



# daily bulletin

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## Strengthening the Seville Agreement

The Council of Delegates approved a resolution aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Seville Agreement which regulates the response of different Movement components to international emergencies. The resolution acknowledges that “the Seville Agreement has been an essential tool to organize the international activities of the Movement” but also notes the concern of some National Societies “that the Agreement does not adequately address some areas of operational cooperation.”

The resolution includes a series of supplementary measures designed to enhance the implementation of the Seville Agreement. The measures include steps to clarify the respective roles of the ‘lead agency’ and the host National Society:

The latter should maintain its role and mandate at all times and therefore be the ‘primary partner’ of the Lead Agency. All other components involved in an international operation should support an increased role for the host National Society in the direction and coordination of activities. Moreover, the function of Lead Agency is defined as a temporary

response to a particular emergency.

The supplementary measures also mention different steps to promote better knowledge of the Agreement within the Movement itself. They call on the ICRC and the Federation to design training modules on the agreement with the involvement of National Societies and ask all components to conduct regular training sessions for staff and volunteers.

The resolution also establishes a group to monitor the implementation of the Seville Agreement and of the supplementary measures, and to address all coordination and cooperation issues in the Movement. The group comprises the four elected vice presidents of the



*Freddy Pedersen, Standing Commission,  
speaking on the Seville Agreement.*

Tae Kyung Ryu

Federation, a member of the Governing Board representing the Middle East and North Africa region, plus two representatives each of the Federation Secretariat and the ICRC. It is to report back to the Council of Delegates in 2007. ■

# Auxiliary role must be protected and understood by all

Ibrahim Osman, director of policy and relations for the International Federation, opened the discussion explaining that there was a need for a common understanding between the Movement and governments on the definition and the scope of the role of the National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities, based on the Fundamental Principles and the Movement's statutes. He declared that the 'concept of this relationship is still not clear, and needs to be further explored'. He stressed the need to find a common agreement and understanding over the next two years, in time for the International Conference in 2007. He explained that a working definition will be developed to facilitate easier understanding of the auxiliary role and to promote the 'balanced relationship'.

The report stresses the importance of the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to their national public authorities.

However, it also highlights the risks the auxiliary role encompasses, especially when it is not correctly understood or misinterpreted.

The report also summarizes a study carried out by the ICRC, in consultation with the International Federation and National Societies, on National Societies and the public authorities in situations of armed conflict.

Angelo Gnädinger, director-general of the ICRC, stressed that 'at a time when we are trying to reassert our independence and neutrality, the issue of our auxiliary role becomes more important'. However he warned that 'while carrying out their auxiliary role, National Societies must be guided by the Fundamental Principles and must refrain from activities that attribute to any military effort'.

Various delegations made interventions and many reiterated the key points made



*Ibrahim Osman - Director of Policy and Relations - International Federation - speaking about the national society auxiliary.*

in the resolution. Namely, that the auxiliary role is a key requirement for National Societies and it is this that sets them apart from NGOs within their own countries; that the role of a National Society as an auxiliary must be balanced against the requirement that it remain independent from government; that the auxiliary relationship must be mutually beneficial and in compliance with the Fundamental Principles and the Statutes of the Movement. ■

# Corporate Sector Partnerships Policy endorsed

In a world that sees a steady rise in the number of emergencies and a continued demand for more resources to respond effectively, it is critical that all components of the Movement are able to build and expand their corporate partnerships.

The Movement Policy for Corporate Sector Partnerships, presented to the Council of Delegates, aims to enable the Movement to draw on benefits of such partnerships while safeguarding its integrity, values and reputation and ensuring respect for the emblems. It offers guidance on ethical criteria and what the Movement can offer in return for corporate support, especially with regard to use of the Movement's emblems.

The document, developed in response to Action 17 of the Strategy of the Movement, was produced by the ICRC and the International Federation, who reviewed a range of existing laws, regulations and statutory decisions and consulted closely with a number of National Societies over a period of two years. The policy was further fine-tuned with amendments suggested at the council.

Measures established for developing corporate partnerships include a set of guiding principles on selection criteria for potential partners, a screening procedure and standard provisions for partnership contracts. The policy can also be used as a reference document to develop distinct country policies by National Societies.



*Markku Niskala, secretary general, International Federation talking on the corporate sector partnerships policy.*

Each component of the Movement is individually responsible for implementing the policy when entering into partnerships at local, national and international level. The ICRC and the International Federation will ensure dissemination of the policy and ensure it is respected, while National Societies are tasked with disseminating it internally and monitoring its application nationally. ■

## The Empress Shôken Fund

**O**n the second day of the Council of Delegates, the draft resolution amending the operation of the Empress Shôken Fund was adopted. The delegates had also received the report of the Joint Commission for the Fund. During the period 2004-2005, grants amounting to 804,950 Swiss francs were made to 19 National Societies, mainly for projects in the field of training, disaster preparedness, youth, first aid, health education and health care for children, care for the elderly and humanitarian values.



The Empress Shôken Fund was established in 1912 when HM the Empress Shôken presented 100,000 yen in gold to the Red Cross to promote National Society activities. In 1934, a second gift from the Japanese Imperial family brought the fund up to 200,000 yen. Over the years, successive contributions from Imperial, government and private sources have increased the fund's value, which currently stands at 12 million Swiss francs. ■

## IDRL update

**S**et up in 2003, the International Federation's Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) programme seeks to generate a global consensus on implementing a coherent framework of laws, rules and principles addressing international response to disasters, where needed. In this context, it will organize four regional meetings in 2006, convening States, international organizations, non governmental organizations and academics, in order to gather support for the further development of an IDRL substantive framework to address currently observed gaps. The IDRL programme seeks to raise awareness, promote the implementation, and where necessary, encourage the development of laws, rules and principles that ensure timely, adequate and efficient international disaster assistance in non-conflict situations. It underscores the importance of legal preparedness for international response to disasters, promotes the rules of accountability and quality of humanitarian assistance, and emphasizes that international assistance must support and strengthen, rather than undermine or override national and community capacities.

As part of its promotion strategy, the programme has contributed to numerous international and regional forums and has received explicit positive recognition in the report of the UN Secretary-General to the 2004 UN Economic and Social Council. Among its plans for the future is the creation of a global IDRL network, the development of an IDRL training module and operational handbook designed for international disaster personnel, as well as a legislative guide for governments. ■

## The Joint Statutes Commission – ensuring sound legal bases

**T**he second report of the joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes was also submitted for information to the delegates.

During the period under review, 2004 to 2005, the report pointed out a “worrisome trend”, illustrated in “a number of cases where the public authorities utilize existing legislation to justify their intervention and instrumentalisation of the National Society. In parallel, the Commission has received an increasing number of requests for assistance in drafting National Society laws and has stepped

up its support in this field. Since 2000, the Commission has reviewed 92 draft or adopted Statutes and 24 are currently under review.

It is crucial, the report says, that “the national legislation establishes a healthy relationship between the authorities and the National Society, notably by providing safeguards against State interference, while simultaneously recognizing the National Society as a legal entity for voluntary aid, auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field”. Governmental appointment of the President of the National Society and

mandatory approval for changes in the Statutes, constitute examples of Government interference that “threatens the ability of the National Society to accomplish its humanitarian mission”, the report said.

The Commission, established in 1974, has a consultative role and a two-fold mandate, to assess the compliance with the ten conditions of recognition of National Societies wishing to be recognized, and to provide recommendations on the legal bases of National Societies, such as their Statutes. ■