



# Youth Declaration

*Solferino 2009*

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth on the Move: Doing more, doing better, reaching further**

We the youth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, united on the battlefields of Solferino, reaffirm the vision of 31 year-old Henry Dunant. His vision of humanity has changed the world and united us under common emblems of hope. 150 years later, his fleeting idea has evolved into a global humanitarian movement of 100 million Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers.

We the youth of 150 countries, representing the 50 million youth volunteers of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, have gathered to define our vision of humanity and to address the Solferinos of today. Poverty, conflict, violence, migration, disease, discrimination and climate change are some of the challenges that still cause suffering for hundreds of millions of people across the world.

Our generation faces unprecedented change. As Henry Dunant mobilized the people of Solferino to alleviate suffering, and then appealed to world to provide humanitarian access, we have mobilized ourselves and now appeal to the leaders of the world to:

- Recognize youth as agents of change;
- Encourage the unique abilities and skills that young people alone can bring to the table, such as intercultural communication and innovative use of technology;
- Include youth in decision-making and planning processes at all levels;
- Push for youth to have a stronger role in program development and implementation to empower their communities; and
- Increase focus on formal and non-formal peer education as a primary method of prevention.

We speak with one voice and call on the international community to work with us to do more, do better, and reach further.

## ***In a world full of challenges, we the youth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement commit ourselves to:***

1. Inner change and the development of skills to promote harmony and positive attitudes within communities;
2. Live our seven Fundamental Principles as agents of behavioral change in our communities;
3. Renounce violence, promote non-discrimination and respect for diversity, and a culture of peace in the world;
4. Stand up for non-discrimination in our personal lives; and
5. Live up to our roots in international humanitarian law, by acting and standing up to reduce suffering in armed conflict, and actively disseminating information about the rules of armed conflict, even in times of peace.

***Live our principles,  
celebrate our diversity,  
change our community.***

**Youth voices  
from Solferino  
for stronger  
societies.**

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***We call on our National Societies to:***

1. Enable youth to take a leadership role in positively changing behaviors and attitudes in our communities, using peer and non-formal education methods such as the Federation's "Youth as Agents of Behavioral Change" initiative;
2. Include the "most-vulnerable" groups in decision-making processes; and
3. Declare that discrimination of any kind is unacceptable in our Movement, including discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation.

***We call on the governments of the world  
and on the international community to:***

1. Promote knowledge and respect for diversity and non-discrimination;
2. Ensure that education is applied in order to prevent violence and abuse affecting children and young people;
3. Respect international humanitarian law in armed conflict and during peace, and ensure all cases of violation are properly investigated;
4. Include international humanitarian law in formal education curricula;
5. Improve the control of weapons with a special focus on small firearms; and
6. Seriously address the issue of children involved in armed conflict, including their reintegration into society in post-conflict areas.

***We the youth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement  
commit ourselves to:***

1. Do our part in building stronger societies by using the invaluable knowledge, resources, energy, capabilities and networks of young people to carry the Movement through the 21st century;
2. Cultivate a more diverse base of youth volunteers, and address local needs of vulnerable people;
3. Honest, transparent self-assessment and regular review of policies and guidelines at all levels, to strengthen global youth participation in the Movement;
4. Embrace equal leadership opportunities for young women and young men, and share success stories;
5. Establish and strengthen regional networks to empower local and international youth structures; and
6. Further utilize social media and emerging technologies to advocate, share ideas, and communicate efficiently.

***We call on our National Societies to:***

1. Empower, enable, educate and elevate young people by sharing responsibility, power and decision-making in a genuine partnership;
2. Involve young people in decision-making processes at regional and international statutory meetings;
3. Work together as a Federation to address the urgent need for financial and human resources to support youth development at the regional and national levels;
4. Provide resources and opportunities to develop, retain and transition volunteers throughout their lives; and
5. Commit to achieve gender equality, especially in leadership.

***We call on the governments of the world  
and on the international community to:***

1. Commit to greater accessibility of education and leadership opportunities for women; and
2. Empower, enable, educate and elevate young people by sharing responsibility, power and decision-making in a genuine partnership.

## **Healthy youth make a healthy world.**

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### ***We the youth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement commit ourselves to:***

1. Ramp up prevention efforts for sexually-transmitted infections, including HIV, through peer education and, for example, condom distribution programs and other suitable approaches;
2. Promote the “right to know” about substance-related harm, by increasing peer education and community participation;
3. Act to eliminate stigma and discrimination associated with tuberculosis, HIV, and drug use;
4. Promote voluntary non-remunerated blood donation to save lives, promote healthy lifestyles, and instill humanitarian values, through programs such as Club 25; and
5. Address road safety as a humanitarian challenge, by encouraging young people to act responsibly.

### ***We call on our National Societies to:***

1. Address tuberculosis treatment, HIV prevention and challenge stigma; and
2. Support voluntary non-remunerated blood donation, targeting young donors.

### ***We call on the governments of the world and on the international community to:***

1. Address drug and alcohol abuse as a humanitarian challenge, not a criminal one; and
2. Include first aid and road safety in national education curricula, and allocate appropriate financial and logistical resources.

## **Adapting to climate change and addressing catastrophes.**

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### ***We the youth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement commit ourselves to:***

1. Involve ourselves in disaster preparedness, response and recovery, including innovative solutions such as psychosocial support;
2. Live up to our commitments on climate change, and make little moves every day, using youth peer education to change communities;
3. Advocate strongly on climate change adaptation, including the protection of climate migrants;
4. “Safe food for safe life”, by advocating on food security; and
5. Advocate for access to clean and safe water, and contribute to sustainable solutions.

### ***We call on our National Societies to:***

1. Follow through on existing commitments on climate change.

### ***We call on the governments of the world and on the international community to reduce vulnerability to disaster by:***

1. Creating active and dynamic partnerships at all levels, to address climate change mitigation and adaptation;
2. Preparing for and responding to the emerging humanitarian effects of climate change, such as the protection of climate migrants; and
3. Renewing your commitment to finding sustainable water security for all.

## THIS IS OUR VISION.

We intend to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Federation in 2019 with the successful achievement of these objectives. We are ready to assume our responsibilities, but we cannot do so alone. We need National Societies and governments to help us address the Solferinos of today. We urge the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, national governments and the international community to do more, do better, and reach further.

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Participants of Youth on the move  
3<sup>rd</sup> Red Cross Red Crescent World Youth  
Meeting Solferino, Italy  
June 2009

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