

Standing Commission Guidelines for awarding the Henry Dunant Medal and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity

Adopted by the Standing Commission on 9 December 2020¹

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¹ Adopted at the fourth meeting of the 18th session of the Standing Commission.

1. Definitions and purpose

The Henry Dunant Medal (HDM) is the highest distinction that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) can bestow on an individual. It is intended to recognize and reward outstanding services and acts of great devotion, mainly of international significance, to the cause of the Red Cross and Red Crescent by any of its individual members. The choice of recipients is guided by the Regulations adopted by the International Conference in 1965 and revised in 1981.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity (PPH) is intended to honour either National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) or individuals in the Movement by recognizing their active contribution to a more peaceful world through humanitarian endeavour and promotion of the Movement's ideals. The prize was instituted by the Council of Delegates in 1987 and the choice of its recipients is guided by the Regulations adopted subsequently by the Standing Commission.

The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission) has the task of administering the HDM and the PPH and of designating the recipients in accordance with the Regulations.

Any member of the Red Cross and Red Crescent may be nominated for the HDM and PPH on the basis of their humanitarian achievements, provided they meet the conditions set out in these Guidelines. No distinction of any kind (gender, age, language, political, religious and philosophical beliefs, national, ethnic or social origins, health, etc.) may be made regarding eligibility. In the nomination process and in its choice of recipients, the Standing Commission is strongly committed to fostering diversity, inclusion and the highest standards of integrity and ethics.

These Guidelines are public and were approved by the Standing Commission on 9 December 2020. Their purpose is to clarify and supplement the provisions of the Regulations on the eligibility and desired qualities of the nominees, the nomination process itself, review and decision-making regarding recipients, and the award ceremony.²

2. Eligibility

The HDM can be awarded only to individuals who are or have been members of one of the Movement's components and in recognition of their work for the Movement.

The PPH may be awarded either collectively to a recognized National Society or individually to members of one of the components in recognition of their work for the Movement.

"Members" of the Red Cross and Red Crescent are individuals who hold either a voluntary or paid position in one of the Movement's components. They may still be active or no

² These Guidelines incorporate and update the previous Criteria for awarding the Henry Dunant adopted by the Standing Commission in 1998.

longer active (end of contract/membership, retired, deceased), provided the HDM or PPH is awarded to honour the exceptional nature of their achievements in the Movement rather than their status.

The HDM and the PPH may be awarded to an individual still active in a leadership position provided there is no real or perceived risk that influence could be exerted in that individual's favour or that advantage could be taken of the award resulting in its undue exploitation either inside or outside the Movement. In particular, neither the HDM nor the PPH may be awarded to an individual who is a candidate in that same year for a high-ranking elected post or other leadership position within the Movement.

Neither leaders, at governance or directorate level, of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) nor the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) nor members of the Standing Commission may be nominated for the HDM and PPH while they are still in office.

Neither the HDM nor the PPH may be awarded to a member of the Red Cross / Red Crescent who has engaged in activities outside the Movement as part of an endeavour that could be viewed as running counter to the Fundamental Principles of neutrality and independence.

Nominations for the HDM may be submitted by National Societies, the ICRC, the IFRC or a member of the Standing Commission. Nominations for the PPH may be submitted by National Societies or a member of the Standing Commission.

3. Criteria for assessing the merits of nominees

Above all, the HDM and the PPH are intended to reward outstanding achievements and dedication to Red Cross / Red Crescent ideals which hold exemplary and inspirational value for the Movement as a whole (and beyond).

3.1. Criteria for awarding the Henry Dunant Medal

The HDM rewards outstanding services and actions by an individual, mainly of international significance. These may include:

- exceptional contributions to international operations; to the Movement's cohesion, unity, influence and/or governance bodies; to developing and promoting international law and policy in the humanitarian field; or to preserving and promoting the heritage and ideals of the Red Cross / Red Crescent on an international scale;
- exceptional and/or pioneering achievements in the humanitarian field at national or local level, which have been a source of inspiration and/or influence within the Movement or have enhanced international outreach by the Red Cross / Red Crescent.

The exceptionality of these services may be enhanced by great bravery and/or tenacity shown by the HDM nominee in the face of the risks run and arduous conditions endangering his or her life, health or freedom.

3.2. Criteria for awarding the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity

The PPH rewards outstanding contributions to respect for the Movement's motto 'Per Humanitatem ad Pacem',³ that is, to a more peaceful world through humanitarian work and promotion of the Movement's ideals. These contributions – of international, national or local scope – must be characterized by decisive and practical efforts by an individual or a National Society to safeguard and strengthen peace, and to resist forces violating or threatening it, inspired by the 1975 'Programme of Action of the Red Cross [and Red Crescent] as a Factor of Peace'⁴ and the 1984 'Fundamental Guidelines for the contribution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to a true peace in the world'⁵ (see Annexes 1 and 2).

3.3. Posthumous awards and long period of services

The HDM and PPH should preferably be given to living individuals so that they know the recognition of their peers and of the Movement for their exceptional work and can be honoured as inspiring examples for others.

The HDM and the PPH may be awarded to a person who has died recently, i.e. less than two years before the Council of Delegates during which the presentation would be made. A nomination for a posthumous award should be assessed according to the criteria set out above.

