

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

**George Weber**

Chairman

Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

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Mr President, Mr Secretary General, dear colleagues and friends, good afternoon (*other languages*).

I am pleased to be with you again this afternoon at the opening of your Board meeting. Thank you Mr. President for inviting me to address you on the work of the Standing Commission. Our own meeting of the Standing Commission will take place in Geneva next week, during which we will undoubtedly take inspiration from some of the work and decisions of your Governing Board. As I said in my previous addresses, I attach great importance to the close collaboration with your Board whenever possible, to ensure that our respective decisions will enhance the harmony, the impact and the coordination of the work among components of the Movement.

In this connection is how we can influence the organization and agendas of the major statutory meetings of the International Federation and the Movement next year. In addition to your General Assembly and the Council of Delegates, **we must ensure we are well organized and cohesive for the important event our Movement will have with the Member States at our 33rd International Conference.** In this regard, I would like to thank the International Federation and its President **for the opportunity to attend, yesterday, the meeting of your Working Group in charge of overseeing the preparation of the 2019 statutory meetings.** This is indeed a good opportunity to be mutually informed on matters of common interest, and to coordinate our actions and avoid duplication where appropriate.

Since my last presentation to you in June, a **document outlining the concept of the 33rd International Conference has been circulated to National Societies and States.** It currently serves as the basis for intensive consultations in order to shape the International Conference's agenda, program and expected outcomes and deliverables. You will have the opportunity during your meeting of this week to discuss in more detail the topics currently being considered, in particular

- the opportunities and threats of new technologies;
- the adaptation of the humanitarian response to vulnerabilities of tomorrow arising from global healthcare challenges, climate change and urbanization;
- the reinforcement of trust in principled humanitarian action; and
- the need to continue the core work on ensuring respect for and the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL).

In addition to participating in the discussion later in this meeting, **I urge you to get involved and participate fully in the larger consultation process when you have returned home. Your feedback on the concept note will help us set the right course for this unique and privileged forum where the Movement components meet with States.**

Let me now provide you with a brief update on some other areas of work closely related to the statutory meetings, which the Standing Commission is working on, with the aim to produce results useful and impactful for the Movement and the people we serve.

Firstly, since 2015, the Standing Commission has been studying possible **measures to enhance the inclusiveness, transparency, diversity and fairness of its election process**, which is conducted once every four years at the International Conference. This effort was reinforced by resolution 12 adopted at the last year's Council of Delegates, calling for gender equality in the leadership of the Movement. The Commission is keen to reach a common decision outlining the possible measures to be implemented as early as 2019.

Secondly, in its role to encourage and further the implementation of resolutions of the Movement, **the Standing Commission wants to close the gap in the availability of and access to decisions made by our Movement**, which currently are scattered across many locations, in physical or electronic form, in archives, libraries, websites or other data centers. Can you imagine that since 1884, over 600 resolutions have been adopted by the International Conference and over 120 resolutions have been adopted by the Council of Delegates in the only past two decades [N.B. since 1997], without counting the many background and progress reports surrounding these decisions? With the aim to provide easy and user friendly access to them, facilitate research and hopefully enhance knowledge and especially their implementation, the Standing Commission decided to create an "online research platform on Movement decisions" in partnership with the ICRC, the IFRC and others as appropriate.

Finally, I have already had the opportunity to inform you of the particular interest of the Standing Commission on the current challenges for our Movement as a whole on matters related to integrity and in particular to compliance. I am impressed to see the **demonstration of new energy in the International Federation, as well as in many National Societies and the ICRC, to strengthen the policy and regulatory framework to better prevent, detect and address misconduct that should have no place in our Movement, be it fraud, corruption, or any forms of sexual exploitation and abuse**. These are all essential questions that must be tackled to preserve the integrity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. This momentum must be kept up by including a thorough reflection on the measures to be implemented to **ensure better compliance with the essential rules that we share, in particular through the decisions of our statutory meetings, which is the cement of our cohesion, our distinctiveness and our universality, at the service of Humanity**.

As things currently stand, I can see that many work processes about integrity and compliance will lead to possible decisions at your General Assembly, and also at the Council of Delegates and the International Conference next year, some through your Governing Board, while others through other channels. These processes include the revisions of the IFRC's Integrity Policy, or the Guidance Document for National Societies Statutes, as well as the dynamics to enhance codes of conduct for institutions, leaders, members, staff and volunteers of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and the proposal for an open dialogue with States during the International Conference on the issues challenging the "Trust in Humanitarian Action". **I want to highlight my wish that we find inspiration, to give these work processes a common ambition and drive**. 2019, the centenary year of the International Federation, can become a **milestone in the history of our Movement to reaffirm its commitment to highly principled policies and standards guiding its humanitarian action, and to express its determination to continue enhancing its integrity framework and the capacity of its components to ensure compliance**.

I conclude on these words and wish you fruitful and successful deliberations and results. Good luck! Bonne chance! ¡Buena suerte!