

Remarks at the opening of the Governing Board  
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Mr President, Mr Konoé,  
Vice Presidents of the International Federation,  
Members of the Governing Board,  
Mr Secretary General,  
Friends, Good morning,

When I'm now back at the Governing Board addressing you for the second time, a Standing Commission Newsletter has just been issued and sent to all of you, to the permanent missions in Geneva. I've received some greetings back, even from some of you in this room, and I thank you for that.

So instead of dwelling on the updates in the Newsletter which you have in front of you, I will focus on some issues, which the Standing Commission will discuss at its next meeting 5th December. I'm interested in your input - in the breaks or by email.

*But first.*

Discussions in my country among my generation as well as younger generations lately often end up around the deepening concerns of our time. Many of us grew up during a period with an invisible growth arrow pointing to a brighter future with increasing wealth and peace. Even early this century, I recall high-level analysis of less armed conflict. This has crumbled and our innocence is gone. We're in a period of challenges. Last summer I read ancient philosophers just to find similar themes, unrest, war, population movements, fear of foreigners. In a way it consoled me. It's about fluctuations. *It is* possible to turn the cycle upwards again.

In this period, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a particular role to play. The preparations for the next International Conference is for all of us, not only for organising committees. We all **need to invest seriously** in reminding ourselves and states of the need to implement decisions taken in 2015 and preparing for 2019. We have the decisions, it's about implementation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement presence was very visible in the UN World Humanitarian Summit earlier this year. You who were there, saw it. We influenced decisions. But, it was also very clear to us what an asset our own International Conference is and the role IHL needs to play. As Chair of the Standing Commission my request to you as leadership is: Invest a lot in the International conference. We need **together to shape** the Global Humanitarian Agenda. And we **can** shape it.

To do that, we also need to **invest seriously in our Movement**, understand how important agile and flexible interaction is, and how *best* to interact in this period. These issues have a forum too: **the Council of Delegates**, our Movement statutory forum. Now we are preparing for the next one in a year in Turkey. In December you'll receive a concept note. Your will be asked to contribute to the thinking. We shape the agenda of the Council of Delegates together.

*So now.*

To the areas that I wanted views on: Futures, the Movement Vision and Movement interaction.

**On Futures:** Last time, I mentioned that the Standing Commission discusses future mega-trends that affect humanitarian actors, to be able to analyse consequences for people we serve and thus shape our responses accordingly. We will frame Movement deliberations in the Council of Delegates by providing futures analysis as a backdrop. During this Governing Board the Federation Futures and Foresight framework will be presented and you will initiate discussions around the effects of the fourth industrial revolution.

I don't need to say that analysing futures is about today's needs. And I don't need to say that the purpose of future trends analysis is *the consequences*, how to better shape our responses.

The second area I'd like to highlight is **the Movement Vision**. At the recent Council of Delegates we all decided to have a Movement Vision, we decided to promote it among ourselves and to look at the impact of it.

The Vision presents aims and elements that bind us together, starting with the fundamental principles and the humanitarian imperative. As a Movement, we've also taken particular decisions in the last few years to increase interaction. The SMCC, the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation process, the Branding initiative and a Movement-Wide Resource Mobilisation initiative. At the next Council of Delegates we can take stock of where we are. Those areas build towards the Movement Vision.

So question one, in our aims to reach the Movement Vision, are there other areas that we need to embark on to be more agile and flexible and joined up in our relations within the Movement?

Let me now give you an example from my own National Society. A test was done to understand how well the Swedish Red Cross strategy fits into the Movement Vision. The first reaction was that the Movement Vision and the Swedish Red Cross strategy were very similar, indeed hand in glove. One person said, there are many strategies, Strategy 2020, ICRC's four year strategy and the Swedish Red Cross one. Why this Vision too? With some more thinking a view emerged. This Vision was indeed very different and was not able to be replaced – and for one simple reason – it encompasses all Red Cross and all Red Crescent, including the ICRC. One can call it *the Movement factor*. The Movement factor binds the whole network together and a reason for the value of the Movement Vision.

So striving to reach the Movement Vision, what does it mean for how we build our global and national *strategies* in the future? How can the strategies themselves better reflect each other and Movement interaction? So my second question is how you will use the Movement vision in your own work with your national strategy and - of course also - building Strategy 2030?

Thinking also goes on outside of the Movement. Indeed, a couple of bilateral donor governments take the view that rather than only supporting separate parts of our Movement, they would also want to support some *common or joint* strategies of the Movement. This indicates that *they* see acting as Movement as more needed now. Why? It may be about *efficiency* and *results*, but also about *purpose of a distinct humanitarian actor within the humanitarian eco-system*. The proposals so far seems to be rather discrete, but it means that we need to relate to that kind of view from certain governments who find that convergence and synergy can help achieve more on the ground.

I believe we all agree that it is about achieving more on the ground. Can the Movement Vision be an instrument to increase that aim? I believe it can.

I leave the questions with you and will return to them in the corridors.

*Finally coming back to our aim to Shape the global humanitarian agenda: I dream of a Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement that has **global moral authority** and can call the attention of the world to humanitarian issues of concern, a Movement which independently chooses the issues to focus on.*

Henry Dunant said that. I believe we all agree. Thank you.  
END