The value for the HDM attached to the services of individual nominees may be strengthened by the following considerations, though they are not alone sufficient to justify any automatic awarding of the medal:

- Length of service as volunteers or staff or of prominent national or international functions may indicate great devotion to the Red Cross / Red Crescent when they have enabled the outstanding achievements credited to the nominees.
- Death, physical or psychological harm suffered in the line of duty may indicate arduous conditions endangering the nominees' life, health or freedom. In such cases, nomination should not be motivated solely by the dangers inherent in such humanitarian work, but rather highlight the exceptional courage with which the nominees have distinguished themselves in helping others.

The HDM and the PPH must also be distinct from other prizes and medals specific to any of the Movement's components to honour their members. If this is not already the case, the Standing Commission encourages each component of the Movement to establish prizes, medals or other tributes to honour the contribution of their members, including those for remarkable length of service or to pay tribute to those who have given their lives

³ This motto 'Through Humanity to Peace' is defined in the Preamble of the Statutes of the Movement

⁴ Adopted by the World Red Cross Conference on Peace (Belgrade, 1975)

⁵ Adopted by the Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace (Council of Delegates, Aaland – Stockholm 1984)

or suffered serious physical or psychological harm in the course of their humanitarian duties.

4. Nominations and decision-making

4.1. Call for and submission of nominations

The Standing Commission calls for nominations for the HDM and the PPH between 10 and 12 months before the Council of Delegates at which they are to be awarded. At least four years must elapse between two PPH presentations.

Nominations which comply with the eligibility requirements of the HDM and the PPH (see section 2 above) must be submitted to the Standing Commission Secretariat at least eight months before the Council of Delegates at which these awards are to be presented, in order to give the Commission sufficient time to examine them.

Nominations submitted by National Societies, the ICRC or the IFRC must be endorsed by relevant leaders empowered to represent those organizations (e.g. president, assembly, directorate). A nomination is not admissible if it is submitted by the nominee him/herself, or if the authority submitting it is part of the nominee's hierarchical authority.

The Standing Commission encourages nominations that highlight the outstanding merits of nominees, but also convey recognition they may enjoy inside and outside their organization and the Movement. Thus joint nominations may be submitted by several of the entities entitled to do so. Similarly, in addition to the information and supporting documents required in the nomination form, the attachment of testimonials (up to a maximum of six) is encouraged.

4.2. Diversity of nominees and recipients

The Standing Commission strongly encourages diversity and inclusion among the nominees and recipients of the HDM and PPH, and seeks to promote the universal and non-discriminatory nature of these awards. Nominating authorities bear the important responsibility of submitting worthy nominations and taking into account the need for diversity and inclusion.

Nominations for the HDM and PPH should reflect the best of devotion shown by Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff in all their diversity. In particular, these awards should foster:

- gender-balanced representation among nominees;
- greater inclusion of nominees from all geographical regions and of all ages;
- recognition of the contribution made by the nominees' achievements to the Red Cross / Red Crescent mission in a variety of posts in leadership, operations, legal contexts, etc.

4.3. Personal integrity of nominees and recipients

HDM and PPH nominees and recipients should represent the highest standards of integrity and ethics. These should be reflected by their exemplary devotion to Red Cross / Red Crescent ideals. The prestige of the Movement's highest distinctions requires the nominating authorities and the Standing Commission to pay particular attention to the nominees' personal integrity. In circumstances of exceptional gravity, the Standing Commission may decide to revoke the award of an HDM.

The nominating authorities must take particular care to ensure that known and sanctioned actions by nominees are not such as to undermine the image and reputation of the HDM and the PPH, including but not limited to all forms of fraud and corruption (favouritism, nepotism, cronyism, bribery, etc.) and sexual misconduct.

While reviewing nominations and before taking its decision, the Standing Commission must verify with the ICRC, the IFRC and the relevant National Societies the nominees' reputation and integrity. The HDM and the PPH may not be awarded to nominees who:

- have engaged outside the Movement in activities running counter to the Fundamental Principles;
- are holding a leadership position(s) in clear contradiction with the standards of governance and conduct applied in the Movement, in particular those adopted by the Council of Delegates in the [Guidance document for National Society Statutes](#);⁶
- have been involved in any violation of international humanitarian law or of internationally recognized standards of human rights law;
- have been convicted for a criminal offence or subject to a civil penalty which would risk the reputation or standing of the Movement;
- have been sanctioned by any component of the Movement for:
 - violations of any Movement component's code of conduct;
 - acts reflecting character or morality incompatible with the seven Fundamental Principles;
 - fraudulent or corrupt conduct; or
 - the violation of laws or policies relating to sexual exploitation, abuse, discrimination or harassment.

The Standing Commission will temporarily refrain from deciding on a nomination if criminal, civil or disciplinary proceedings are in progress concerning the nominee, pending the outcome of those proceedings.

4.4. Reviewing nominations

Nominations received within the deadlines (see 4.1) are subject to the following review process:

- The Standing Commission Secretariat receives applications and ensures that they are complete before they are registered.

⁶ Adopted by the IFRC Governing Board (October 2018) and the Council of Delegates (Geneva, December 2019)

- As soon as possible after the close of nominations, the Standing Commission establishes a Joint Nomination Review Group, which includes representatives of the ICRC and the IFRC. This group's task is to verify the eligibility of nominees, to ascertain whether the criteria for the HDM or PPH have been met and to check available information on the nominees' personal integrity. If necessary, it requests additional information from the nominating authority. Finally, the group presents its recommendations and observations to the Standing Commission regarding the eligibility, merits and integrity of the nominees.
- The Standing Commission examines the nomination files and additional information submitted to it before taking a decision.

