report any new construction of fast lanes for ambulances, but apparently a new general order has been issued to facilitate the passage of ambulances. An estimate is yet to be made of the real effect of this at the hundreds of checkpoints in the occupied Palestinian territories. The two National Societies are committed to honouring the jurisdiction of the geographical scope of activities of each, and initial progress has been made in this matter. Future monitoring must pay attention to this sensitive issue, and keep you well informed about any political or administrative obstacles that might affect the freedom of independent National Societies to make decisions about the scope of their own activities.

There are numerous other ingredients in the Memorandum of Understanding, but due to time constraints I once again ask you to refer to my written report. All in all, there is good reason for this body and for the components of the Movement to carefully follow and monitor the implementation of these agreements, which aim to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable people regardless of the prevailing political constraints. By adding the strong voice of governments, the monitoring process can be meaningful and contribute to the creation of a humanitarian dimension separate from the unresolved conflict in the region. I thank you.

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Chairwoman of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Mr Stenbäck, for this updated information relating to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom. Now I would like to call upon Ambassador Van Eenennaam, the Vice-Chair of the Conference, to give us a briefing.

H.E. Mr Boudewijn J. Van Eenennaam, Vice-Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

I am happy to be able to report to you, Madam, that informal consultations over the past few days have resulted in a consensual draft resolution, the text of which is, I think, on everybody's table. Now, once the result is known, is on the table, I guess usually nobody is really interested any more in a description of the process of consultations that led to the outcome. But if you will allow me, Madam, I would nevertheless like to make one or two quick personal remarks about this week's consultation process because I think there was something special, something that I think will interest the audience, things different from the past which give hope for the future.

First, it turned out that in spite of the many well-known serious and substantial differences, all the participants, from the beginning, shared a common determination: the strong and sincere intention to work on the basis of consensus rather than through voting, and to take a humanitarian rather than a politicized approach. I was honestly impressed to see how this spirit provided the participants in the consultations with what I would call the courage to bridge the distance between fixed positions and common solutions.

Second, it was fascinating to see that these were not the usual – I'm sorry to say – often rather dull consultations in the abstract. You know, it's easy to imagine, we all can see it: the meeting rooms with the usual suspects, diplomats and officials, trying to outmanoeuvre each other in a battle of words. Do we use upper case or lower case and where do we put the commas? Well, Madam, of course the commas were there and we were in Geneva, but ... the focus of the meetings ... our minds were clearly focused on the situation in the region, on the facts on the ground. We were staying away from the usual hollow generalities.

I think everyone learned from our eminent Monitor, Mr Pär Stenbäck, and I think everybody came to respect and appreciate and give credit to the daily work of the two National Societies.

So, in short, Madam Chair, I feel confident in presenting this draft resolution to you because it enjoys broad support, it contains substance and concrete language, it explicitly addresses the role of the main actors, i.e. the Movement, the two National Societies, the authorities and the Monitor. It contains specific commitments, also on reporting, and includes concrete dates. It provides a basis – a tool, I hope – for the further full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and it reflects the key notion of this Conference, the spirit of working together for humanity. And may this spirit continue to prevail!

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

I would like, as the Chair of this Conference and on behalf of the Bureau, to express our appreciation for the efforts that the two National Societies have undertaken. I will make sure that this acknowledgement is reflected as such in the proceedings of this Conference, as a special moment of celebration and joy for the Movement and the people that we serve.

As explained, we have in front of us a draft resolution, which is the result of consensus reached after wide consultations. I propose that we all join together in adopting it by consensus.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. The vulnerable communities of these affected areas thank you through the applause that you have just given. Now, I have several delegations on my list of speakers.

**Mr Younis Al-Khatib, President,
Palestine Red Crescent Society**

(Original English)

I would like to start with this morning: at 11.30 a.m., we did get all the guarantees needed for the ambulances of the Palestine Red Crescent to get operational in East Jerusalem, with the presence and the assurances of the American Red Cross and the American government. One and a half hours later, the ambulances were operational. It is now up to the

Monitor to verify, in the coming days, the facts on the ground. I thank all those who played a role to make this a reality. Better late than never.

Two years have passed since we signed this Memorandum of Understanding and here we are, in the Palestine Red Crescent, attending this International Conference for the first time as a full member of this great Movement. I would have liked us to be celebrating, after two years, the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding. I promise you, when full implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding takes place, we will be signing a new Memorandum of Understanding. There is a lot for us, the two National Societies, to do; there is a lot of suffering that we need to alleviate. So, after passing your resolution, just now, with your help, with your support, we will embark on a process to speed the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Here I would like to call upon the Government of Israel. I have no doubt they are keen to reach peace. But, believe me, if that is your intention, you should embrace and support the joint initiative of the Palestine Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom in this Memorandum of Understanding. And support it to reach full implementation of this genuine example – and believe me, I think it is a genuine, credible example – of peace-building in our region. Allow us to fully implement this initiative so that we can go and address other humanitarian needs and issues in my country. And there are a lot. The least of our humanitarian staff has been deprived of permits to reach Gaza, hard-stricken Gaza, for a number of weeks. We say, “Please give us a chance to do what we are good at doing as National Societies and as a Movement that is alleviating human suffering!” Thanks to all those of you who have supported us through the last two hard years. And there are a lot amongst you here, to whom I would say, “Thank you, thank you and thank you! And all the way forward for a strong, united, human-sensitive International Movement!”

**Mr Noam Yifrach, Chairman, MDA Executive
Committee, Magen David Adom**

(Original English)

I want to touch on three points: first of all, the cooperation between the Palestinians and us; the second point is Syria and Lebanon; and the third point is Africa. There is very good cooperation between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and us. We are

at the checkpoints 24 hours a day, also during the night, and we assist the Palestinian Red Crescent and the Palestinian people every day. We have a joint communication system: when they need us, they call us immediately; and when we need them, we call them immediately. I want to underline that the Palestinian Red Crescent saves a lot of Israeli lives after car accidents and other difficult medical situations. I want to give our appreciation to Younis Al-Khatib, the President of the Palestine Red Crescent, who leads his National Society under very difficult circumstances and in a very difficult situation. Two years ago, nobody thought that the Palestinians would ask Magen David Adom to lobby their needs. Two years ago, nobody thought that the Palestinians would ask us to lobby their needs and that the Israeli government would implement them. The Israeli government implemented free access to Jerusalem, facilitated the passage of patients between Israel and Jordan at the Allenby Bridge, and implemented the operation of the five ambulances in East Jerusalem. Nobody thought two years ago that the first Palestinian legal entity to operate in Jerusalem would be the Palestine Red Crescent, with the consent of people all over the world, including the Israeli government.

The second issue is this: we hope to build a relationship with the Lebanese Red Cross Society and the Syrian Red Crescent Society. We believe that we can arrive at something more than we have today.

About the Africa issue: it is said in the Movement that there is no discrimination; today we can show the African Group that somebody from their Group will be elected.

**H.E. Mr Juan Martabit,
Vice-Chairman of the Conference**

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chairwoman, along with the Latin American delegations, we are delighted that a consensus has been reached on the approval of the resolution on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel. I wish to extend special greetings to the members of those National Societies, who are full members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to whose Statutes they are bound.

These men and women, Palestinians and Israelis, deserve our thanks for their shining example, as they

work for the humanitarian cause and help each other. At the same time, we urge them to pursue their efforts, which in the end benefit all humanity. Does not our Conference theme, "Together for humanity," symbolize precisely what Palestinian and Israeli volunteers are doing every day in the field, Madam Chairwoman? The work accomplished by the independent Monitor, Mr Dieter Pär Stenbäck, and the comprehensive report that he submitted to this International Conference, are very valuable and open and I request that our appreciation be reflected in the records.

In the agreement that we have reached, Madam Chairwoman, it is only fair to recognize the memorable efforts of the Palestinian Ambassador, Mr Mohammad Abu-Koash – and of other ambassadors from the Islamic, Arab and African groups – to promote the consensus. I would also like to express my gratitude to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador John Bellinger, whose diplomatic skills and good faith in negotiating I can appreciate yet again.

I cannot conclude without making special mention of the Ambassador of the Netherlands, my colleague Boudewijn Van Eenennaam. His optimism, clear thinking and candour facilitated the important agreement we reached today. We hope, Madam Chairwoman, that this agreement will represent one more step towards building a more constructive peace in this strife-ridden area of the world.

**H.E. Mr Mohammad Abu-Koash, Permanent
Observer, Permanent Observer Mission of
Palestine, Geneva**

(Original English)

At the outset, we would like to thank Mr Stenbäck for his introductory remarks and his efforts to implement the Memorandum of Understanding. We would like also to thank His Excellency the Vice-Chair for his valuable role. Excellencies, this is the time to heal wounds and end this plight. The fair-blowing breeze from Annapolis inspires us to reach out to others. There is no room for invoking articles or rules of procedure. Instead we seek to invoke your noble qualities and address your conscience. We come from a land endowed with the blessings of the prophets, and religions that advocate equity, justice, peace and harmony, the same principles in which international humanitarian law is anchored. The Palestinian people, trapped in a vicious circle of inequality and injustice, under foreign occupation, hold tight to the belief that humanity at large will translate its support for

these divine and earthly principles into a collective engagement that sets in motion their emancipation.

We are grateful to the delegations that called upon the beneficiary of the Memorandum of Understanding, and of Protocol III additional to the Geneva Conventions, to fulfil its obligations under international humanitarian law – including abiding by the provisions of Resolution XI of 1921 – and to honour its other promises stated in that agreement.

We would like to congratulate the gifted teams, led by the heads of delegations of – and I'll say it in alphabetical order – Algeria, Netherlands and the USA, in which Palestine had the honour of participating, for achieving a consensual text on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. It is meant to bring us together on a bridge of reconciliation. Its fate should not be that of the albatross of good omen for the Ancient Mariner. We call upon the Israeli side to render it a sailing ship through full implementation, lest it become "As idle as a painted ship/Upon a painted ocean." We are glad of the last-minute news concerning the Palestinian ambulances and we thank Israel and the National Society for their efforts in that direction. We also owe it to you that all these good initial steps have been taken. Many thanks for your valuable support and for adopting the resolution by consensus.

**Mr Abdullah bin Mohammed Al-Hazaa,
Secretary-General, Organization of Arab Red
Crescent and Red Cross Societies**

(Original Arabic)

The Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation for the report presented by Mr. Stenbäck on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom, which is largely consistent with the reports issued by the Palestinian Red Crescent. Mr. Stenbäck's report is truly equitable and we are saddened by the failure to implement the Memorandum of Understanding, which has entailed suffering for the Palestinian people.

The reports of Mr. Stenbäck and the Palestinian Red Crescent reflect only part of the human suffering. In addition, other health reports indicate that the reserve stock of about 100 types of basic medicine has fallen to zero in the medical stores and facilities in the occupied Palestinian territories. The blockade imposed on the Palestinians is one of the causes of their increased human suffering. There are

many sick persons who have been unable to obtain treatment at home and who have not been permitted to travel outside the territories for treatment. The international information media have provided us with examples of such cases during the last two weeks. It is evident, therefore, that this matter might be beyond the capabilities and competence of the two National Societies that signed the Memorandum. Consequently, the Israeli authorities should take immediate and durable measures to alleviate the plight of the Palestinian people. I hope that the Conference will take vigorous and ongoing humanitarian action to this end and also consider the humanitarian situation in the Golan and the Shebaa Farms in the light of the Fundamental Principles and Statutes of the International Movement, as well as of the Geneva Conventions and the Resolution of the 1921 Conference, with a view to providing the following:

1. Clear specification of the implementation and monitoring mechanism
2. Clear specification of the periodic reports to be submitted
3. Inclusion of these reports on the agenda of the 31st International Conference and their consideration at all future statutory meetings

We wish to emphasize the importance of applying the provisions of international humanitarian law in an equitable manner, supporting the project for the formulation of domestic legislative frameworks consistent with the provisions of international law, and supporting the project for the establishment of national committees on the application of international humanitarian law conventions and instruments.

One final point: We wish to draw attention once again to the plight of refugees and migrants and to media reports concerning the human suffering and exploitation of children who have been victims of an attempt to remove them from their national and family environment. We reaffirm the need for the international community to oppose such inhuman practices. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

**Mr Steve Carr, Member, Board of Governors,
American Red Cross**

(Original English)

First I would like to thank Pär Stenbäck who has served effectively and fairly and demonstrated his considerable diplomatic skills in serving as

the Movement Monitor for the Memorandum of Understanding between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

At the 29th International Conference, the American Red Cross committed to ensure the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. We have been impressed by the cooperation undertaken today by both the Magen David Adom and the Palestinian Red Crescent, and we fully believe, as the Monitor has noted, that both National Societies have done everything possible to achieve implementation.

The American Red Cross welcomes the adoption of this resolution. Both the Palestinian Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom deserve our praise and support for their past, present and future cooperation and dialogue. Younis Al-Khatib deserves our respect, praise and support for his leadership and humanitarian principles. He has kept the needs of those we serve first and foremost in his thoughts during sensitive and difficult discussions. Younis has faithfully represented his National Society and its adherence to our Fundamental Principles. Noam Yifrach of the Magen David Adom deserves our respect, praise and support for his leadership of his National Society. We recognize, with great appreciation, his contribution and that of the Magen David Adom in promoting close cooperation with the Palestinian Red Crescent in consistently and effectively advocating for full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

With our support, these two National Societies and their leadership will be able to continue this important collaboration and cooperation. Should any obstacles to this cooperation emerge, you have our highest assurance that the American Red Cross will use its good offices and influence to affect the situation positively.

