

Ceremony at Special Day
World Red Cross Red Crescent Day
Osaka, Kansai, World Exposition 2025

Address by

Mercedes Babé

Chair

Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

2025 05 08

Excellencies

Dear Mr Atushi Seike President and Board members of the Japanese Red Cross Society,

My dear friend Mr Tadateru Konoe, President Emeritus, of the Japanese Red Cross Society,

Dear colleagues and friends, representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC),

Distinguished guests, Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and colleagues in Japan and beyond,

Good morning, Buenos días, Ohayō! (おはよう)

It is a great privilege and honour for me to be here today and lead the delegation of the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent today, with the presence of representatives of the ICRC, IFRC and the Japanese Red Cross Society at this special event of the Osaka World Expo.

When I became Chair of the Standing Commission, one of my first official letters in January 2020 was from the President of the Japanese Red Cross Society, at the time. He asked for the endorsement of his National Society's endeavour to participate in the Osaka Expo 2025 and create the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Pavilion. Five years later, this idea has become a reality.

On behalf of the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, I express my deep gratitude to the Japanese authorities and the EXPO Association for their incredible work in organizing such a wonderful Expo 2025.

It truly represents Japan's culture and openness to the world. My admiration also goes to the Japanese Red Cross Society for their fantastic achievement in displaying our global humanitarian efforts.

The Osaka Expo represents a platform for innovation and cultural exchange. It is also a great opportunity to reflect on the values that unite us as human beings: values of solidarity, compassion and mutual support.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent are globally recognized symbols of aid, solidarity and humanity. These symbols were born from the vision of Henry Dunant, who in a time of great suffering dreamed of a fairer and more compassionate world. This dream became a reality that transcends borders, languages and cultures, founded on solid and universal principles that guide our actions.

Today is a Special Day. On May 8th, we celebrate our founder's birthday and the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. We honour the dedication and invaluable work of millions of volunteers who made the choice to engage in impartial, neutral and independent humanitarian action and stand firmly **on the side of humanity**.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Pavilion is not only a showcase for our actions; it is also a reminder that humanity is stronger when it comes together in times of need. From our

emergency interventions to our health, education and support programs for displaced people, the Red Cross and Red Crescent operate in 191 countries, tirelessly working to protect and assist people living in situation of vulnerability and to promote peace and reconciliation.

Under the umbrella of Expo 2025, I invite you to reflect on the Power of Humanity and international cooperation and to be inspired by the stories of hope shared here. Together, we can build a more just, caring and compassionate future for generations to come.

Thank you all for being here today. I invite you to explore, learn and become part of the humanitarian mission of the Red Cross Red Crescent, today and in the future.

The world needs the Red Cross and Red Crescent more than ever, and we need your support. Join me in applauding the millions of volunteers and staff who make a difference here in Japan and around the world.

Thank you to them and to the Japanese Red Cross Society for organizing the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Pavilion and highlighting the Movement so well!

Welcome to the 2025 Osaka Expo's and Happy World Red Cross Red Crescent Day!

8 May 2025