The highest degree of discretion, trust and confidentiality is required in the Group's conduct and Standing Commission deliberations.

4.5. Decision

The Standing Commission is empowered to award:

- a maximum of five HDMs every two years, unless exceptional circumstances justify awarding more;
- a maximum of two PPH every four years.

These decisions must be taken between three and six months before the Council of Delegates at which the awards are to be presented, in order to allow sufficient time for preparation of the ceremony.

The Standing Commission seeks to obtain a consensus regarding the HDM. If there is no consensus, the decision is taken by simple majority (secret ballot) of the members present.

The Standing Commission chooses the recipients of the PPH by consensus.

The Standing Commission's choice of recipients are communicated only to the relevant leaders who submitted the nominations.

5. Award ceremony

The ceremony for presentation of the HDM and PPH takes place at a plenary session of the Council of Delegates. It is recorded in the Council's Summary Record.

Once the choice has been made and communicated by the Standing Commission, the nominating authority has the following responsibilities:

- inform recipients – or, where appropriate, their families or other representatives – and liaise with them throughout preparations for the award ceremony;
- be guided by the Standing Commission for arrangements for the award ceremony;
- make the practical arrangements for the recipients – and where appropriate their families, representatives and/or accompanying persons – to attend the awards ceremony. If necessary, a request for financial assistance may be submitted to the organizers of the Council of Delegates through the Standing Commission Secretariat.

The chair of the Standing Commission will present the HDM and PPH recipients at the ceremony. If the recipient or a family member cannot be present, the award will be handed to the president or other representative of the relevant National Society for later presentation to the recipient.

If the PPH is awarded to a National Society, it must be presented to the Society president or, in his/her absence, to his/her designated representative.

The HDM and PPH recipients receive a diploma stating the reasons of the award.

The HDM winners receive a medal consisting of a red cross bearing the profile of Henry Dunant in relief, attached to a green ribbon. When worn with other Red Cross or Red Crescent badges or decorations it takes precedence.

The PPH recipients receive a work of art symbolizing the Movement's work for peace, with the inscription of the motto 'Per Humanitatem ad Pacem'.

ANNEX 1: Program of Action of the Red Cross [and Red Crescent] as a Factor of Peace (1975)

adopted by the World Red Cross Conference on Peace (Belgrade, 1975)

Action to be taken on the World Red Cross Conference on Peace (Council of Delegates, Geneva, 1975, Resolution 2)

The Council of Delegates,

considering that the World Red Cross Conference on Peace, organized in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in June 1975, on the basis of Resolution No. 37 of the XXXIInd session of the Board of Governors, represents an important demonstration of the unity of the world Red Cross family in favour of peace, the development of cooperation, friendship and understanding among peoples,

recalling that this World Conference

- assembled 220 delegates from 81 National Red Cross Societies throughout the world including seven still in process of formation, as well as delegates from the League of Red Cross Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Henry Dunant Institute;
- examined the role of the Red Cross for the promotion of peace from all the aspects concerning the Red Cross;
- adopted the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace,⁷ as guidelines and with all the views expressed and recorded in the League's report on the Conference;

having noted the League's report on the World Red Cross Conference on Peace,

1. expresses its recognition of Red Cross work accomplished with regard to peace for many years, and of its contribution to the general efforts undertaken in the world for the strengthening of the foundations of peace,
2. considers that National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC should take their inspiration as guidelines for their work from the Programme of Action as adopted at the Conference, that they should keep it in mind in all their activities and that they should strive for its creative implementation,
3. recommends
 - a) that National Societies should submit the Programme of Action to be examined by their leading bodies with a view to the adoption of concrete measures for its implementation;
 - b) that the ICRC and the League, each in its own respective sphere, should cooperate to put into action the tasks which the Programme of Action invites them to undertake;
4. requests that the item "Implementation of the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace" be included in the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Council of Delegates and that, prior to that session a Working Group be set up by the League in consultation with the ICRC to consider the comments expressed and the annexes proposed and required to report, for the consideration of the session, any proposals they may evolve to resolve or otherwise provide for meeting such comments and annexes, this being without prejudice to the recommendations in paragraph 3.

Red Cross and peace
(Council of Delegates, Bucharest, 1977, Decision 1)

⁷ See below Annex to Decision 1 of the Council of Delegates (Bucharest, 1977)

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the report by the Working Group constituted pursuant to point 4 of Resolution No. 2 (975),

noting with satisfaction that the Group reached a consensus on ways to meet the comments contained in the League report on the World Red Cross Conference on Peace and in Annex 6 of that report,

approves the proposals of the Working Group intended to define the meaning of the recommendations in the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace which were the subject of such comments,

considers the interpretations so approved to be an integral part of the Programme of Action,

asks the League, therefore, to include the interpretations of the Working Group in its report on the World Red Cross Conference on Peace,

considers that the implementation by the Red Cross Institutions of the Programme of Action should fully respect the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and take the aforesaid interpretations into account,

considers that the Working Group has thus fulfilled its mandate, and thanks it for its services.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE RED CROSS AS A FACTOR OF PEACE
adopted by the World Red Cross Conference on Peace (Belgrade, 1975)

Preamble

All members of the world Red Cross family should make constant efforts to safeguard and strengthen peace, and combat forces violating or threatening it, in the spirit of their tenet "*Per humanitatem ad pacem*".