**H.E. Mr Masood Khan,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Pakistan, Geneva**

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. In diplomacy it is prudent to avoid hyperbole. Yet what we have achieved today might well be called a historic moment.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom are poised to begin a new phase of

enhanced cooperation, with the full backing of the entire humanitarian community. We commend both National Societies for the steps they have taken for the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between them, and for the infrastructure they have established.

Mr Stenbäck's report has been heard and reviewed by the Council of Delegates and the International Conference with concern. President Micheline Calmy-Rey of Switzerland, in her inaugural address to this Conference, rightly pointed out that some progress had been made, but much more needed to be done. The implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding will contribute to the alleviation of the suffering of the people in the occupied Palestinian territory.

We applaud the Conference's decisions to request the ICRC and the International Federation to appoint an independent monitor and give this mechanism full institutional backing, to call on the independent monitor to report on the progress towards full implementation and on the steps taken to support and strengthen the monitoring mechanism – the first report is due on 31 May 2008 – and to present the progress reports on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding at the 31st International Conference.

Madam Chairwoman, the success of these decisions hinges on the leadership of, and cooperation between, the Governments of Israel and Palestine. We sincerely hope that the Government of Israel will help create the enabling environment. The Palestinian government is ready to do so.

The Palestine Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom are keen to enhance their cooperation. They need the unqualified support of the public authorities. For smooth operations, the geographical scope of the operational activities and the competences of the National Societies – in accordance with the Statutes and the Rules of the Movement, including Resolution XI of the 1921 International Conference – should be invoked and respected.

The decisions taken by the International Conference have created a new space for the two National Societies: a new space for recognition, legitimacy and respectability, and a new space for cooperation to mitigate human suffering. It is a noble cause.

Here in Geneva we have been struggling for the past three years to explore a common denominator, to develop a shared lexicon, and to reach consensus on

an issue that had divided the Movement. With the adoption of this resolution, we can move towards restoring the Movement's unity.

Madam Chairwoman, thank you so much for steering the negotiations on the Memorandum of Understanding issue with skill, serenity and sagacity. Dr Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission, and the Council of Delegates paved the way for our decision by transmitting a consensual text. Dr Kellenberger brought that outcome to the Conference after investing his time and energy in this enterprise. We commend Ambassador Boudewijn Van Eenennaam of the Netherlands for building on this consensus by assembling a critical mass of negotiators. His transparent and forthright style helped the process. The sincere and passionate efforts of Ambassador Juan Martabit of Chile made a difference.

Ambassador Idriss Jazaïry ably led the negotiating team of the Arab-OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) Group envoys from Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan. We thank Ambassador Francisco Xavier Esteves for bringing the European Union on board. We want to extend our profound gratitude to Ambassador Warren Tichenor for his support for the consensus building process and his authoritative assurances about the US government's commitment to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Finally, our sincerest compliments are reserved for Mr John Bellinger, the United States Assistant Secretary of State, and Ambassador Mohammad Abu-Koash of Palestine. Mr Bellinger worked diligently, walked the extra mile, and made this delicate breakthrough possible. If you are listening to me, keep coming to Geneva. Brother Abu-Koash, with a combination of tenacity of purpose and flexibility, helped us all to craft this consensual document. We appreciate Israel's resolve to support consensus.

Madam Chairwoman, while celebrating the outcome, we must remind ourselves that things that have to be done ought to be done. Ambulances should start running. Ambulances should keep running. A strong commitment to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding is a good beginning. It must culminate in the full realization of the goals of the Memorandum of Understanding. On a personal note, I would like to say that the OIC stands redeemed. In the past three years, we always worked for consensus. This time we actually achieved it. Thank you, everybody.

**H.E. Mr Francisco Xavier Esteves,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Portugal, Geneva**

(Original English)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The European Union is extremely pleased today that it was possible to reach agreement on a resolution supporting the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements signed by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel.

In keeping with the humanitarian focus of this Conference, our guiding concern in this matter has been to support all efforts that can contribute in an effective manner to alleviating the suffering of the concerned populations. We are confident that this resolution and the steps agreed therein, including a stronger monitoring and reporting mechanism, will be a positive contribution to the achievement of this goal.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of National Societies, the International Federation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, governments and concerned authorities alike, consensus has been reached. This is the only working method worthy of the high-minded goals of our Movement.

Let me therefore express the hope that this Conference will be seen as a turning point, in keeping with the spirit of compromise that must prevail in the process of negotiations for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East re-launched by the recent Annapolis Conference.

On behalf of the European Union, I wish to offer a word of thanks to the Monitor, Mr Pär Stenbäck, to the Council of Delegates, to the Vice-Chair, Ambassador Boudewijn Van Eenennaam, to the two National Societies and to all those who worked so hard to achieve this important result

Ghana Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Madam Chair, as someone who has personally visited both East and West Jerusalem, I am witness to the difficult conditions under which the two National Societies work, and I want to express our appreciation for their efforts to persuade their governments to put

political interests aside to work towards a common humanity.

I want to remind you that the Magen David Adom, working with the Israeli government, has initiated implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. We hope that that will be sustained and their desire to continuously engage neighbouring National Societies will be implemented. I appreciate the efforts of the Palestine Red Crescent Society in working hard towards the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, and commend both National Societies for agreeing on the common text that we have all agreed upon and passed. We trust that this will lead to the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. The Ghana Red Cross Society wishes the people of Israel and Palestine the best.

H.E. Mr Itzhak Levanon, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Israel, Geneva

(Original English)

We take particular satisfaction in participating in this Conference, the first International Conference ever in which the Israeli Magen David Adom Society has taken its proper place as a full member of the Movement.

As a kind of response to the call made by the Chairman of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, I think – this is the time and the place – I would like to reiterate our support for the humanitarian arrangements reached between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent, and our commitment to continue to facilitate the implementation of these arrangements. In practice, some of these arrangements have proven more complex than either side anticipated, but I am pleased to note that our efforts have brought about practical results, such as special ambulance arrangements at the Allenby Bridge, priority arrangements for ambulances at crossing points, joint training programmes for medical personnel, the stationing of two special ambulances at the Red Crescent Maternity Hospital in Jerusalem, and arrangements for six designated ambulances to transfer patients to Jerusalem hospitals.

In recent weeks, the most challenging topic has been the issue of the five additional ambulances to be operated by the Palestine Red Crescent in Jerusalem. I am pleased to be able to announce that arrangements to resolve this issue have now been reached, and

that as of today these ambulances have effectively begun their operation. I am also pleased to announce that Israel has joined those States that have ratified Protocol III additional to the Geneva Conventions. I would like to reiterate that we are committed to full implementation of Additional Protocol III and are working with the relevant Israeli authorities to ensure full compliance with its provisions.

Madam Chairwoman, it is most appropriate to call attention to the significant symbolism of today's date. Sixty years ago today, on 29 November 1947, the nascent United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution recommending a plan for the establishment of a Jewish State and an Arab State. Sixty years later, we are still waiting for that vision of the two States to become a reality. However, as was demonstrated by the historic meeting concluded on Tuesday in Annapolis, the desire for peace in our region is still strong. We hope that the spirit of cooperation we have witnessed between National Societies at this Conference will serve as a model and as a catalyst for progress towards peace in our region and across the world.

Permanent Mission of Egypt, Geneva

(Original English)

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the African Group. The African Group welcomes the report of Mr Stenbäck, the independent Monitor appointed by the ICRC and the International Federation to monitor the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements signed by the Palestine Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom.

The report is factual and objective. It clearly indicates that much remains to be done for the Memorandum of Understanding to be implemented. It also emphasizes the suffering of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, a matter which is of great concern for the Group.

The African Group calls for the full and faithful implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, in a manner consistent with the Statutes, rules and Principles of the Movement, including the consent provision of Resolution XI of the 10th International Conference of 1921. We also urge the authorities of the Israeli government to take all necessary measures for the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, as called for by Mr Stenbäck in his report and by numerous

participants from various parts of the world at the present Conference. The African Group welcomes the news just received concerning the operation of the Palestine Red Crescent ambulances in East Jerusalem.

We believe that the faithful implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding is the responsibility of every member of the Conference. Of utmost importance is ensuring a thorough follow-up to guarantee the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, through the continued submission of reports on this matter by the ICRC and the International Federation to future sessions of the Council of Delegates and the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Strengthened and periodic monitoring are vital elements for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. We look forward to verifying the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding at the next International Conference. This can only help ensure the credibility of the humanitarian Movement and uphold its Fundamental Principles.

The African Group welcomes the positive spirit that has prevailed during the negotiations on the resolution issued by this Conference on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. It takes this opportunity to thank all the participants in those negotiations.

Finally, the African Group commends both the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom for their commitment to the humanitarian principles of the Movement and their mutual cooperation.

H.E. Mr Blaise Godet, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Switzerland, Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Chairwoman, the Swiss delegation welcomes the adoption by consensus of the resolution on the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements, of 28 November 2005, between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom. We owe this successful outcome to the negotiating skills of the permanent representative of the Netherlands, to whom we extend our heartfelt congratulations. We also wish to pay tribute to the unfailing commitment of Mr Pär Stenbäck, independent monitor.

Through this resolution, the 30th International Conference gives its full support to the measures provided for in these texts and calls for reinforced monitoring. We are convinced that this will contribute to the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom. We hope that the report submitted to the 31st International Conference can be summarized in a single sentence, reflecting the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

On this occasion, Switzerland would like once more to applaud the good cooperation between the two National Societies, the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Our special thanks go to the presidents of the two National Societies, Mr Noam Yifrach and Mr Younis Al-Khatib, for their personal commitment and efforts.

Permanent Mission of Iraq, Geneva

(Original Arabic)

The overriding concern of the Arab Group, on whose behalf I have the honour to address you at this forum, is to ensure the application of international humanitarian law and the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The earnest and sincere intentions expressed during the meetings of this Conference clearly indicate the desire of the participating delegations to ensure respect for the Movement's principles. To achieve the lofty objectives of international humanitarian law to which we are aspiring, we must all endeavour to implement these principles in a diligent and earnest manner. Accordingly, the Memorandum of Understanding agreed upon between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society, and signed at Geneva on 28 November 2005, should be implemented to the letter and with good faith since an agreement in writing is merely ink on paper and can give rise to many problems if it is not implemented in an unequivocal and manifest manner on the basis of a bona fide intention to achieve the lofty objective for which this Movement was established. Other promises given to the Syrian side concerning humanitarian requirements in the occupied Syrian Golan also need to be fulfilled, as do the promises given to Lebanon. In this connection, we wish to commend the endeavours of all the parties that contributed to the successful achievement of a consensus on a draft resolution basically designed to ensure fulfilment of the promises made in accordance

with the Fundamental Principles and spirit of the Movement.

We are eagerly looking forward to the day when the efforts made to put an end to the various types of conflict throughout the world, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, will be crowned with success.

Finally, we wish to thank the depositary State of the Geneva Conventions for its valuable and clear statement at this Conference. We are also grateful to the observer monitoring implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding for the endeavours that he has made. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. Peace be with you.

Mr John Hannaford, Director-General and Deputy Legal Adviser, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada

(Original English)

The purpose of this Conference has been to promote partnerships and shared humanitarian values and the effective functioning of the Movement and States Parties. In this regard, Canada welcomes the resolution that has been tabled today as a constructive moment in the realization of our goals, including access to affected populations. We also congratulate the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society on the high level of cooperation between them, which has been recognized by the Monitor, whose report we welcome. This cooperation will be a valuable foundation for their ongoing hard work together.

Mr John Bellinger, Legal Adviser, Department of State, United States of America

(Original English)

The United States very much welcomes the achievement of this resolution by consensus. We appreciate the cooperation it represents in this hall, and recognize that none of this would be possible without the example of cooperation shown by the Palestine Red Crescent and by the Magen David Adom, and in particular their chairmen, Younis Al-Khatib and Noam Yifrach. These two men and their organizations embody the principles of the Movement in a way that we can all admire and aspire to.

As I emphasized in my opening statement, the United States will continue to pay close attention to the implementation of the Memorandum of

Understanding between the two National Societies. We are committed to results on the ground, not just the words on the page.

Madam Chair, two days ago in Annapolis, the Palestinian and Israeli people made an historic commitment to launch a process to achieve a peace agreement by the end of 2008. On the heels of this achievement, we are buoyed by the cooperative spirit shown this week by the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel, and believe it augurs well for a successful peace process. I will personally carry the good news from here back to Secretary Rice and others in Washington.

In closing, Madam Chair, I would like to recognize Ambassador Van Eenennaam for his facilitating consensus on this resolution, and to personally thank the Arab Group, so ably represented by the distinguished ambassadors from Algeria and Palestine, for their integrity and flexibility. We would also like to thank Ambassador Khan for his skilful management of the Drafting Committee and for his own effective diplomacy, and Minister Pär Stenbäck for his hard work as Monitor and the positive role he played during this Conference. And finally, we thank you, Madam Chair, for your support and leadership this week. We hope that the spirit of this Conference and the spirit of Annapolis will continue on in future Conferences and in other fora for years to come.

Mr Jakob Kellenberger, President, International Committee of the Red Cross

(Original English)

In my capacity as Chairman of the Council of Delegates, I note with gratitude that the resolution adopted by the Conference endorses the resolution of the Council of Delegates. In the name of the ICRC, I do assure you that together with the International Federation, we shall invest all the energy needed in order to fulfil the mandate contained in the resolution. The ICRC is pleased with the resolution adopted by the Conference and thanks warmly all those who have contributed to the successful outcome, in particular Ambassador Van Eenennaam. I thank Mr Stenbäck for his commitment as Monitor.

My last word goes to the chairman of the Magen David Adom in Israel and the president of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. The resolution encourages you to enhance your cooperation, but I think it is only fair to add that you have already, under difficult circumstances, shown an impressive

personal commitment. I want you to know that the ICRC pays tribute to your courage, is grateful for what you have already achieved and looks forward to continuing its close cooperation with both of you. We want full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding as early as possible and will continue to work for it with all of you with determination. And you know how determined the ICRC can be.

