

From the Chair

Preparations for the 33rd International Conference in 2019 have now commenced. This meeting will be a major opportunity to take decisions that will promote respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) and its development, and thus better protect people affected by armed conflict. By strengthening other legal frameworks and policies related to humanitarian action and promoting their effective implementation it will also be a chance to improve the safety, security and dignity of those people.

By raising its collective voice on pressing humanitarian concerns the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement can shape the global humanitarian agenda.

We want to build relationships – and identify synergies – among the components of the Movement, as well as between ourselves and governments, and ourselves and other humanitarian partners. Such mutual understanding and cooperation are fundamental to implementing and enhancing the impact of Conference outcomes, and to laying the foundations for the next Conference.

Just as preparations for the next Conference start as soon as the last one has finished, so implementation of the resolutions adopted at the most recent Conference should now be underway. Our humanitarian action, backed up by effective implementation of these resolutions, can make a real difference in today's complex, turbulent and politicized humanitarian landscape.

To prepare the ground for ourselves and other participants in the next International Conference, the Standing Commission is studying the effects of "mega-trends" on both the international humanitarian ecosystem as a whole and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as one of its major pillars.

We aim to analyse the manner in which we are affected, both as individual organizations and as a Movement, and identify critical overarching policy-level issues that will help us improve our effectiveness, agility, reaction times and ability to adapt to new needs in a changing world.

Within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement we must continuously develop our own responses so that we remain a strong global humanitarian network, needed on a local, national, regional and global level.

To that end, we plan to undertake independent research and studies in order to learn from their results and seek ways of moving towards greater convergence within the Movement, where necessary.

We on the Commission look forward to working on these issues in the coming months and years, and welcome contact from National Societies and others who would like to contribute.

Changes at the Commission Secretariat

After serving for more than four years as secretary of the Standing Commission, Mr Tore Svenning is standing down in October 2016 to take up a position with the Norwegian Red Cross. I am deeply indebted to Mr Svenning for introducing me to the executive work of the Standing Commission Secretariat and supporting me so well throughout my first year.

A profile for the role, which will contain an explicit policy/research component to reflect the role of the Standing Commission in identifying critical future issues for the Movement and preparing them for discussion and deliberation in the statutory meetings, will be posted on the ICRC, International Federation and Standing Commission websites. In the meantime, the Secretariat can be reached via email on contact@standcom.ch and by telephone on +41 22 730 20 32.



Eva von Oelreich
Chair

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES 2017 AND 33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2019

In November 2017, the components of the Movement will gather in Istanbul for the Council of Delegates. This is the body where the representatives of all the components of the Movement meet to take decisions, so we need to make the most of this opportunity.

The International Federation's acceptance of an offer from the Turkish Red Crescent Society to host the 2017 General Assembly in the city informed the Standing Commission's decision to arrange for the next Council of Delegates to be held there also. Both meetings will take place during the week commencing Monday, 6 November 2017.

The membership of the Council of Delegates comprises all National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation as separate delegations. The agenda for the Council varies from meeting to meeting and is developed by the Standing Commission, which also acts as the gateway for all official documentation submitted to the Council. In years when there is no International Conference, as is the case in 2017, the Council also provides an opportunity for the Movement to discuss matters that it may wish to carry over to 2019 and the 33rd International Conference.

This is important in light of the Standing Commission's resolve, stated at its most recent meeting on 5 September 2016, to make following up the last Conference an integral part of preparations for the next one.

The themes for the 2017 Council of Delegates are under discussion and a concept note is being drafted for circulation to National Societies in order to gather comments and ideas.

Standing Commission elections

The next round of elections of members to the Standing Commission will take place at the 33rd International Conference in 2019. In preparation, the Commission has decided to examine previous decisions pertaining to these elections and study options for ensuring that they yield a balanced and strong Commission.

Name plates for observers at the International Conference

Following expressions of concern over the manner in which observer delegations are identified at the International Conference, the Commission held a discussion on the matter. For practical reasons, the Commission decided to retain the existing practice for future Conferences.

North Cyprus Turkish Red Crescent (NCTRC)

The Commission reviewed the participation of NCTRC as an observer at the Council of Delegates and the International Conference and, after discussion, reconfirmed its previous decisions on this matter.

Henry Dunant Medal and Peace Prize

The Henry Dunant Medal is awarded at every Council of Delegates, while every other Council of Delegates also includes a ceremony to award the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity. National Societies will receive an invitation to nominate candidates for these honours in early 2017.

Monitoring of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel

Prior to its last meeting, the Commission received a report from the new Independent Monitor, Mr Robert Tickner of Australia, following his first visit to the region.

Thanking the Independent Monitor for his report the Commission expressed regret that a meeting with the chair of MDA did not take place and encouraged the arrangement of such a meeting for the next occasion.



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and Red Crescent**

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