To establish peace as an inalienable human right is the greatest aspiration of all peoples in the world. Without peace a full life and the development of each nation and individual are an impossibility.

Humanitarian ideals and the need to mitigate, if not eliminate, human suffering and distress have found fulfillment in the Red Cross movement, whose history dates back to over a century.

Red Cross action for peace is therefore an essential part of mankind's quest for peace. The Red Cross is duty bound to support efforts to consolidate detente and strengthen world peace.

Peace is still being violated in different parts of the world, in different ways involving varying means and degrees.

Preventing conflicts, relieving the consequences of war, and helping victims of conflicts, has always been the fundamental aim and task of the Red Cross and hence an important contribution to peace.

The Red Cross does not view peace simply as the absence of war, but rather as a dynamic process of cooperation among all States and peoples; cooperation founded on freedom, independence, national sovereignty, equality, respect of human rights, as well as a fair and equitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of peoples.

The Red Cross considers respect of humanitarian rules, in all circumstances, essential to peace.

Peace is indivisible – it should be understood that peoples and races constitute one and the same family. They are one body and if one limb is indisputably contaminated, the whole body will be contaminated too.

Peace is indivisible and the Red Cross has to act, not to divide but to unify, not to disintegrate, but to consolidate.

All the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality, underlying all Red Cross activities, contribute to peace by developing understanding, strengthening friendship, collaboration and mutual aid between the Red Cross organizations, as members of the world Red Cross family, and among peoples in general.

Red Cross action for promoting peace must be founded on the ethical principles of the Red Cross, which are a factor of rapprochement among men and peoples.

In pooling their efforts towards this end, all members of the world Red Cross family act to promote peace while, at the same time, respecting each National Society's independence and freedom.

Continuous action to promote reform of bodies of the world Red Cross family, so as to adapt their structure to the needs and demands of contemporary society, leads to greater democratization and creates conditions for accomplishing more and more complex tasks facing the world, especially where peace is concerned.

Recalling the suffering of peoples in World War II and other wars, all Red Cross members are morally bound to struggle, in conformity with the principles and objectives of the organization, to prevent a recurrence of such suffering anywhere and to build a lasting peace, paving the way to the progress of mankind.

1975 is international Women's Year. Women have always been, ever since the Red Cross movement was founded, a living force in that movement and are among its most active members and most vigorous champions of Red Cross ideals.

Numerous recommendations, resolutions and appeals for peace adopted by various organs of the International Red Cross in past years reflect the constant desire and concern of the world Red Cross family to work for peace. They are accordingly a valuable starting point and encourage more intensive Red Cross action for peace.

In the light of the world Red Cross movement's rich experience, the World Red Cross Conference on Peace, fully alive to the principles of the movement, presents a Red Cross Programme of Action for Peace based on the reports, statements submitted at the Conference, and on the discussions during the Conference itself.

I. Solidarity

A. Relief

1. Principles

1.1 Practising solidarity helps to safeguard and promote peace.

1.2 International solidarity today is marked by awareness that the distress of an individual or a community entails the responsibility of all others. The duty to help has replaced mere charitable action.

1.3 Through international assistance organized by the Red Cross to assist victims of natural disasters, and through international relief actions, the Red Cross is a factor of peace.

1.4 Consequently, the duty of Red Cross members is to associate themselves in the greatest possible measure with international Red Cross relief actions.

2. Tasks

National Societies are asked to:

2.1 Work out a national disaster relief preparedness plan, if there is not one already, in full cooperation with Governments concerned and with their help, and in accordance with Resolution 2816/XXVI of the UN General Assembly.

2.2 Develop plans for regional cooperation in case of disaster and set up structures, methods and forms of cooperation adapted to local conditions, such as setting up relief supplies warehouses, training officers, relief actions, etc.

2.3 Organize informal gatherings amongst Societies to strengthen cooperation for mutual advantage.

2.4 Strengthen exchanges of information, especially to prevent disasters.

2.5 Undertake joint programmes for training qualified personnel in cooperation with League bodies.

2.6 Maintain close cooperation with national and international disaster relief organizations.

2.7 Take an active part in the League's international relief operations by giving material assistance, providing necessary personnel, and helping in every other way possible.

3. *The League of Red Cross Societies* is asked to:

3.1 Continue helping National Societies which need to strengthen their activities in this direction.

3.2 Promote regional conferences and encourage meetings.

3.3 Redefine and specify the role of experts attached to National Societies.

4. *Red Cross institutions* are asked to:

4.1 Examine the feasibility of setting up an international “Solidarity Fund” financed from National Societies’ and other voluntary contributions. The fund would collect money for extremely urgent action and finance pilot projects (such as scientific studies) in disaster areas. (*See below: Interpretative Texts – Section 1*).

4.2 Have studies carried out on the basis of relief experience, find new and better ways of helping victims of natural disasters.

B. Development

5. *Principles*

5.1 Equality of all men and peoples, and human dignity, are man’s essential attributes and must be respected. The Red Cross should help to eliminate the great disparities and inequalities in the distribution of material wealth, which threaten world peace.

5.2 Security for all is not complete unless it includes economic security guaranteeing to all countries the right to develop free from economic aggression.