**Mr Juan Manuel Suárez del Toro Rivero,
President, International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

(Original Spanish)

The resolution relating to the work to be done to fully implement the agreement between the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society is most clearly a historic instrument. It is also historic in that it is the first resolution adopted by the International Conference since the two National Societies joined our Federation, after the 29th International Conference.

The resolution contains important messages for Conference participants. For its part, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies welcomes the consensus, which will surely contribute to the application of the agreement, given the full support this consensus lends to the resolution adopted by the Council of Delegates, implying also the increased, already broad, support of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for the two National Societies in their continuous efforts. On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, I invite all National Societies to continue supporting the sister Societies in their cooperation and in their development of the agreement.

I am very proud of the work that both National Societies have accomplished up to now. We in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies offer them our whole-hearted congratulations for that and for their will to build sound cooperation in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. We will continue to support this work and that of the independent monitor. The report submitted today by Mr Stenbäck is clear evidence of the importance of the monitoring mechanism, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies – as set out in the resolution – will provide the institutional backing. We will work

closely with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the two National Societies. We will do our best to keep the Council of Delegates informed of our progress at their upcoming session in 2009 and to ensure that an account of the work accomplished is provided at the 31st International Conference.

This resolution is of paramount importance for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. I am very pleased by the active participation of so many National Societies and governments that have contributed to these results, as well as everyone who has been directly involved in achieving the consensus. Madam Chairwoman, it is wonderful for me to see how truly united our Conference is in its humanitarian endeavours and therefore, Madam Chairwoman, I would like to reiterate to you and all the participants my deep acknowledgement and appreciation.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Chairwoman of
the Conference**

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, I think we owe it to ourselves to give yet another round of applause for what, collectively, we all have contributed to achieving: the resolution. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. And I thank all the speakers for their statements and I thank all of you for the positive thoughts and prayers that you have been sending ever since this matter came to our attention.

And now we will proceed back to number 10, to deal with the follow-up to the 28th International Conference. I would now like to call on Jean Abt from the ICRC and Stephen Ingles from the International Federation to take the floor.

**28th International Conference of the Red
Cross and Red Crescent: Implementation
of the Declaration and Agenda for
Humanitarian Action and of the pledges**

**Mr Jean Abt, Member of the Committee,
International Committee of the Red Cross**

(Original French)

On behalf of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, we are honoured

to submit to you a follow-up report on the application of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action from 2003 to 2007. The 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent adopted by consensus the Declaration of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action, which aims to protect human dignity in all circumstances. The participants in the 28th International Conference were asked to report on the implementation of these decisions. Thus, this report is based on 115 follow-up questionnaires sent to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies this summer. Admittedly, this represents only one-fifth of the States party to the Geneva Conventions and one-third of National Societies. Therefore, this follow-up report only reflects general trends and cannot do justice to all of your work. We therefore can only encourage you, in the years to come, to report on your activities so that we can discuss any progress achieved and together decide what measures will be necessary.

The database, *Follow-up to the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent*, is available on the website of the International Committee of the Red Cross and contains all the information provided by members on the implementation of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action and the Declaration, and on the individual and joint commitments made by the participants. We invite you to review this information.

Let us turn now to the main actions that were carried out to translate the Agenda and the Declaration into reality. First of all, given the measures taken in line with goal 1 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action concerning respect for missing persons and their dignity, we observe that the problems of persons gone missing, and of the impact on families and communities, are universally recognized. States, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and governmental, regional and international organizations have helped prevent the disappearance of persons, determine their fate and alleviate their families' suffering. These initiatives have brought about tangible, effective measures. In this context, the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance adopted by the United Nations in December 2006 is a major step forward. Lastly, in order to strengthen capacities for restoring family links, for tracing missing persons and re-establishing contact among separated family members, the Council of Delegates adopted in its Resolution 4, the Restoring Family Links Strategy (and Implementation Plan) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008-2018).

Today, Madam Chairwoman, ladies and gentlemen, we ask States to support the implementation of this strategy and to reaffirm their commitment to supporting the tracing activities of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The efforts made to relieve the suffering of families and their missing do not suffice. A clear political will is key and all parties concerned need to pursue their efforts in a spirit of cooperation.

Some progress has been made in protecting civilians from the indiscriminate use and effects of weapons and in protecting combatants from unnecessary suffering, as set out in General Objective 2 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action. With regard to reducing the effects of landmines and explosive remnants of war, 156 States are now party to the Ottawa Convention and 35 States have adhered to the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War adopted in 2003 by the States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are pursuing the implementation of the strategy on landmines, which also covers explosive remnants of war, particularly in the areas of victim assistance, risk reduction and other prevention activities. We also note that international momentum for averting the consequences of cluster munitions is growing. In a resolution adopted last week by the Council of Delegates, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement expressed its deep concern over the grave consequences of cluster munitions for civilians. It urged the adoption of a new international humanitarian law treaty prohibiting cluster munitions. The United Nations programme of action on light weapons is ongoing. Discussions are pending for 2008 on a treaty on the international trade in weapons, which will cover all conventional weapons. Nevertheless, much remains to be done to ensure that these normative steps help reduce unregulated arms availability and their effects on civilians.

Lastly, in the frame of the implementation of the Declaration, the universal nature of international humanitarian law was reinforced by an increase in the number of signatures and ratifications of international treaties. The International Committee of the Red Cross and a host of National Societies have continued to support the modification of implementation measures and the adoption of new measures for criminal proceedings and punishment for war crimes and for the protection of distinctive emblems, cultural goods and children. Throughout the world, 84 national commissions for the implementation of international humanitarian law continue to do

important work by advising their governments and providing assistance in enforcing and promoting international humanitarian law at the national level. The members of the International Conference have also taken steps to incorporate international humanitarian law into the doctrine, education and training of armed forces and security forces and to make the public more aware of international humanitarian law. Thank you for your attention. I will now yield the floor to my colleague from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr Stephen Ingles.

**Mr Stephen Ingles, Director, Support Services,
International Federation of Red Cross and Red
Crescent Societies**

(Original English)

I will now briefly summarize the feedback on Objectives 3 and 4 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action and conclude our joint follow-up report. Objective 3 is to minimize the impact of disasters through the implementation of disaster-risk reduction measures and to improve preparedness and response mechanisms. Organizational legal steps have been taken to implement this objective, with actions reported at different levels – local, national and international. National Societies are particularly involved in awareness raising and disaster preparedness activities on a community level, with many conducting vulnerability and capacity assessments, so-called VCAs. States have particularly emphasized the importance of inter-governmental cooperation and focus on integrating rules and regulations in country. It is encouraging to see the feedback reflecting the close cooperation, in both preparedness and response, between States and National Societies acting in an independent and auxiliary role. A great deal of importance is given to the laws, rules and principles governing international disaster response, and the commitment of the Movement in this area is strong. As requested by the 28th International Conference, the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) programme has developed tools and guidelines for practical use in international disaster response activities, in particular, the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance. These Guidelines are aimed at strengthening legal preparedness for international disaster assistance and they are an important tool for enhancing the effectiveness of neutral and impartial assistance to victims of disasters. I finish my brief summary of the feedback on Objective 3 by underlying its importance

to the International Federation. This is clearly reflected by the 2005 General Assembly adoption of the global agenda, with Goal 1 being to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

I turn now to Objective 4, to reduce vulnerability to diseases arising from stigmatization and discrimination and from lack of access to comprehensive prevention, care and treatment. The importance of this objective is also reflected in the global agenda: Goal 2 aims to reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies; and Goal 4 aims to promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion. The follow-up report makes it clear that National Societies and States have made serious efforts to meet their commitments in this area. There has been a particularly strong focus on HIV/AIDS, stimulated by the enormous scale of the problem. While there is clearly much work still to be done, the enormity of the problem and the rapid spread of the infection have resulted in real action in many countries. A common framework for National Societies has been established through the Global Alliance on HIV, with more than 60 National Societies currently involved and more joining. Many National Societies and States have included campaigns in their strategic planning, and have worked as partners to influence public thinking and attitudes. It has also been gratifying to see National Societies and States offering financial and human assistance to less well-off National Societies and States for work in this area. I shall complete this part of the follow-up report with this observation made by one National Society: “We are now strong on HIV/AIDS, but weak in other areas of community health.” The report asks, “How does the Movement, in conjunction with all its partners, learn the lessons of the HIV pandemic and apply them to other health issues?”

I finish by turning to part 3 of the report: our overall conclusions and challenges. In conclusion, the Agenda for Humanitarian Action remains a relevant and comprehensive framework for action to address (1) the suffering caused by family separation and the persisting tragedy of persons missing in armed conflicts or other situations of violence; (2) the human cost of the uncontrolled availability, use and misuse of weapons in armed conflicts; (3) the risk and impact of disasters and the improvement of preparedness and response mechanisms and (4) the risk and impact of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases with regard to vulnerable people. These challenges remain. We would therefore like to encourage you to continue your efforts to implement decisions taken in 2003 and to adopt Resolution 1 of this Conference, which

relates back to this agenda. Finally, we also invite you to undertake individual and collective pledges related to the Agenda for Humanitarian Action for the period 2008-2011.

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Chairwoman of the Conference

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, that was information related to the follow-up to the 28th Conference. I would just like to remind members that the voting room on the third floor will close at 4.30 p.m. So all the members who are here and have not voted yet should try and make sure that they do.

Now I would like us to turn to Agenda item number 5, "Collaborative action and partnership to address humanitarian challenges." I would now like to call upon Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki who is the Conference rapporteur.

4.8.3 COLLABORATIVE ACTION AND PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES (CONTINUED)

Report on the general debate

H.E. Mr Ichiro Fujisaki, Conference rapporteur

(Original English)

I have learned that there are no recent precedents in this Conference of having a summing-up of the General Debate. No wonder. It is an awesome and formidable task to sum up presentations by 109 speakers representing National Societies and governments and other organizations. However, I will give it a try. The positive part was that everyone who spoke was quite focused on the issues on the agenda. This makes it somewhat easier to summarize in a thematic manner. For your reference, the topics most referred to by delegations were in the following order: for governments, they were international humanitarian law, the environment, migration, urban violence and health; and for National Societies they were migration, health, international humanitarian law, the environment and urban violence. So what, you may say. But it was quite a task to count all 109.

Now I have one plea to make to you all. If something close to what you said, remote as it may be, appears in my summary, please think to yourself, "The reporter took my argument. My points are reflected." This will make my job easier.

I will focus on four challenges identified in the Conference Agenda. Before doing so, I would like to mention three important issues that were raised in the course of the debate. First, many delegations underlined the continuing relevance of international humanitarian law and the need to ensure compliance with the rules in force. Several delegations also called for a ban on cluster munitions. Second, many delegations insisted on the full implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding of November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent and the Magen David Adom. Third, a number of delegations condemned all forms of trafficking and exploitation of human beings, particularly women and children.

I now turn to the four themes of the Conference agenda. It was widely recognized that these four issues interact with each other. To take just one example: climate change will result in new migration flows, which can sometimes lead to health degradation and violence. It was stressed that these challenges require partnership at the local and national levels, particularly partnership between the State and the National Society, which can reach all social or ethnic groups as a community-based organization with a network of volunteers. It was seen that the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to their governments in the humanitarian field can be compatible with their independent character. Partnership is also required at the international level, between States or groups of States, and international organizations, in particular the United Nations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

First, environmental degradation including climate change. It was emphasized that climate change affects the poorest in the poorest countries, those who contribute least to global warming. A number of delegations encouraged National Societies to develop further certain activities, such as raising public awareness of environmental risks, strengthening disaster preparedness at the national level, and strengthening the risk reduction component in disaster management. It was pointed out that States should also devise comprehensive disaster response plans integrating National Societies and other partners.

Second, international migration. It was pointed out that migration should not be tackled merely by itself. It is important to address the fundamental causes such

as poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and armed conflict. Cross-border cooperation was mentioned as a key factor. The profound vulnerability of migrants – for example, their exposure to violence and exploitation, particularly the case for women and children – was stressed. The paramount importance of respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law was emphasized. Some delegations pointed out that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had a key role to play in alleviating the humanitarian consequences of migration, and thus National Societies had a duty to assist migrants, regardless of their status. It was pointed out that migrants in irregular situations should not be deprived of access to medical assistance. A number of delegations recognized the role of National Societies in developing the following activities: providing information on the risks of irregular migration, providing relief and medical assistance, helping migrants in registering and other administrative matters, assisting members of separated families in restoring family links, visiting migrants in administrative detention or holding centres, and advocating for tolerance and respect for diversity.

Third, urban violence. A number of delegations highlighted the crucial role that States and National Societies can play in preventing and reducing urban violence, whether associated with armed conflict or social unrest. They referred to concrete initiatives in this respect, such as the 2006 Geneva Declaration on armed violence and development. A number of delegations raised the following points regarding the role the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement can play: reinforce social solidarity as this will give young people opportunities, provide education, disseminate international humanitarian law and human rights law, and develop programmes for the social reintegration of ex-child soldiers and street children in the community. In all these activities, volunteers, particularly the young, can play a key role. The value of peer-to-peer education was highlighted as well.

Fourth, health. Delegations expressed several concerns over the increase in the number of victims of emergent and recurrent communicable diseases. They mentioned in particular HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, influenza and leprosy. What main role can the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement play? They could contribute to primary health care, provide health education and first-aid training, provide access to safe blood, fight discrimination and exclusion, advocate for the protection of medical missions in times of war, and be ready to cope with unexpected health threats. Again, many delegations underlined the role of volunteers, particularly young volunteers; they emphasized the importance of empowering young volunteers and

maintaining their motivation. Solidarity to reinforce the capacity of National Societies so that they can more efficiently contribute to preventing and fighting epidemics was also highlighted.