6. *Tasks*

6.1 Participation by National Societies and their Federation in developing structures and programmes of Societies in developing countries, on a bilateral and multilateral basis, under the Development Programme.

6.2 Amplifying the League Development Programme on a decentralized regional basis.

6.3 Progressive integration of the Development Programme extraordinary budget into the League ordinary budget (*See below: Interpretative Texts – Section 2*).

6.4 Training personnel in modern techniques by means of courses, seminars and regional and national institutes.

C. Health

7. *Principles*

7.1 The Red Cross must be active in every way calculated to protect life and health and develop community services, with full participation by young people at all levels.

7.2 Man and his environment are seriously threatened by uncontrolled use of scientific and technical development and ill-considered activities, which cause air and water pollution and accumulation of waste dangerous to health.

The Red Cross has work of major importance to do in improving the environment.

8. *Tasks*

National Societies should:

8.1 Educate their public and make it aware of its health responsibilities.

8.2 Establish close cooperation with public health services and national public health institutions to improve living conditions and protection against disease.

8.3 Promote a network of human relations among peoples, especially by organizing “inter-country” assistance to sick foreigners, holidays abroad for the handicapped, international camps for handicapped youth, etc.

8.4 Set up effective regional cooperation on first aid and health programmes. These will benefit the community and bring peoples closer together in health matters, which are very important.

8.5 Include in National Societies’ programmes, especially in health education, more work to protect man and his environment, and so, safeguard health.

8.6 Get neighbouring countries and regions to cooperate in protecting the environment.

D. Youth

9. Tasks

National Societies should:

9.1 Involve young people in their decision-making bodies to the fullest extent possible, give them important responsibilities, and consider revising the Statutes of the National Society to include youth in Central, Regional and Local Committees.

9.2 Draw up programmes to educate young people for peace, and get them to take part in solidarity actions such as relief teams, relief activities, antihunger campaigns, etc., and in carrying out programmes for the diffusion of the Geneva Conventions and the principles of humanitarian law, in cooperation with other National Societies.

9.3 Hold numerous international meetings and exchanges of experience, such as international camps, seminars and the like, possibly under League auspices, for young people alone and for young people together with adults.

9.4 With League and ICRC cooperation, organize central courses on the Red Cross for secondary school teachers, either on a national or regional basis. Regional courses would enable those attending central courses to pass on their knowledge to others, who would teach it to classes.

9.5 Cooperate with the Ministry of National Education to have lessons on the Red Cross included in civic, moral and ethical education.

10. *The League of Red Cross Societies* is asked to:

10.1 Foster the award of travel grants and scholarships, especially to young people from developing countries.

10.2 Create and administer a "Friendship Fund" (*See below: Interpretative Texts – Section 3*).

10.3 Organize seminars and set up an effective guidance programme to clarify the role of youth in Red Cross activities.

The League and the ICRC are asked to publish a manual for secondary school teachers in consultation with experts from National Societies from different geographical and linguistic regions. It would include a presentation of basic Red Cross Principles; a brief historical introduction to the Red Cross and a

statement on its organization and basic activities and a chapter on "The Red Cross as a factor of peace".

II. Protection

I. HUMANITARIAN LAW

11. Principles

11.1 The Red Cross demands humane treatment for all men in all circumstances.

11.2 The Red Cross is duty bound to forward the widest possible application of existing humanitarian rules. Developing international humanitarian law is a contribution to peace and the Red Cross should be the main driving force behind its development, which should be carried on in the form adopted by the present Diplomatic Conference, i.e., in close cooperation with National Societies and Governments (*See below: Interpretative Texts – Section 4*).

11.3 Members of the International Red Cross must therefore help to formulate humanitarian rules, to ensure that Red Cross role and activities are reinforced in international law.

11.4 They must keep the public constantly informed of the great moral responsibility of the Red Cross for developing and implementing international humanitarian law.

11.5 The Red Cross must also promote the widest possible application of humanitarian principles in case of armed conflict, even when this exceeds the strict application of international humanitarian law.

A. Knowledge and dissemination of humanitarian law

12. Principles

12.1 Teaching and disseminating the Geneva Conventions and the principles of international humanitarian law in general, which are the expression of the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross, are a factor of peace and therefore a duty.

12.2 The great efforts already made by the ICRC and National Societies to induce all Governments to take effective action for this purpose, particularly with regard to their armed forces, police, senior civil servants and universities, but also to the public, should be completed and developed, in particular:

- by institutionalizing cooperation between Red Cross Societies and their Governments to improve the dissemination of humanitarian law;
- by incorporating Red Cross Principles and ideals into educational programmes and producing appropriate material for teaching and disseminating them.

13. Tasks

13.1 *National Societies* should:

Propose that a *Standing Committee* be formed in their country, composed of Government representatives and representatives of the National Red Cross Society, to evolve and implement adequate means for systematic dissemination of the Geneva Conventions in the armed forces and universities and

among young people, and also among the civilian population.

14. *The International Committee of the Red Cross, in cooperation with the League of Red Cross Societies*, is asked to:

14.1 Promote new methods for spreading and disseminating the Geneva Conventions.

14.2 Take part in organizing programmes for practical cooperation, jointly with National Societies.

14.3 Elaborate youth programmes adapted to different communities.

B. Development of humanitarian law

15. Principles

(See below: *Interpretative Texts – Section 5*)

15.1 The development of human society and technical progress have led to use of the most modern military techniques and to drastic changes in ways of war and combatant status. This is particularly marked in wars of liberation and resistance movements. To protect victims of modern war, international humanitarian law should be extended and adapted to these new conditions.

15.2 Under the United Nations Declaration of 24 October 1970, on the principles of international law affecting friendly relations and cooperation between States, wars of aggression are crimes against peace. Consequently, international humanitarian law should give increased protection to every victim of such wars, “including the population and fighters who resist aggression and occupation”. (See below: *Interpretative Texts – Section 6*)

Under Resolution 3314/XXIX of the United Nations General Assembly, it is the duty of States not to use armed force to deprive peoples of their right to self-determination. International humanitarian law should accordingly protect freedom fighters and peoples exercising their right to self-determination.

15.3 Efforts to prohibit weapons, including those with indiscriminate effects, also contribute to the promotion of peace, therefore any efforts to limit the arms race and promote disarmament should be strongly supported by the Red Cross movement; this could ultimately increase economic and social cooperation among nations. (See below: *Interpretative Texts – Section 7*)

15.4 The Red Cross should, more than ever, take part in formulating new legal standards at the Diplomatic Conference now being held. This principle should apply especially where appropriate rules for protection, such as those mentioned above and those for protecting victims of non-international armed conflicts, were felt to be lacking. Interest in development in international humanitarian law is thus a permanent task for the Red Cross and should be continued even after the present Diplomatic Conference ends. (See below: *Interpretative Texts – Section 8*).

16. Tasks



National Societies should continue:

16.1 To urge their Governments so that these give National Red Cross Societies and international Red Cross institutions the protection and facilities they need to carry out their humanitarian activities.

16.2 Red Cross institutions, in particular the ICRC, should encourage meetings and seminars of the Red Cross and non-Red Cross experts on international humanitarian law.

II. RED CROSS ACTIVITIES FOR RELIEVING THE SUFFERING OF WAR VICTIMS

17. Principles

17.1 Relieving the suffering of war victims is one of the fundamental tasks of the Red Cross for the promotion of peace. The International Red Cross should not only intervene when a conflict has broken out but also organize preparatory action in case of danger of armed conflict.

17.2 In this connection, Resolution No. XXI of the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross held in Istanbul, recommended unanimously that in case of armed conflict or of a threat to peace, the ICRC should, in case of need invite representatives of National Societies of countries concerned to meet it, either all together or separately to discuss humanitarian problems involved and with the agreement of Governments concerned to consider what contribution the Red Cross could make to prevent the conflict or achieve a ceasefire or the cessation of hostilities.

18. Tasks

National Societies should:

18.1 Help their Government to apply the Geneva Conventions and urge it even in time of peace to undertake all necessary measures to ensure implementation of international humanitarian law in case of armed conflict (penal sanctions for violations, legislation on use of the Red Cross emblem, dissemination, etc.).

18.2 Offer their services, especially qualified personnel, for discharging the duties of the Protecting Power.

18.3 Do all that is possible to implement Resolution No. XXI of the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross, especially by drawing the attention of their respective Governments at an appropriate moment, to the opportunities it offers for humanitarian action and even for the cessation of hostilities.

18.4 Cooperate as closely as possible with the ICRC to implement plans of action prepared to help the victims.

18.5 Help in every possible way all victims of conflicts without discrimination of any kind, in accordance with The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross.

18.6 Take part in ICRC activities extending beyond existing law (political detainees, stateless persons, national minorities, unprotected civilians, etc).

18.7 Follow the conflict, protest in case of violation of international humanitarian law by either party and inform the competent authorities thereof, so that steps be taken to prevent further violations.

18.8 Endeavour to act if internal conflict occurs in their country, assuming the National Society is left free to act in complete impartiality and enjoys the trust of the authorities and population.

19. *The League of Red Cross Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross* are asked to:

19.1 Act in closest cooperation with National Societies in all matters related to relieving the suffering of victims of conflicts.

19.2 Prepare a practical manual of National Societies' duties towards war victims.

20. *The International Committee of the Red Cross* is asked:

20.1 To see that the Geneva Conventions are fully applied.

20.2 To maintain "humanitarian contact" with warring countries, particularly when political and diplomatic relations between them have been broken off. Maintenance of humanitarian contact enables other relations to be built up.

III. DIRECT RED CROSS CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE



(See below: *Interpretative Texts – Section 10*)

21. Principles

21.1 The Red Cross should use its moral influence to help to eliminate imminent threats to peace. It should try to prevent the outbreak of hostilities and help to bring about a ceasefire or cessation of hostilities.

22. Tasks

The International Committee of the Red Cross with or without League cooperation, is asked:

22.1 To ask representatives of National Societies to meet to discuss ways of solving humanitarian problems and, in accord with Governments concerned, to consider what the Red Cross could do to prevent the outbreak of conflict or bring about a ceasefire or cessation of hostilities.

22.2 In accordance with Resolution No. X of the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross (Vienna, October 1965), and if it believes such a course possible, to make a direct appeal to the Governments concerned and even to the Secretary General of the United Nations when an armed conflict appears imminent.

Protection of the civilian population should be one of the principal aims and preoccupations of action by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

23. National Societies are asked to:

23.1 Appeal to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies whenever a conflict threatens to break out, so enabling them to approach the Parties in the name of the members of the Red Cross and take action to safeguard peace.