Concluding remarks. First, the discussions here have three clear results, as I see it. First, all the representatives share the view that challenges cannot be met by a single player. They have to be met together. This notion, however, should not be taken as an inducement to evade individual responsibilities. No way. The fact that many delegations welcomed draft resolutions – including guidelines – and expressed their resolve to implement them when adopted, was very encouraging.

Second, many of the representatives who had gone through tough times – wars or internal disputes or natural disasters – showed a readiness to share their experiences. This provided excellent learning opportunities for others. Even after this Conference, this could be followed up.

Third, the importance of having a sense of urgency and adequate funding in dealing with these four issues was mentioned. In summary, what delegations stressed most were the following elements, as I understood: preventive measures, preparedness or planning, promptness, persistence in our efforts, public awareness, and partnership. This is, of course, no time for *jeux de mots* or word games but, if you so agree, we may call them “the six Ps” for these four themes. I would repeat: Prevention, Preparedness, Promptness, Persistence, Public awareness and Partnership.

As I already said, writing the report was no easy task. However, it gave me a good opportunity to think about some very important subjects. My only contribution will have been to write a report that is not as long as some of you feared. I thank you all once again for having appointed me as rapporteur. I would also like to thank Ms Toivola, Ms Haroff-Tavel and Mr Bugnion for their assistance. I would be happy to serve as rapporteur at the next Conference if my report today proves satisfactory, and if I am still serving as ambassador four years hence.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Now ladies and gentlemen, that report has already been shared with the Drafting Committee. We will now hear the report on the work done by Commission

A, which discussed the auxiliary role of National Societies. I would like to call now upon the rapporteur for the Commission, Dr Muctaru Jalloh who is the President of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society.

4.8.4 THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF THE 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

Report on the work of Commission A

**Dr Muctaru Jalloh, President,
Sierra Leone Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

I have the singular honour to present the report of Commission A, which met yesterday to consider “the specific nature of the 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.”

Madam Chair, the Commission Chair, Ms Jane McGowan, the President of the Canadian Red Cross, opened the proceedings by warmly welcoming government and Red Cross and Red Crescent representatives. She spoke of the wonderful opportunity the Commission afforded to take forward the work of National Societies as auxiliaries to their governments, confirming that the specific and distinctive nature of this role was enshrined in the resolution – already finalized by the Conference Drafting Committee – to be put before the Conference. Accordingly, it would not fall to the Commission to discuss or review the resolution, either in detail or in totality. She added that, as a broad structure for the forthcoming deliberations, the Commission should focus on best practice in its morning session and partnerships through the afternoon.

The Chair then invited Mr Ibrahim Osman, Deputy Secretary-General of the International Federation, to give an overview of the subject matter for the presentations and general discussions to follow. In a short, lucid speech – for which he was subsequently complimented by a number of representatives – Mr

Osman delineated the distinctiveness of the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, setting them apart from other humanitarian bodies, namely recognition at international level, in international law and in national law, the Fundamental Principles and emblems of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and, last but not least, the fact that a National Society, to be recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross, had to have territorial coverage. Mr Osman explained that not all National Society activities would necessarily be carried out in an auxiliary capacity to the public authorities. Such work had to be clearly and previously divided and agreed on by both parties. He also stressed that any humanitarian intervention under the auxiliary role had to comply absolutely with Red Cross and Red Crescent principles and values. Nor did working as auxiliary to government imply any obligation on the latter with regard to funding, unless previously agreed on.

Madam Chair, we had two countries make their presentation, a National Society and a government representative from each. The first country that made its presentation was Colombia. The Colombian government representative, Ms Adriana Mendoza, charg   d’affaires of the Colombian Permanent Mission in Geneva, began by describing the auxiliary role of the Colombian Red Cross as crucial to the various humanitarian situations that the country was facing, referring also to the clear and strong legal framework and respect for the Movement’s Fundamental Principles on appealing and facilitating the work of the National Society. The current legal base is family-founded, founded on two principal laws. The first, updated in 2003 smooths Colombian Red Cross operationality, while the second, revised the following year, regulates emblem use. Ms Mendoza spoke of the balanced relationship between the Colombian Red Cross and public authorities at all administrative levels and pointed particularly to the support rendered to the National Society by the ICRC in its essential work arising from the long-running internal conflict that has beset Colombia, leaving millions displaced. It is through the Colombian Red Cross, said Ms Mendoza, that delivery of humanitarian assistance to this very vulnerable group was possible. Among the several provisions of the legal base, Ms Mendoza emphasized that the Colombian Red Cross’s right to confidentiality when dealing with all groups in the armed conflict was an essential element, which created trust and mutual understanding, key features in the relationship between National Societies and governments.

The speaker from the National Society, Dr Fernando Jos   C  rdenas Guerrero, Vice-President of the

Colombian Red Cross, spoke enthusiastically about the strong synergy of co-responsibility that exists, and has existed for many years, between the government and the National Society, founded on a strong legal framework, recognition of the emblem and, for instance, the visibility afforded to the Red Cross in the national school syllabus. He referred to the access granted to the Colombian Red Cross at the highest levels of government and the representation accorded to the National Society on key emergency decision-making bodies, and outlined major areas of Red Cross activity, such as mine awareness, support for persons internally displaced as a result of the armed conflict, community development, environmental concerns, health care and promotion of blood donations. He thanked sister Societies for their partnership and collaboration. Dr Cárdenas Guerrero described the dissemination of international humanitarian law as a vital part of our mandate as auxiliaries to governments, citing training of the armed forces and material production as examples of this work. Cooperation with the government extended also to tax-waiving. In his concluding remarks, Dr Cárdenas Guerrero intimated that without this auxiliary status and State collaboration, many Red Cross activities in Colombia would not be possible.

The next presenters, Madam Chair, were from Finland. We had two representatives from the Finnish government and one from the National Society. The two speakers from the Finnish government, were both from the External Affairs Ministry. Ms Marja Lehto focused on the legal framework in place in Finland to underpin and facilitate the work of the Finnish Red Cross and also to protect the emblem. Although the government is legally responsible for protecting the emblem, in practice, the monitoring is always carried out by the Finnish Red Cross. Ms Lehto described the National Society as a highly respected and reliable partner, and pointed to its cooperation with the government in a number of spheres, such as health and disaster response. She reminded us that migration remained an issue in Finland. Turning more specifically to humanitarian law, Ms Lehto highlighted the Finnish Red Cross's membership of Finland's National Committee for international humanitarian law, which enables but does not engage in direct dissemination, a role undertaken by the National Society, which targets, *inter alia*, the armed forces, secondary schools and law students.

The other speaker from the Finnish government, Ms Ulla-Maija Finskas, concentrated on humanitarian assistance and the Finnish government's commitment to the fundamental principles of good donorship. With an annual budget of 260 million euros, the

government's humanitarian assistance unit works through the Finnish Red Cross when deciding on support for either the ICRC or the International Federation. But it always listens if the National Society prefers to allocate part of the budget for Red Cross in-kind response. A major government objective is the strengthening of existing capacities at the field level in the National Society.

The Finnish Red Cross's Secretary-General, Ms Kristiina Kumpula, spoke of the humanitarian values shared by the government and the National Society, which is even more important when combined with a sound understanding of roles and mandates and a long-established international and national legal base. She cited the recent incident of a school shooting as an example of the Finnish Red Cross's auxiliary role in action, with volunteers responding to aid the victims and their families within an hour of the tragedy's occurrence. Ms Kumpula went on to outline the wide-ranging activities of the National Society, including the task of supplementing but, she emphasized, not substituting for, the social welfare system. The list may be long but it is not a list of obligations, she reminded the Conference. She saw the National Society's auxiliary role as one side of the same coin, the Finnish Red Cross being a reliable partner to the government, offering grassroots and international reach, and in return receiving a special place in civil society and long-term stability. Auxiliary status also afforded the National Society an entry point with key partners like universities; it also helped in attracting a highly qualified professional base, especially in the health sector. Among the challenges for the National Society were maintaining a balanced relationship and having continually to prove its reliability and understanding. In other words, "nothing is free." The real test of the relationship, she said, came when the humanitarian imperative ran contrary to government policies.

Madam Chair, I shall give a summary of the speeches or addresses, but, here, I must apologize to most of the participants whose names or National Societies or governments I will not mention. All your contributions were valued and highly appreciated. In a lively and highly interactive series of exchanges, Madam Chair, more than 50 government and Red Cross and Red Crescent representatives were granted the floor. Time and space dictate that the summary below cannot be exhaustive, the obvious intent being to capture the main themes and issues.

The first thing we touched on was partnership and the auxiliary role of National Societies in practice. It was encouraging to note, Madam Chair, that a

number of government and Red Cross and Red Crescent representatives welcomed the resolution on Conference Objective 2; they particularly appreciated the definition of 'auxiliary role' that this pivotal text enshrines. Several speakers felt that the resolution would assist in dialogue with governments aimed at taking forward the auxiliary role concept; others pointed to the toolbox being developed as an important future asset.

Madam Chair, with regard to supporting their governments in their role as auxiliaries, five working areas were most frequently mentioned by National Societies: (1) dissemination of international humanitarian law through secondary schools or beyond, and the training provided to armed forces, (2) disaster preparedness and relief response, (3) support to public and communities affected by armed conflict, (4) social welfare, and (5) health care at the community level, including first-aid training and recruitment of voluntary blood donors.

A number of concerns were expressed, Madam Chair. The auxiliary role played by National Societies is not well known to all stakeholders; an appropriate legal recognition is vital. In addition to National Societies' working relationship with governments, confirmation of their 'auxiliary role' status should provide a platform for the development of wider collaboration, both within the public sector and elsewhere. The second concern expressed was this: due to a lack of regulations – thus far – defining its role, a National Society is too often perceived by its government and by others as just another NGO at country level, membership of the International Federation is often not known, and the implications of linkage to a global network not understood. Thirdly, National Societies are often called on by governments, in an ad hoc manner, to provide humanitarian support, but without being afforded appropriate resources. Many National Societies mention the expectation to assist migrants, regardless of their status, and internally displaced persons as examples. Others, particularly those from small island States, pointed to the unavoidable duplication of roles for key officials where resources are limited. Last but not least, although they work closely with governments, the independence of National Societies needs to be maintained.

An early question raised by the Saint Kitts and Nevis Red Cross Society centred on how to initiate discussions with government on recognition of the National Society as auxiliary. Other National Societies, notably Uzbekistan, indicated that there were considerable difficulties in persuading their governments that any role other than that

of a normal non-governmental organization was necessary. The ICRC, the International Federation and sister Societies suggested that a first step for each National Society, in this position, was to look closely at its operational capacity and at what could be afforded to the public authorities by way of an auxiliary role. Strong negotiating skills are also an invaluable advantage in this situation. Other speakers emphasized that the practicality and scope of the auxiliary role could only be determined on a country-by-country basis.

The Samoa Red Cross Society highlighted the Memorandum of Understanding it signed with its government as a significant benefit for the relationship, while the Republic of Korea National Red Cross spoke movingly of its role in the betterment of inter-Korean relations and asked the ICRC and the International Federation to develop a workable mechanism for guiding National Societies as auxiliary partners to governments. The conduct of the National Society-government relationship also came under the spotlight and the Commission was counselled that healthy tension, if kept within bounds, could prove beneficial for both parties. There was emphasis too on a balanced dialogue. We should always be proactive.

The Government of the United Kingdom stressed that it was important not to be overly prescriptive in the modalities of the relationship since humanitarian activities and needs vary from country to country. Meanwhile the Malaysian Red Crescent cited, as examples of its close working relationship with the government, the ambulance service it provides in Kuala Lumpur and its long-running, nationwide "First-Aider in Every Home" initiative.

The second item we dealt with was international humanitarian law. A significant number of National Societies spoke of their activities in the field of dissemination. National Societies are mandated to disseminate and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, and to assist their governments in this essential task. Among major activities highlighted were: educational programmes on international humanitarian law for children and young people, exploring humanitarian law in secondary schools and university programmes, dissemination among the armed forces, encouraging governments to set up national committees on IHL, protecting the emblems by strictly monitoring their use and taking steps to prevent misuse, and lastly, proper advocacy before government to restrict certain weapons that currently violate international humanitarian law. At this juncture, the ICRC intervened to reiterate its ongoing availability

to help National Societies with a range of dissemination activities, and also with the revision of statutes, together with the International Federation.

The third aspect we dealt with, Madam Chair, is the legal basis of National Societies. The Commission felt that a sound legal basis, particularly at national level, was seen by all National Societies as an essential prerequisite for distinctiveness, respect among decision-makers and influential persons, and image visibility interest. In addition to the emphasis on this legal basis in the Colombian and Finnish presentations, two other speakers highlighted progress in this regard. First, a new decree is under active consideration in Norway, which will, *inter alia*, focus on establishing a negotiation environment between the government and the National Society, thus avoiding the existence of an imposed relationship. A new model law is under way in Austria, which, when promulgated, will strengthen emblem protection and the auxiliary role and mixed confidentiality provision for the Austrian Red Cross in its dealings with disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals.

The fourth topic we discussed was migration. If there is any issue at all, Madam Chair, of overriding concern to National Societies, governments and management, it is the complex issue of migration, the often ambiguous plight of migrants, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and other marginalized groups. Speakers in the Commission returned to this vast question very frequently. National Societies commented that too often they were in a “Catch-22” position: in the awkward and invidious position of witnessing real humanitarian need and, sometimes, being denied access by governments, and then invariably having to cope with the adverse impact this had on their relations with the indigenous population, in terms of both image and resource mobilization. Many speakers voiced their concerns at a growing tendency in some developed countries towards xenophobia.