24. Red Cross institutions are asked to:

24.1 Cooperate more closely with the United Nations in all cases of aggression, bearing in mind the specific humanitarian tasks of the Red Cross.

24.2 Such cooperation should be effective in preparing documents condemning aggression, racial discrimination, apartheid and political detention (*See below: Interpretative Texts – Section 11*)

IV. ORGANIZING AND COORDINATING RED CROSS WORK FOR PEACE

25. Principles

25.1 The promotion of peace has always been one of the essential tasks of the League of Red Cross Societies, and National Societies have also an important part to play. The main task of the Red Cross in this direction is to create an atmosphere conducive to better understanding among peoples.

25.2 Coordination of Red Cross activities for peace is essential to success. Research on peace is one of the main aspects of its promotion.

25.3 The Red Cross should accordingly maintain very close contact with scientific institutions undertaking such research and should give its material support.

25.4 The promotion of human equality and opposition to all forms of discrimination are important Red Cross contributions to peace.

The Red Cross must work to implement the programmes and plans already approved by the International Red Cross, e.g. the Red Cross Plan of Action in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination-Racism and racial discrimination are violations of essential human rights and human dignity, and are contrary to the Red Cross Principles.

26. National Societies are asked to:

26.1 Include in their statutory texts in accordance with the spirit of the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross in so far as this has not been done already and as one of its main objectives, contributing to establishing and safeguarding a lasting peace, by developing and reinforcing international cooperation, humanitarianism, solidarity, respect and understanding between men and peoples.

26.2 Establish “National Peace Committees” which could advise National Societies on matters connected with peace.

27. Tasks

The League is asked to:

27.1 Continue to carry out its development programme, which is the best means by which the International Red Cross can add to its power to promote peace.

27.2 Form a “League Committee on Peace” as a permanent body, to advise the Board of Governors on what should be done to promote peace.

The Committee should be mainly concerned with promoting and stimulating research in cooperation with specialized institutes, collecting information, giving suggestions, following the progress of work begun, etc.

28. Red Cross institutions are asked to:

28.1 Enlist expert help to organize meetings and symposiums on Red Cross work for peace, these coinciding with Red Cross international or regional meetings.

28.2 Promote programmes to inform public opinion and eliminate causes of conflicts such as racial discrimination and colonialism.

28.3 Publish documents to guide the millions of Red Cross members on how to perform their task of promoting peace.

28.4 Promote research on peace and instruct the Henry Dunant Institute, the International Red Cross research centre, to carry out teaching, study and research on the subject, publish works thereon, and make all necessary contacts with scientific institutes doing research on peace.

28.5 Consider the idea of instituting a “Red Cross Prize” to encourage and honour the National Society making the greatest contribution to international solidarity and thereby promoting the Red Cross image.

28.6 Find a new Red Cross way of describing ideals and activities so that young people understand better Red Cross Principles and programmes.

28.7 Encourage representatives of various parts of the community, such as schools, universities, the armed forces and the churches, to say what they believe to be most important and shoulder their responsibilities in their own way, producing adequate material on the Red Cross. (*See below: Interpretative Texts – Section 13*)

INTERPRETATIVE TEXTS

adopted by the Council of Delegates (Bucharest, 1977)

Section 1 – Solidarity

A. Relief

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Programme of Action – para. 4.1)*

“Delete paragraph 4.1 in which Red Cross Institutions are called upon to examine the advisability of the creation of an international ‘Solidarity Fund’ financed through voluntary contributions of National Societies and other sources. This fund should accumulate sufficient resources to intervene in cases of extreme emergency and finance pilot projects in the areas of disasters: scientific studies, etc.”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

After taking note of the League Secretariat’s point of view on the expediency of setting up a solidarity fund, the Council of Delegates accepts, in order to take into account the concern expressed by the authors of the proposed amendment referred to above, that the League be invited to continue this study and so seek a solution which would meet with general approval.

Section 2 – Solidarity



B. Development

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Programme of Action – para. 6.3)*

“Delete paragraph 6.3 which stipulated the ‘Progressive integration of the extraordinary budget of the Development Programme’ into the ordinary budget of the League”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates did not feel it useful to propose an interpretative text for point 6.3 of the Programme of Action or for the corresponding comment above since the League has already implemented that recommendation and intends to specify progressively the measures involved in putting point 6.3 into effect.

The Council of Delegates therefore accepts that the League be requested to continue the policy which it has already put into practice with regard to the integration of the extraordinary budget into the League ordinary budget.

Section 3 – Solidarity

D. Youth

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Programme of Action – para. 10.2)*

“Delete paragraph 10.2 in which the League is asked to create a ‘Friendship Fund’”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

Having noted that various methods have been worked out by the League to attain the goal set in this recommendation of the Programme of Action, the Council of Delegates accepts that the League be encouraged to continue its information and coordination efforts, in order to develop communication and mutual understanding between young people of various countries.

Section 4 – Protection

Principles – Humanitarian law

Contribution of the Red Cross to the development of international humanitarian law.