The British Red Cross echoed the thoughts of many others by asking what steps the Movement should take when a government’s political or domestic priorities threaten to compromise an overriding humanitarian agenda. The speaker from the Swedish Red Cross informed us that he had tussled with his government over the denial of access to health care for certain groups of migrants. The representative from the Philippine National Society, whose country has about eight million nationals living overseas, highlighted the problem of individuals migrating to locations they have been advised against. The Dominican Republic expressed concern at the situation of displaced people

living along the Dominica-Haiti border and the ability of the respective National Societies to respond. At this juncture, we invited the ICRC and the International Federation to give us their views.

The ICRC’s director-general said that the ICRC was producing a manual to advise National Societies. Restoring family links, when irregular migrants are held in detention centres, is a particular priority. The ICRC is also working closely with National Societies in countries where migrants originate and to which they are also returned. The International Federation’s deputy secretary-general added that there must be a clear differentiation between political and security aspects on the one hand and humanitarian considerations on the other. The first priority was to ensure that the survival needs of migrants are met. If the government is handling this, then the dialogue can move to protection matters, which are complicated for National Societies. In the event that even basic assistance is withheld, and Red Cross and Red Crescent access continues to be denied, then the National Society is compelled to advocate, and must do it vigorously.

Describing the Mediterranean as “a sea of death,” the Italian Red Cross argued that while advocacy goes far, as National Societies we often need to do more and, when necessary, to be indifferent to public opinion. He called on the International Federation to establish an operational alliance linking National Societies in countries where migrants originate with those in countries that receive migrants – in this instance, North Africa and southern Europe.

The last topic was advocacy and communication. There was general agreement, Madam Chair, that the National Society-government relationship requires long-term investment from both sides. The Spanish Red Cross and its government, for instance, conduct a formal audit of this relationship on an annual basis. More broadly, continuous and regular dialogue should be established at all levels, both national and local, to build up mutual trust and understanding.

Despite the emphasis on the legal basis, it was understood that the law alone is not enough to enshrine and maintain the auxiliary role. National Societies must continuously demonstrate their role and usefulness in the humanitarian arena, through compelling advocacy and communication programmes. In particular, Madam Chair, there is a need for the International Federation and the ICRC to develop a toolbox to guide National Societies in the areas of advocacy and communication. The toolbox should also contain information on the rights, advantages and privileges that National Societies would gain if the role of

auxiliary was clearly defined. Training in negotiation skills is also needed, to facilitate National Societies' discussions and lobbying with their government, so that they can provide humanitarian support to the public authorities without involving themselves in political and national security issues. National Societies need to acquire the strength to decline to assist their governments when asked to undertake tasks that are beyond their mandate and capacity. It is incumbent on the International Federation and the ICRC to consistently promote understanding of the auxiliary role of National Societies among government leaders, as and when the opportunity arises.

Madam Chair, in conclusion, we want to thank you for giving us an opportunity to debate and discuss this important issue. At the close of a dynamic and often challenging full day's session, the chief executive of the British Red Cross, with support from all, rose to thank and congratulate Madam Chair, Ms Jane McGowan, for the firm but flexible manner in which the proceedings had been conducted and for ably creating the space for all who wanted to speak to do so.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

That was the report of Commission A. Thank you, Dr Jalloh and the group that you referred to, for that wonderful job. I now have the honour of calling the rapporteur of Commission B, Mr Jeffrey Chan Wah Teck, Vice-Chairman of the Singapore Red Cross.

4.8.5 REAFFIRMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: PRESERVING HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY IN ARMED CONFLICT

Report on the work of Commission B

**Mr Jeffrey Chan Wah Teck,
Vice-Chairman, Singapore Red Cross Society**

(Original English)

It is an honour for me to report on the work of Commission B of the 30th International Conference. This Commission deliberated on the theme "Reaffirmation

and implementation of international humanitarian law: Preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict." The Commission's session took place on 28 November 2007. The President of the Commission was Ambassador Nicholas Thorne of the United Kingdom and the Vice-President was Ambassador Mabel Gomez Oliver of Mexico. The Commission's deliberations were substantive and reflected a high degree of commonality regarding the issues addressed.

In his opening remarks, the President noted that the issues to be considered by the Commission, as indicated by the Guiding Questions, were aligned with the theme of the Conference, which is the re-affirmation of the important role of international humanitarian law (IHL), in armed conflicts. Of late, IHL has been criticized for not being relevant to modern-day armed conflicts. However, studies by the ICRC have concluded that the rules of IHL are adequate today, that the problem is the lack of respect for IHL rules in armed conflict. Thus the importance of the Commission's deliberations.

The deliberations began with a keynote speech by Professor Daniel Thurer, a member of the ICRC. Professor Thurer referred to the ICRC study on customary international humanitarian law and its report entitled "IHL and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts," both of which have been submitted to the Conference. The customary law study was requested by the 26th International Conference. It concluded that the gap between the regulation of international and non-international armed conflicts is closing. State practice has affirmed that many rules of IHL apply in both international and non-international armed conflicts. Parties to all armed conflicts are thus bound to observe the same rules.

The ICRC report on "IHL and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts" noted that IHL treaties supplemented by customary humanitarian law remain the relevant frame of reference for regulating behaviour in armed conflicts. It noted in particular that there is a growing awareness of IHL in today's world.

Professor Thurer also outlined the main sections of, and the rationale for, the draft resolution on humanitarian law submitted by the ICRC to the International Conference. This draft resolution was premised on the principle that IHL is as relevant today as it was previously and continues to provide valuable protection for victims of all types of armed conflict. IHL underscores the principle of humanity by ensuring that no one is without legal protection in times of armed conflict.

In the deliberation that followed, numerous delegations congratulated the ICRC on its reports; they provided strong affirmation for the importance of IHL in today's world. Participants in the Commission strongly reaffirmed the continued adequacy and relevance of IHL to contemporary armed conflicts. In this context, it was underscored that IHL regulates only armed conflict and that its application should not be extended to situations that do not amount to armed conflict. A speaker from one delegation, however, mentioned his view that the ICRC study should not be taken as authoritative on the subject of applicable law being customary international law.

In relation to the principle of distinction, participants reaffirmed the importance of this principle in the conduct of hostilities. They also reaffirmed the need to respect the fundamental guarantees provided by IHL to all persons.

Several delegations touched on IHL and the fight against terrorism, noting that the appearance of new situations does not lead to the conclusion that IHL is inadequate today.

A number of delegations noted the complementary nature of IHL, human rights law and refugee law during times of armed conflict. The relationship between these bodies of law merits further exploration, given the relative paucity of IHL treaty rules applicable to non-international armed conflicts.

Numerous delegations commented on the challenges posed to IHL by asymmetric warfare. It was pointed out by one delegation that reciprocity is not a condition for the application of IHL. The fact that the opposing party does not comply with IHL does not provide an excuse for a party to itself renege on its obligations to apply IHL.

A large number of delegations spoke on the adverse humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions and the need to prohibit such weapons. Such weapons were said to violate the principle of distinction. Mention was made of the initiatives to prohibit such weapons and to formulate a legally binding instrument to this effect by 2008. They urged support for this initiative.

Among operational challenges to IHL, it was noted that attacks against medical personnel and humanitarian relief workers were particularly egregious examples of serious violations of IHL. One delegation stated that there is also a need to clarify practical and legal issues related to detention carried out during multinational military operations.

The protection of journalists during times of armed conflict and their responsibilities – particularly in relation to persons captured or detained, who have a right not to be subjected to public curiosity – need to be made more widely known.

Concern was also expressed over the misuse or abuse of the emblems. Such abuses include the fraudulent use of the emblem on the Internet by criminals to solicit funds. National Societies were urged to monitor and prevent such abuses.

It was widely recognized by participants that for IHL to be effective, there must be effective measures against impunity. This requires all States to ensure that they have the necessary domestic legislation to criminalize and prosecute breaches of IHL. In this context, it was noted that under IHL, States have universal jurisdiction. Thus, even States not party to an armed conflict can take steps to punish the breaches of IHL that might occur in that conflict. The principle, enshrined in the Geneva Conventions, that States must respect and ensure respect for IHL requires States to do more than just ensure that their own actors are compliant with IHL: States must also monitor breaches of IHL and take all feasible action to ensure compliance with IHL, even in armed conflicts in which they are not involved.

Recent changes in the international environment, such as the establishment of the International Criminal Court and other international tribunals to bring to trial violators of IHL, were recognized as positive and important developments in combating impunity.

Many delegations also spoke of numerous other means whereby respect for IHL can be instilled. Often, they cited their own actions and programmes as examples of what can be done to meet this objective. Calls were made to all States to take certain measures. Here are some examples: States should become party to all IHL instruments and enact the necessary domestic laws to give domestic effect to these instruments; States should ensure that all armed forces personnel are adequately trained in the application of IHL and prosecute such personnel when they breach the rules of IHL; IHL training is of key importance for military personnel deployed on international peace-keeping operations; States should generally raise awareness of IHL throughout society, particularly among young people, through programmes in school curricula.

Some delegations spoke of the necessity to ensure that decision-makers were sensitized to the legal obligation to respect and ensure respect for IHL.

It is thus necessary to include lawmakers in IHL dissemination programmes. In this context, the Commission was informed of one National Society's initiative to update a publication on IHL addressed to domestic lawmakers. This will be made available shortly.

Many delegations reiterated the importance of partnerships in ensuring respect for IHL. Numerous delegations underscored the value they place on their partnership with the ICRC. Apart from the ICRC, such partnerships may be both domestic and international and should, besides governments, include NGOs, academic institutions and civil society, and others, as the case may be. The upcoming 60th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions in 2009 was pointed to as a good opportunity to plan a range of activities aimed at disseminating IHL.

The key role played by national IHL committees was brought sharply into focus. National commissions or committees on IHL were repeatedly mentioned as an invaluable way of creating the awareness necessary for improved domestic implementation of this body of rules. It was also stressed that States have the primary responsibility not only to respect but also to ensure respect for IHL. A call was made to utilize existing IHL mechanisms. Among these is the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission (IFFC) established under Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions. It was recalled that the services of the IFFC may be put in motion by any party and not just by parties to an armed conflict.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is my report. I thank you for your attention. I am keenly aware that given the large number of speakers and the numerous excellent points made during the deliberations, invariably this report cannot do justice to the contributions made by many delegations. To these delegations, I would like to offer my sincerest apologies. I can only hope that the general tenor of this report, which seeks to capture the strong sentiments among the members of the Commission to work *together for humanity*, will be to your satisfaction.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Mr Chan Wah Teck, we appreciate that report. We have one more report from Commission C, which dealt with the legal framework for disaster response, or IDRL as we have come to

know it. I would now like to call upon the rapporteur for Commission C, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, of the Permanent Mission of Turkey in Geneva.

4.8.6 STRENGTHENING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO DISASTERS

Report on the work of Commission C

**H.E. Mr Ahmet Üzümcü,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Turkey, Geneva**

(Original English)

It is my pleasure to present the report of yesterday's proceedings in Commission C on "Strengthening the legal framework for international response to disasters." The Commission was chaired by Dr Raymond Forde, President of the Barbados Red Cross Society. The work of Commission C began with introductory presentations by three invited speakers, followed by an open debate in which over 120 delegations from governments and National Societies took part.

The first presenter, Dr Salvano Briceño, Director of the United Nations' International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, highlighted the importance of being prepared not only to respond to disasters, but also to reduce vulnerabilities before they strike. Despite global commitments to prioritize risk reduction, more work remains to be done towards creating a holistic approach to disaster management and to affirm a human right to safety. He highlighted the links between the IDRL Guidelines and the Hyogo Framework for Action, whose Priority 5 calls for greater preparedness and contingency planning. He encouraged Conference members to link our follow-up efforts on the new Guidelines with those to implement the Hyogo Framework.

The second presenter, Senator Richard Gordon, Chairman of the Philippine National Red Cross, highlighted the experience of South-East Asian National Societies with legal issues concerning disaster response. He noted that the recent proliferation of actors involved in international response has led to new regulatory challenges, including both entry barriers for relief goods and equipment as

well as quality and coordination problems. He encouraged governments to take a more proactive and forward-looking approach rather than relying on ad hoc arrangements to address these problems. In this respect, he highlighted the recent efforts of a number of governments in the region to strengthen their applicable laws and described the recent commitments of South-East Asian National Societies towards promoting legal preparedness.

The third presenter, Dr Charles Agbo, Director of Planning, Research and Forecasting at the Nigerian Emergency Management Agency, informed participants of his government's efforts to strengthen its institutional policy and regional frameworks with regard to international disaster response. Nigeria has also played a leading role in ensuring that the issue of legal preparedness for international disaster response is taken up and suitably addressed at the sub-regional and regional levels. This was demonstrated by its collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union.

The open debate that followed reaffirmed the widespread agreement among Conference members that legal preparedness was directly linked to reducing human suffering.

Many participants expressed their satisfaction with the IDRL Guidelines, and with the consultation process by which they had been developed, and urged their adoption. We learned about a number of existing initiatives, by both governments and National Societies, to promote sound legal preparedness in their countries. Apparently, some have already begun to make use of the IDRL Guidelines. Consultations between governments and relevant agencies on the draft Guidelines has spurred a deeper discussion of how they would address these types of problem in the future.

In response to the first guiding question submitted by the Conference organizers – “How can the Guidelines be useful in your national context?” – the participants stated that the Guidelines were useful in that they were non-binding and adaptable to local circumstances, and seek to provide useful practical guidance to common problems without impinging on the sovereign rights and responsibilities of domestic authorities. They also allow the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to work in accordance with its principles and values in disaster management. Moreover, they contain a convenient compilation of existing international norms and best practices to which governments can refer.

Participants emphasized that the Guidelines can be useful as a source of reference for governments interested in strengthening their legal and policy frameworks to prepare for the possibility of international disaster response. They also agreed that the Guidelines may serve as a checklist of common legal issues that may arise and that should be taken into account by National Societies and other organizations when receiving and providing assistance.

In response to the second guiding question – “What additional steps can be taken to promote legal preparedness for disasters?” – participants suggested that States and National Societies should examine their domestic, legal, policy and institutional frameworks to see how they might be strengthened. Furthermore, all relevant actors should share best practices so as to enable all of us to improve our methods of providing humanitarian services.

With regard to the third guiding question – “How can National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies best support their governments in improving legal preparedness?” – a number of National Societies expressed their commitment to work on this issue with their governments. It was suggested in particular that National Societies that are represented on national disaster management committees or similar bodies seize the opportunity to promote the utilization of the IDRL Guidelines at these fora. They should take the relevant measures vis-à-vis legal preparedness as part of their contingency planning process.

Participants underscored the significance of disseminating the Guidelines and urged their use not only at the national but also at the regional level. Commitment by governments was also expressed to adopt programmes for disseminating the Guidelines and to encourage an inclusive dialogue with lawmakers, disaster management authorities, National Societies and civil society more generally.

In response to the fourth guiding question – “How might issues raised by the IDRL Guidelines be addressed at the regional or sub-regional levels?” – it was recommended that regional and sub-regional organizations be invited to make use of the IDRL Guidelines. Moreover, the International Federation was encouraged to raise awareness of the Guidelines at regional organizational meetings. A commitment was expressed by governments to work together with National Societies and the International Federation to increase policy cohesion on international disaster assistance at the regional level.

With regard to the best means of linking follow-up efforts on the Guidelines with other initiatives – implicit in the fifth guiding question – participants in the Commission suggested that the IDRL Guidelines could be incorporated in national and regional platforms developed pursuant to the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Finally, a number of participants commented on possible future activities for the International Federation in this field. It was suggested that the International Federation be proactive and continue to lead collaborative efforts on advocacy and research into legal preparedness, for instance, through operational case studies and information sharing. The International Federation should work with and empower National Societies to provide advice to their governments on how to make the best use of the Guidelines. The International Federation should also develop new tools for dissemination and raising awareness, for example, through training materials. The importance of working with the UN in the area of capacity building was highlighted. Lastly, there was a request to the International Federation to raise the necessary funds to establish a regional presence on IDRL in Africa and the Americas.

4.8.7 ELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMISSION (CONTINUED): PROCLAMATION OF RESULTS

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

We now have the results from the first round of voting in the election for membership of the Standing Commission. I now invite Ms Anne-Marie Hubert-Hotz to proclaim the results and to tell us if we are done or if we have to go to a second round.

**Ms Anne-Marie Hubert-Hotz,
Vice-Chair of the Conference**

(Original French)

Ladies and gentlemen, before announcing the results of the voting, I would like to thank all the candidates who offered to serve on the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, thus

showing their commitment to the important work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The results are as follows: The following persons have been elected to the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent with an absolute majority of 163 votes. First, Mr Massimo Barra was elected with 213 votes; second, Mr Mohammed Al-Hadid, 211 votes; third, Mr Adama Diarra, 187 votes; fourth, Mr Steven Carr, 182 votes; and lastly, Mr Eamon Harrison Courtenay, 165 votes. As a result, there will not be a second round of voting.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to congratulate all of you on behalf of all the members of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Finally, I will announce the results of those candidates who were not elected: Mr William Aurélian Edeki Moubouma, 110 votes; Mr Tissa Manilal Abeywickrama, 83 votes and Mr Freddy Karup Pedersen, 132 votes. Again, my thanks to all those who stood for election. I wish the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent good luck in its work. I omitted Lady Jocelyn Margaret Keith who received 156 votes. Thank you and my congratulations to the winners.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you, Madam, for the results, and congratulations to our incoming Standing Commission. I would now like to say that we shall meet here tomorrow at 10 a.m. to continue with the plenary. Thank you very much and good night!

4.9

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Friday 30 November 2007

(10 a.m.)

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Welcome to the fourth and final plenary of our International Conference. Before we go into hearing the reports: you will remember that yesterday the Standing Commission was elected; according to the rules, the first meeting of the Standing Commission has to be chaired by the Conference Chair. We have just come out of a meeting of the Standing Commission and I would now like to call upon the Chairman of the Standing Commission, Dr Al-Hadid, to come and address us briefly.

**Mr Mohammed Al-Hadid,
Chairman of the Standing Commission**

(Original English)

On behalf of the newly elected Standing Commission, its members and on my personal behalf, I want to warmly thank you for the trust and confidence you have bestowed on us to act on your behalf as the trustees of the International Conference for the next four years.

Before going any further, I would like to pay tribute to the outgoing members of the Standing Commission and hope that they will remain friends and supporters in the Movement. As Chairman of this Standing Commission, I commit myself to continue working with the National Societies, with the other members of the family – the International Federation and the ICRC – and with the government members of this Conference. Under the theme of “Together for humanity” we have discussed partnership this week. It implies equality and we will continue forward, from here together, respecting each other’s mandates and roles. Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision, the ability to direct individual accomplishments towards organizational

objectives. It is the fuel that allows ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results. We will act with the aim of making a difference, a difference for the better and in the interest of serving the vulnerable people who have put their hope and trust in this Movement.

The results of our Council of Delegates as well as the excellent results of this Conference will form the basis of the work of the Standing Commission. When taking the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as a whole forward, I would like us to be guided by a Japanese proverb: “Vision without action is a daydream; action without vision is a nightmare.” Our strength as a global movement lies in our diversity and in our differences. Still, we all work towards the same aims and goals. Besides a sound and realistic understanding of the needs and the challenges facing us, and the sensitivity to identify with people and feel their need for protection and assistance, leadership requires courage, integrity, vision and strength. If you want to lead the orchestra, you have to turn your back to the crowd. But conducting an orchestra also demands that you carefully hear and know how to bring every single instrument into play. I pledge to listen to you, our National Societies and our government partners, in shaping our strategies for tomorrow’s problems and our response to them.

4.9.1 OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOPS

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

I would like to invite Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki, the Conference rapporteur, to take the floor; and whilst he is getting ready, I would like, on your behalf, to thank him for having put maybe a thousand thoughts every day into five paragraphs, for having been able to take the diverse positions that were laid out by people in the groups that he was listening to and putting them into a paragraph that we can all chew and swallow.

H.E. Mr Ichiro Fujisaki, Conference rapporteur*(Original English)*

Workshops are an integral part of the work of the Conference. This year we had 10 sessions and 1,000 participants. The participants paid full attention to the importance of diversity, gender issues and youth involvement. This report is based on the reports made by the rapporteurs of each session. The full report can be found on the websites of the ICRC and the International Federation. There were ten workshops.

The first worked on the notion of “direct participation in hostilities.” The question of distinguishing civilians who were directly participating in hostilities from other civilians who were not was the central issue. This is all the more difficult in times when there is an increasing intermingling of civilians and armed actors, and when military operations are moving away from traditional battlefields into areas populated by civilians. Panelists shared the results of expert meetings between 2003 and 2006 that addressed three main concepts of international humanitarian law: “civilians under international humanitarian law,” “direct participation in hostilities” and “modalities of suspension of protection.” There was lively discussion of two issues. The first was the interpretation of “direct participation in hostilities.” The second was the application of the proposed standards to specific categories of civilian. Participants concluded that the answer varied with the situation. Nevertheless, the findings of the expert meetings were considered to be a useful framework.

Second workshop: “Addressing armed violence and violence prevention as humanitarian and development issues.” The Geneva Declaration on Violence and Development’s aim of integrating armed violence reduction and conflict prevention programmes into development policies was discussed. The presentations focused on concrete measures to link security and development. Recommendations were made as to how and where humanitarian workers could translate their operational and policy-level activities into the prevention and reduction of armed violence. National Societies’ involvement to this end was recommended.

Third workshop: “10 years after the anti-personnel mine ban: Addressing the human cost of landmines, explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions.” How much has been done and how much work remains to be done was discussed. The workshop also highlighted the validity of continued Red Cross and Red Crescent work, especially on behalf of victims

and affected communities. In the last ten years, for example, 156 States have joined the treaty on banning landmines, 42 million anti-personnel mines have been destroyed, mine clearance efforts are making steady progress, and in 2003, a protocol on the Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons was drafted. The participants concluded that further incidents are preventable. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was expected to keep playing a crucial role.

Fourth workshop: “Promoting respect for international humanitarian law by private military and security companies in conflict situations.” The increasing importance and the growing numbers of private military and security companies, or PMSCs, operating in conflict situations were discussed as a new priority issue. PMSCs are close to the heart of military operations. Consequently, accountability and lack of oversight were identified as the main humanitarian concerns. This led to a discussion of the relationship between PMSCs and mercenaries. The workshop panel presented the “Swiss initiative on PMSCs in cooperation with the ICRC.” Discussion included concerns that the PMSC industry might be given a legitimacy it does not deserve: it was felt that this should not happen. Further clarification and elaboration of the applicability of rules were sought.

Fifth workshop: “Benefits of collaboration between governments and National Societies.” This dealt essentially with the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities, following the debate in Commission A. This discussion included, among other issues, the following subjects: the application of the auxiliary role to aboriginal and remote communities and to various levels of government, advocacy for disaster risk reduction by National Societies before governments, the challenge of balancing neutrality and independence in National Societies’ relationships with governments, the value of having recognition for the auxiliary role in national legislation. An important result of this workshop was the creation of a draft model pledge as a practical tool to assist National Societies in redefining their auxiliary relationship. This model pledge was made available to Conference participants.

Sixth workshop: “Humanitarian and public health consequences of substance abuse.” The role of National Societies’ activities in the fight against drugs was analysed. The limitations of taking a repressive approach were pointed out. The bulk of the discussion was on the situation of those who were affected, including families and communities who were suffering discrimination and stigmatization.

There was a consensus on the need to promote and implement humanitarian policies focused on the alleviation of suffering, the need to develop preventive and educational programmes, particularly with youth (this is something the Movement could undertake together with national authorities), the need for free access to integrated programmes addressing substance abuse (these should be provided by the public health services and should target the most vulnerable, such as people living with HIV. The experience of the Rome Consensus and the European Council's campaign "For a European drug convention on promoting public health policy in drug control" were highlighted, as examples of ways in which this humanitarian problem might be effectively addressed by National Societies. Participants agreed that cooperation and alliances among non-governmental organizations, foundations and international organizations should be reinforced.

Seventh workshop: "The humanitarian consequences of climate change." Conclusions drawn were as follows. Many governments and National Societies are starting to address these challenges. Participants noted that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Climate Guide released last week makes it clear how to start. Partners are key. The Red Cross and Red Crescent can foster dialogue between different actors. There is an urgent need to address the inequity in funding. Relatively little is available to help vulnerable people in the poorest countries. Funding must be found for the programmes needed in the poorest countries.

Eighth workshop: "Neutral independent humanitarian action." Current challenges to humanitarian action in modern conflicts were highlighted. The essential value of neutral and independent humanitarian action is being increasingly recognized by governments. However, a survey of Nordic parliamentarians revealed that decision-makers need more information on the principles of neutral and independent humanitarian action. Participants concluded that ongoing discussions with the different stakeholders were necessary in order to increase understanding. Neutrality and independence are essential to provide assistance and protection to victims of armed conflicts. The work of the Afghan Red Crescent was cited as an example of best practices. The role of the ICRC as a neutral intermediary was also reaffirmed. The participants were encouraged to join the common Nordic pledge on neutral and independent humanitarian action.

Ninth workshop: "Respect for diversity and non-discrimination." Personal testimonies and good practices from National Societies and governments

were introduced and discussed. On an individual level, we need to respect differences and look for similarities that bring us together. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement can provide an example by ensuring diversity in its governing bodies and among its volunteers and staff, and by developing programmes for respect for diversity and non-discrimination. Governments have to fulfil their commitments under international law, to ensure that domestic anti-discrimination policies and laws are put in place and implemented. We can only have an impact if we work together with different stakeholders and across borders. We have shared responsibilities.

Tenth workshop: "Restoring family links – a partnership between States and National Societies." Participants reaffirmed the right of families to know the fate of their loved ones, and the important and vital role States have in this regard. The Movement's capacity to access the most vulnerable through community programmes was emphasized. The long history of collaboration – since the 1870s – between States and the Movement in restoring family links was highlighted. The workshop resulted in recommendations to both States and National Societies on how to strengthen their individual and joint capacities. The official signing of the joint ICRC-International Federation pledge on restoring family links was an important message to both States and the Movement. States and National Societies were urged to make joint pledges to support and strengthen activities aimed at restoring family links.

Madam Chairman, many people from the International Federation and the ICRC helped in the making of this report. My gratitude – the gratitude of all of us – goes to them. I conclude by thanking all the other organizers of the workshops, as well as the governments, the National Societies and observers who participated in the workshops. The workshops were very relevant and I believe they made a significant contribution to the Conference as a whole.

4.9.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PLEDGES

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, Ambassador Fujisaki. And now, ladies and gentlemen, we will benefit from an overview

of the pledges. I again go back to ask Ambassador Fujisaki to give us that report on the pledges.

H.E. Mr Ichiro Fujisaki, Conference rapporteur

(Original English)

Madam Chair, pledges have become an integral feature and outcome of the Conference. The components of the Movement, governments and observers, have all used this opportunity to turn goodwill into specific and measurable humanitarian commitments.

In all, 71 governments, 121 National Societies, the International Federation, the ICRC and three observers have submitted a total of 340 individual and collective pledges for the period 2008-2011 and beyond. In doing so, they demonstrated the strength of their humanitarian commitment, in the spirit of the Conference slogan, "Together for humanity."

Let me now briefly present you a preliminary review of the pledges made during this 30th Conference. I stress that this is very much a short summary. The full details of the pledges are available on the ICRC's website.

Many pledges were presented in relation to the themes of the Conference and the Declaration, "Together for humanity." Most addressed the themes that had been debated either in the general debate or in workshops. The pledges clearly display the readiness of States and National Societies to work together to achieve their objectives.

On environmental degradation, many participants pledged to address new and emerging challenges in this field, focusing on adaptation, preparedness and risk reduction. This included the promotion of community-based disaster preparedness and management, as well as risk reduction models. On international migration, many States and National Societies pledged to assist persons adversely affected by migration in various ways. On urban violence, pledges made covered essentially preventive strategies, including education and training youth in humanitarian values. On health, States and National Societies pledged to step up measures to cope with emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges, including equal access to treatment, prevention of HIV, malaria, TB and other communicable diseases, as well as the availability of safe blood. They also pledged to increase the scope of community-based health programmes.

Other subjects, related to the resolutions of the Conference, also received attention in pledges. First,

the ICRC, National Societies and the International Federation, as well as States from all parts of the world, pledged their strong commitment to support and implement the Restoring Family Links Strategy. Second, many States promised to accede to and support participation in a range of international humanitarian law treaties, including in particular the Protocols of 1977 and 2005 additional to the Geneva Conventions. They also pledged to work towards the implementation of international humanitarian law in domestic law. Pledges focused on addressing the explosive remnants of war. This is to be done by strengthening the international legal regime in this field and by providing assistance to victims. Many pledges also focused on the dissemination of, and training in, international humanitarian law among armed forces and civilians.. Particular pledges were undertaken for the training of journalists. Third, the IDRL Guidelines were widely supported. Participants pledged to use the Guidelines when reviewing their national legal frameworks.

Finally, the specific nature of Red Cross and Red Crescent action was reiterated. States underlined the auxiliary role and the independence of National Societies in the humanitarian field. While reaffirming the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and humanitarian values, National Societies and the International Federation pledged to combat discrimination, exploitation and other abuses of power. Attention was also given to strengthening understanding of the purpose and value of the distinctive emblem. This point was also relevant to pledges made in support of the Movement's commitment to neutral and independent humanitarian action.

To conclude this initial review of the pledges, let me emphasize that developing the volunteer and youth volunteer bases is at the heart of most pledges concerning the strengthening of National Societies. All the pledges have been recorded in an honour "book", which is on the ICRC's website. I should remind you that participants can continue to lodge pledges after the Conference by contacting the ICRC or the International Federation, meaning the book is not closed. You can contact and lodge pledges after the Conference. Please do so if you have not done that.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, let me remind us all that with commitment comes responsibility. The follow-up Report on the Agenda for Humanitarian Action for the Years 2004-2007 has shown that there is room for improvement in reporting the implementation of commitments. Pledges made during this Conference should strengthen our

commitment to continue and reinforce our work towards common goals. The implementation of both the Resolutions of this Conference and of our pledges should start today. Let us immediately start working “Together for humanity.” I would like to thank Aurélie de Gorostarzu and Martin Schuepp of the ICRC for preparing the draft of this report.

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, Ambassador. And now ladies and gentlemen, to continue with the reports: we will now hear from Ambassador Masood Khan, the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. Here again, I would like to do another preamble. I think his was a difficult job in a different direction. Whatever he presents here is a product of a lot of negotiation within that room: the words, the context, the actual content itself.

**4.9.3 REPORT OF THE DRAFTING
COMMITTEE**

**H.E. Mr Masood Khan,
Chair of the Drafting Committee**

(Original English)

Madam Chairwoman, I want to thank this International Conference for giving me the opportunity to chair its Drafting Committee. In the first half of the year, Dr Mohammed Al-Hadid, Chairman of the Standing Commission, proposed such a role for me. I accepted the nomination after deep reflection and wide consultation. Once I agreed to perform this role, I dedicated myself to exploring consensus. I promised impartiality and efficient conduct.

Madam Chairwoman, consensus building is a process, not an event. Diligence by a critical mass of negotiators and facilitators determines the outcome. I will therefore begin this report by thanking the ICRC and the International Federation for their thorough preparations, made over the past several years. This year, the Movement intensified their extensive consultations with States Parties and National Societies on the draft texts, which were structured around four core themes: one, collaborative action and partnership to address humanitarian challenges;

two, the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities; three, reaffirmation and implementation of international humanitarian law; and four, strengthening the legal frameworks for international response to disasters.

Madam Chairwoman, in the last two months, with the full blessings and backing of Madame Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Dr Kellenberger, Mr Markku Niskala and Dr Al-Hadid, we launched into an even more intensive consultative process involving several ambassadors and delegations based in Geneva, to identify areas of convergence and to narrow down divergences. In this effort, I was helped by: Ambassador Stephan Husy, Secretary-General designate at that time, now Secretary-General of the Conference; from the International Federation: Mr Ibrahim Osman, Mr Christopher Lamb, Ms Yulia Gusynina and Ms Elise Baudot; from the ICRC: Dr Philip Spoerri, Mr Balthasar Staehelin, Mr Jean-Philippe Lavoyer, Mr Bruce Biber, Ms Marion Harroff-Tavel, Mr Jean-Marie Henkaerts and Ms Victoria Gardener; Ms Helena Korhonen of the Standing Commission was associated with the entire preparatory process.

The Drafting Committee had before it a number of documents and was given the task of negotiating them and reaching consensus with a view to their adoption by the plenary. The documents are: Draft Declaration, “Together for humanity”; Draft Resolution 1, “Together for humanity”; Draft Resolution 2, The Specific Nature of the 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; Draft Resolution 3, Reaffirmation and Implementation of International Humanitarian Law: Preserving Human Life and Dignity; Draft Resolution 4, Adoption of the Guidelines for Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance.

Madam Chairwoman, I have the pleasure to report that by 7 p.m. on 28 November, the Drafting Committee adopted all the texts by consensus and decided to transmit them to the Conference plenary. The texts were re-endorsed by the Committee in all the official languages yesterday, on 29 November.

The Drafting Committee engaged in in-depth, substantive negotiations on all documents. A number of ad hoc working groups were established to reach agreement on specific parts of the texts. I would like to convey our deepest appreciation to the facilitators who helped us reach consensus in some of the most

difficult, most sensitive and potentially divisive issues. The illustrious persons who worked with me were from the International Federation, the ICRC, Egypt, Norway, the United States, India, the British Red Cross, the Government of the United Kingdom, Netherlands, the Swedish Red Cross, Switzerland, the Holy See, the Dominican Republic and Ethiopia. The list is not exhaustive.

I am also pleased to report that the majority of the issues were solved at the plenary itself, which demonstrated the genuinely collegial, cooperative and constructive spirit that prevailed in the room. I appreciate the serious concessions delegations made to reach consensus.

When I was invited to address a meeting of the Governing Board of the International Federation on 19 November, one representative of a National Society, responding to my invitation to participate fully in the work of the Drafting Committee, said that the International Conferences were traditionally dominated by governments. I can testify that National Societies along with governments made excellent contributions and enriched the content of our documents and resolutions.

The Drafting Committee was truly composed of governments and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They showed what “together for humanity” meant in real terms and how results can (and should always) follow good intentions. The documents before you, thus, represent an aggregation of interests of the Movement and States party to the Geneva Conventions that, we hope, will be endorsed by this plenary.

Madam Chairperson, a wise man once said that consensus is what many people say in chorus but do not believe as individuals. It is also believed that consensual texts usually represent the lowest common denominator. Not the consensus produced by this Drafting Committee. This Drafting Committee presents the texts that, we believe, reflect a common denominator for future vision and direction. These texts strengthen, not weaken, the original drafts.

The Draft Declaration – “Together for Humanity” – along with its draft resolution represents the state of thinking of this Conference on the major contemporary humanitarian challenges in the areas of environment, international migration, urban violence and public health. The role of the components of the Movement, particularly National Societies, in solving those issues is recognized throughout the documents. Their active participation in the work of

the Drafting Committee shows their commitment to this partnership, be it the measures to decrease the vulnerability of communities to environmental hazards and degradation or humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants, irrespective of their legal status, or humanitarian activities to prevent or mitigate violence, or filling the gaps in facilitating access for vulnerable people, without discrimination, to prevention, health promotion and curative care.

The draft resolution on The Specific Nature of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Action and Partnerships and the Role of National Societies as Auxiliaries endorses a similar resolution recently adopted by the Council of Delegates of the Movement and provides guidance to governments and National Societies on how to improve dialogue and complementary action for the benefit of vulnerable people.

Most significantly, I think that the draft resolution on international humanitarian law (IHL) contains a strong commitment from all the members of the Conference to respect and ensure respect for humanitarian law. It strongly reaffirms the applicability and relevance of IHL for preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict. The resolution is premised on the conviction that IHL remains as relevant in armed conflicts today as ever before, from traditional inter-State wars to the wide variety of armed conflicts not of an international character the world suffers today. IHL continues to provide valuable legal protection for victims of all types of armed conflict. In this resolution, we will reaffirm the basic tenets of IHL that include the right to humane treatment, the prohibition of torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and of arbitrary detention, and the right to a fair trial. It highlights the obligation of the parties to a conflict, as well as that of third States, to grant humanitarian relief and relief workers rapid and unimpeded access to civilian populations in need, and the obligation to respect and protect humanitarian relief personnel. In some of the most difficult areas, excellent results were produced by Rolf-Einar Fife of Norway, Jeffrey Kovar of the United States and Mr Omar Shalaby of Egypt, who acted as negotiators and catalysts.

The resolution on the Adoption of the Guidelines on the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance was agreed. The Resolution adopts the IDRL Guidelines and sets out the future role of National Societies, States and the International Federation in the area of IDRL. Although non-binding, the Guidelines reflect a broad agreement on how institutional, policy and legal frameworks could effectively facilitate and regulate

international disaster response. The Guidelines were the subject of a lengthy consultation process, including high-level regional multi-stakeholder forums, as well as other global, regional and bilateral meetings, briefings and discussions. I was told that in total, over 150 States, 140 National Societies and over 40 agencies and bodies of the United Nations, international and regional organizations and NGOs were consulted on the various previous drafts. I was also informed that strong support for the resolution and Guidelines was also evidenced by numerous statements made by participants in Commission C. These Guidelines are in fact a free gift to States, which may choose to customize, adapt and adopt them voluntarily as they develop laws and streamline their administrative machinery.

I would like to thank the three Vice-Chairs of the Drafting Committee: His Excellency Ambassador Valery Loshchinin of the Russian Federation, Mr Abbas Gullet of the Kenya Red Cross and Mr Ian Courtenay of the Belize Red Cross Society. They sat through the proceedings faithfully and followed all the developments in the Committee. Their support enhanced the Committee's efficiency.

Madam Chairwoman, my thanks to the most efficient committee secretariat team I have ever had. It was a dream team and they are: Ms Yulia Gusynyna from the International Federation, and Mr Jean-Marie Henckaerts, Victoria Gardener, Victoria Bannon, Baptiste Rolle, Karin Layoun, Azim Nourani and Marie-Noëlle Laforest. I would also like to thank Ms Nanaz Shahidi-Chubin under whose stewardship interpreters supported our difficult negotiations. Our thanks also to the officers responsible for room allocation, translation and document distribution.

Madam Chairwoman, now is the time for special thanks. Ms Yulia Gusynyna who was the focal point and my 'one-window' liaison with the International Federation and the ICRC: she simply did an outstanding job; she made the entire organizational process look like a piece of cake. Thank you, Yulia. Mr Chris Lamb, who was my political eyes and ears, as well as my compass, Jean-Marie Henckaerts for his legal acumen and diligence: thank you. Ms Andrée Lorber-Willis, Head of Administration at the International Federation, who made every administrative chore work like clockwork. And my delegation – Ahmar Ismail as well as Tehmina Janjua and Aftab Khokher – for giving me space and support. Last but not least, Ambassador Stephan Husy, Secretary-General of the Conference, in his unassuming yet most effective manner, provided leadership in the running of this humanitarian marathon.

Madam Chairwoman, I also thank you and other colleagues in the Bureau for the wise counsel and excellent guidance to the Committee. A final note: I have authorized some editorial corrections to be made in the translations into the French, Spanish and Arabic languages. A list of these corrections is being included in the report of this Conference. The documents are ready for adoption by the 30th International Conference.

4.9.4 ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

**Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams,
Chairwoman of the Conference**

(Original English)

Thank you, Ambassador Khan. Now ladies and gentlemen, we are very close to the end of the 30th International Conference. But before we close, we have to do one important thing and that is the adoption of the resolutions.

You will remember that we have already adopted one resolution, yesterday, the one on the follow-up of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding of 28 November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom in Israel.

I would like us now to adopt those resolutions as they were given to us by Ambassador Khan in his report. They are the following:

- (1) Adoption of the Declaration and Resolution, "Together for Humanity"
- (2) Adoption of the Resolution, "The Specific Nature of the 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"
- (3) Reaffirmation and Implementation of International Humanitarian Law: Preserving Human Life and Dignity in Armed Conflict
- (4) Adoption of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance

(5) And the last Resolution: you now have the resolution on the date and place of the 31st International Conference on your table. I would like you now to adopt these resolutions

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you. I now have a request that I should give the floor to the delegation from Egypt. We are almost at the end.

**H.E. Mr Sameh Shoukry,
Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Egypt, Geneva**

(Original English)

On behalf of the African Group, I would like to congratulate you on the able manner in which you steered the work of this important Conference. Permit me also to extend through you our sincere appreciation to all members of the Bureau, who spared no effort in ensuring a successful Conference. Special thanks must be conveyed to H.E. Ambassador Masood Khan, Chairman of the Drafting Committee. Through his able and skilful leadership he was able to guide our work to a successful conclusion.

We have just adopted a number of far-reaching documents that, if implemented, can make a significant contribution to improving the situation of victims and those most in need. The African Group salutes the constructive engagement demonstrated by every member of this Conference during the deliberations, consultations and negotiations on its outcome documents. We especially welcome the flexibility and understanding shown by many delegations, National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation in accommodating the various proposals put forward by the African Group in relation to its outcome documents, all in a spirit of compromise and consensus building, which should always constitute the hallmarks of the humanitarian Movement in carrying out its noble objectives.

Finally, the African Group welcomes the election of Mr Adama Diarra from Mali to the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. A successful African candidature for the Standing Commission was long overdue. We would like to express our appreciation to all those who supported Africa's candidates in the elections, the results of which have helped bring us closer to the principles of universality and equitable geographic representation.

4.9.5 CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Chairwoman of the Conference

(Original English)

Now ladies and gentlemen, I would like to start the end of the Conference in the following manner. I would like us all to thank, in the most visible and special way, the volunteers who have made this Conference live for us. From the day the Movement's statutory meeting started, they have been women and men in red T-shirts, and I would invite them to come and be seen by everybody and be applauded by the Conference.

Thank you. To you, ladies and gentlemen, I say *muchas gracias*, thank you, *baya*, *Danke*, *shukran*, I forgot what else. But thank you, thank you very much. First, I would like to thank the members of the team that I joined when I took up the challenge of being the Chair to this Conference. My first reaction when I was asked to chair the Conference was, actually, to become very scared. I was apprehensive and I kept saying to myself, "What if I fail?" I think at the time I did not realize that it was not the chairing of the Conference, but the spirit that the rest of the Conference brings into the room. I did not know that I would have to rely on such goodwill from all the members of this Conference. I did not know that I would actually also be guided by existing principles, existing laws as well as your overall commitment to serving humanity in your best able way. Now I know differently because you have shown me.

The success of this Conference poses a special challenge to all of us, though: it does not end here; it begins when we get home. It is the beginning of the hard work for all of us. Now we need to put the statements, the pledges, the resolutions and the promises that we have made which are on paper – Ambassador Khan has just reminded us of what we have committed to – into action when we get home. We actually also need to demystify them so that my grandmother in a village can understand what it is that we said and agreed upon here, can actually identify with the decisions you took here as something that will make a difference to her life. Will she have clean water tomorrow? Will her son who is on the run come home, because the political situation in their country has normalized? Will this orphan affected by HIV/AIDS be able to go to school tomorrow and regain his or her childhood, like all other normal children? That, for me, is what the

International Conference means to the man on the ground. I think we have also committed ourselves on very critical issues. We have spoken of how we are now looking out at climate change because we may have seen it as a scientific issue; for people vulnerable to disasters, it is the reality of escalating suffering. We have spoken of migration. I have already said what it does to an ordinary family when it throws people asunder. We then have to say, "We will unite you with your family."

We have also spoken of partnerships. Are the partnerships balanced? Are we talking of givers and receivers, or are we talking of equal partners with equal responsibilities, on a credible basis of services being rendered in a way that makes the lives of people change? So all of these things that we have spoken about here may be words here, but when we get home, these need to be actions.

Now, in order for us to have understood each other in terms of communication, we could never have done it. I have a language full of so many clicks that if I sprang up and spoke in that language, very few people in this room would understand; but the organizers made it

easy for us. They provided the interpretation of what we said as well as the translation of documents. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I would like you to help me to thank the translators and the interpreters of this Conference.

And finally, I would like, on behalf of the Movement, to thank all the governments for the hard work they have put into making this Conference yet another memorable Conference. I would also like to thank the leadership of the ICRC and the International Federation for being there as part of this whole rich Movement that we all belong to, but most sincerely, I want to thank the National Societies who have sacrificed all their hard work at home to come and be part of this ground-breaking, successful build-up to a better future for the people that we serve.

May you all travel well from this Conference. Travel with blessings and have a very safe festive period as we move into the end of this year. Thank you very much. Thank you! Ladies and gentlemen, I am told that if I don't do the next thing, you will all have to come back here next week. I would now like to declare the Conference officially closed.



4.10 LIST OF PLEDGES

The pledges can be consulted on the ICRC and the International Federation websites (www.icrc.org and www.ifrc.org). For further information, please refer to the overview of pledges presented by H.E. Mr Ichiro Fujisaki, Rapporteur of the Conference (section 4.9.2).

Governments that made pledges at the 30th International Conference

Argentina
Armenia
Australia
Austria
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belgium
Bulgaria
Cambodia
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic (the)
Denmark
Dominican Republic (the)
El Salvador
Eritrea
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Holy See (the)
Honduras
Hungary
Iceland
Indonesia
Ireland
Italy
Japan
Latvia
Lesotho
Liberia
Lithuania

Luxembourg
Malta
Mexico
Monaco
Montenegro
Netherlands (the)
New Zealand
Nigeria
Norway
Papua New Guinea
Peru
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea (the)
Romania
Serbia
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia
Slovenia
South Africa
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Thailand
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Turkey
Uganda
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uruguay

National Societies that made pledges at the 30th International Conference

Algeria – Red Crescent
Antigua and Barbuda – Red Cross
Area under Palestinian Authority – Red Crescent
Armenia – Red Cross
Australia – Red Cross
Austria – Red Cross
Bahamas (the) – Red Cross
Barbados – Red Cross
Belarus – Red Cross

Belgium – Red Cross	Montenegro – Red Cross
Belize – Red Cross	Morocco – Red Crescent
Bolivia – Red Cross	Mozambique – Red Cross
Botswana – Red Cross	Myanmar – Red Cross
Brazil – Red Cross	Namibia – Red Cross
Bulgaria – Red Cross	Netherlands (the) – Red Cross
Cambodia – Red Cross	New Zealand – Red Cross
Canada – Red Cross	Nicaragua – Red Cross
Chile – Red Cross	Nigeria – Red Cross
China – Red Cross	Norway – Red Cross
Colombia – Red Cross	Panama – Red Cross
Cook Islands – Red Cross	Paraguay – Red Cross
Costa Rica – Red Cross	Peru – Red Cross
Côte d'Ivoire – Red Cross	Philippines (the) – Red Cross
Cuba – Red Cross	Poland – Red Cross
Czech Republic (the) – Red Cross	Portugal – Red Cross
Democratic Republic of the Congo (the) – Red Cross	Republic of Korea (the) – Red Cross
Denmark – Red Cross	Romania – Red Cross
Dominica – Red Cross	Rwanda – Red Cross
Dominican Republic (the) – Red Cross	Saint Kitts and Nevis – Red Cross
Ecuador – Red Cross	Saint Lucia – Red Cross
Egypt – Red Crescent	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – Red Cross
El Salvador – Red Cross	Samoa – Red Cross
Estonia – Red Cross	Serbia – Red Cross
Ethiopia – Red Cross	Sierra Leone – Red Cross
Fiji – Red Cross	Singapore – Red Cross
Finland – Red Cross	Slovakia – Red Cross
France – Red Cross	Slovenia – Red Cross
Germany – Red Cross	Solomon Islands – Red Cross
Greece – Red Cross	Somalia – Red Crescent
Grenada – Red Cross	South Africa – Red Cross
Guatemala – Red Cross	Spain – Red Cross
Guinea – Red Cross	Sri Lanka – Red Cross
Guinea-Bissau – Red Cross	Suriname – Red Cross
Guyana – Red Cross	Swaziland – Red Cross
Haiti – Red Cross	Sweden – Red Cross
Honduras – Red Cross	Switzerland – Red Cross
Hungary – Red Cross	Syrian Arab Republic (the) – Red Crescent
Iceland – Red Cross	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Red Cross
Indonesia – Red Cross	Togo – Red Cross
Ireland – Red Cross	Tonga – Red Cross
Italy – Red Cross	Trinidad and Tobago – Red Cross
Jamaica – Red Cross	Tunisia – Red Crescent
Japan – Red Cross	Turkey – Red Crescent
Kenya – Red Cross	Uganda – Red Cross
Lao People's Democratic Republic (the) – Red Cross	Ukraine – Red Cross
Latvia – Red Cross	United Arab Emirates (the) – Red Crescent
Lebanon – Red Cross	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – Red Cross
Lesotho – Red Cross	United Republic of Tanzania (the) – Red Cross
Liberia – Red Cross	United States of America – Red Cross
Lithuania – Red Cross	Uruguay – Red Cross
Luxembourg – Red Cross	Vanuatu – Red Cross
Malawi – Red Cross	Venezuela – Red Cross
Malaysia – Red Crescent	Viet Nam – Red Cross
Malta – Red Cross	
Mexico – Red Cross	

Zambia – Red Cross

International components that made pledges at the 30th International Conference

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

Observers that made pledges at the 30th International Conference

International Society for Military Law and the Law of War
Pan-Pacific & South-East Asian Women's Association
Tuvalu Red Cross Society



4.11

LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE

- Provisional agenda and programme of the 30th International Conference (30IC/07/1.1)
- Guiding questions for Commissions
- Programme of workshops and side events to be held during the 30th International Conference
- Guidelines for pledging
- Information note for the members, observers and guests of the 30th International Conference

Objective 1 – The need for collaborative action and partnerships between States, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other stakeholders in addressing humanitarian challenges of common concern

- Background document (30IC/07/5.1)
Document prepared jointly by the ICRC and the International Federation
- Draft declaration “Together for humanity” (30IC/07/5.2 – for decision at the Conference)
Document prepared jointly by the ICRC and the International Federation
- Draft Resolution 1- Adoption of the Declaration “Together for humanity” (30IC/07/15.1 – for decision at the Conference)
Document prepared jointly by the ICRC and the International Federation

Objective 2 – The specific nature of the 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

- Background document (30IC/07/7.1)
Document prepared by the International Federation in consultation with the ICRC

- Draft resolution (30IC/07/7.2 – for decision at the Conference)
Document prepared by the International Federation in consultation with the ICRC

Objective 3 – Reaffirmation and implementation of international humanitarian law: “Preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict”

- Background document (30IC/07/8.1)
Document prepared by the ICRC
- Draft resolution (30IC/07/8.2 – for decision at the Conference)
Document prepared by the ICRC
- Study on customary international humanitarian law (30IC/07/8.3 – for information at the Conference)
Document prepared by the ICRC
- International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts (30IC/07/8.4)
Document prepared by the ICRC

Objective 4 – Strengthening the legal framework for international response to disasters

- Background document (30IC/07/9.1) – including Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance
Document prepared by the International Federation in consultation with the ICRC
- Draft resolution – Adoption of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (30IC/07/9.2 – for decision at the Conference)
Document prepared by the International Federation

Report on the follow-up to the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2004-2007) including:

- Introduction (30IC/07/10.1.0)
Document prepared jointly by the ICRC and the International Federation
- Part 1 – Implementation of General Objective 1 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action: Respect and restore the dignity of persons missing as a result of armed conflicts or other situations of armed violence and of their families (30IC/07/10.1.1)
Document prepared by the ICRC
- Part 2 – Implementation of General Objective 2 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action: Addressing the human costs of the availability, use and misuse of weapons in armed conflicts (30IC/07/10.1.2)
Document prepared by the ICRC
- Part 3 – Implementation of General Objective 3 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action: Minimize the impact of disasters through implementation of disaster risk reduction measures and improving preparedness and response mechanisms (30IC/07/10.1.3)
Document prepared by the International Federation
- Part 4 – Implementation of General Objective 4 of the Agenda for Humanitarian Action: Reduce the increased vulnerability to diseases arising from stigma and discrimination and from the lack of access to comprehensive prevention, care and treatment (30IC/07/10.1.4)
Document prepared by the International Federation
- Part 5 – Implementation of Resolution 1 in the field of international humanitarian law (30IC/07/10.1.5)
Document prepared by the ICRC
- The Restoring Family Links Strategy (and implementation plan) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008-2018) (30IC/07/10.2 and CD/07/4.1), copy of the draft Strategy as submitted to the Council of Delegates (23-24 November 2007) for adoption
Document prepared by the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC in consultation with National Societies and the International Federation



FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE STANDING COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

(CONSTITUTIVE MEETING)

GENEVA, 30 NOVEMBER 2007

PRESENT

Chairwoman of the 30th International Conference

Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams

Elected members

Mr Mohammed Al-Hadid

Dr Massimo Barra

Mr Steve Carr

Mr Eamon Courtenay

Mr Adama Diarra

Members, representatives of the ICRC

Mr Jakob Kellenberger

Mr Philip Spoerri

Members, representatives of the International Federation

Mr Juan Manuel Suarez del Toro Rivero

Mr Markku Niskala

Secretariat

Ms Helena Korhonen, Head of Secretariat

Ms Erica Tong Junod, Assistant

Other participants

Mr Manuel Fiol, Adviser to the President of the International Federation

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

The first meeting of the new Standing Commission, chaired by Ms Mandisa Kalako-Williams, Chairwoman of the 30th International Conference, took place at the CICG in Geneva on 30 November 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to elect the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Commission.

Decision: Mr Mohammed Al-Hadid was re-elected Chairman of the Standing Commission for the first two years of the four-year term after which Dr Massimo Barra will take the chairmanship for the remaining two years.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

As Chairman of the Standing Commission, Mr Al-Hadid proposed Dr Massimo Barra to serve as the Vice-Chairman.

Decision: Dr Barra was elected to the position of Vice-Chairman of the Standing Commission.

3. NEXT MEETING

The Commission agreed to meet from 21 to 22 February 2008.