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Programme of Action – para. 11.2)*

“To read at the end: ‘in close collaboration with Governments on the one hand and with National Societies and their Federation, the League, and the ICRC on the other’”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

This new wording is in no way in contradiction with the idea expressed in paragraph 11.2 of the Programme of Action. It is even more explicit. Accordingly, the Council of Delegates accepts that in compliance with the wish of the authors of this comment, the text of the Programme of Action be understood as including, besides the National Societies, the ICRC and the League among the Red Cross institutions which are invited to cooperate with the Governments in the development of international humanitarian law.

Section 5 – Development of humanitarian law

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Conference Report – para. 74, sub-para. 2)
(Programme of Action – para. 15)*

“(Some speakers)... hoped this section would be reconsidered in the interest of avoiding any misunderstanding, and that experts would be asked to help in drafting its final text”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates accepts not retaining the suggestion to submit the chapter in question to qualified experts, in view of the fact that the passages in the Programme of Action having motivated this suggestion are dealt with specifically in sections 6, 7 and 8 of Part III.

Section 6 – Legal protection for victims of wars of aggression

Comments expressed during the Belgrade Conference

a) (Conference Report – para. 74, sub-para. 1)

“(Some speakers)... In their opinion the Red Cross could not subscribe to the United Nations Declaration of 24 October 1970...”

b) (Programme of Action – para. 15.2)

“After ‘every victim of such wars’, delete ‘including the population and the fighters who resist aggression and occupation’...”

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

As long as it is clear that:

- the passage under point 15.2 of the Programme of Action “... wars of aggression are crimes against peace...” is a quotation from the United Nations Declaration of 24 October 1970;
- the passage under point 15.2, sub-para. 1: “... international law should give increased protection...” is understood as follows: “... international humanitarian law should give strengthened protection...”

The Council of Delegates,

a) considers possible to maintain in the Programme of Action the reference to the above mentioned declaration,

b) accepts that the passage under No. 15.2, para. 1 of the Programme of Action (“... including the population and fighters who resist aggression and occupation...”) should be understood as being intended to improve the legal protection for certain victims who are inadequately protected by existing international humanitarian law. Clearly the wording in neither case implies any discrimination in the assistance which should be given to all conflict victims to whatever party they may belong. This is very appropriately pointed out in point 18.5 of the Programme of Action (“... help in every possible way all victims of conflicts without discrimination of any kind, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross”).

Section 7 – Arms race limitation and disarmament

Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference

(Conference Report – para. 75)

(Programme of Action – para. 15.3)

“There was controversy on whether the Red Cross should join in attempts to limit the armament race and obtain disarmament. Some speakers in favour of its doing so, whilst others thought it would thereby exceed its terms of reference”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates did not deem it advisable to propose that a follow-up be given to the comment made on this subject at the Belgrade Conference, since the International Conference of the Red Cross had twice (New Delhi 1957,

Res. No. XVIII and Vienna 1965, Res. No. XXVIII), taken a stand in general terms on the contribution of our movement to the efforts aimed at limiting armaments – whilst specifying that the nature and the extent of this contribution must retain a general character. The Council of Delegates moreover, accepted that “prohibit weapons” mentioned in the first line of Point 15.3 of the Programme of Action was intended to mean “prohibit weapons of war”.

Section 8 – Red Cross participation in the development of international humanitarian law

Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference

(Programme of Action – para. 15.4)

“Second sentence: For ‘this principle would apply’ substitute ‘the principles of humanitarian law should apply’”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

To avoid any confusion with the Fundamental Red Cross Principles, the Council of Delegates accepts that the word “principle” in passage 15.4 of the Programme or Action be understood to mean “requirement”: “This requirement should apply ...”

Section 9 – Reunion and repatriation of families

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Conference Report – para. 71)*

“(Delegates...) indicated their preference for practical work to which the report had given insufficient prominence, such as reuniting dispersed families, repatriating families to their countries of origin, etc.”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

Considering that recommendation 18.5 of the Programme of Action already urges National Societies to “help in every possible way all victims of conflicts without discrimination of any kind, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross”, the Council of Delegates accepts that this recommendation be understood to include help also to families seeking to be reunited or repatriated.

Section 10 – Direct Red Cross contribution to peace

*Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference
(Programme of Action – paras 21 to 24)
(Conference Report – paras 33 to 38)*

“33. Several delegates were of the opinion that the Red Cross contribution to peace could not be direct, unless the Red Cross took part in the strategy of preventing armed conflicts by eliminating their causes. To do so the Red Cross would have to participate in the establishment of a political, economic and social programme which is now the responsibility of the United Nations. This would infringe its Basic Principles.

34. The delegates could not agree to the Red Cross, through its governing bodies or National Societies, protesting against all acts or threats of aggression.

35. Other speakers, whilst understanding that the Red Cross could not remain indifferent to the gap between rich and poor nations and should attempt to narrow it, thought that every direct Red Cross action for peace should remain within certain limits if the Red Cross were to safeguard its unity and retain the confidence of all.

36. By taking part in peace conferences organized by public authorities, and cooperating with the UN and its special institutions in preparing documents condemning the perpetration of violations of human rights, aggression and discrimination, the Red Cross was in danger of becoming involved in controversy which would inevitably lead it to discord and paralyse its activities.

37. A number of delegates took the contrary view that Red Cross contribution to peace could not be complete if the Red Cross did not attack racial discrimination, colonialism, infringement of peoples’ right to self-determination, aggression, and other causes of conflicts.

38. For these delegates, it was the duty of the Red Cross to denounce all forms of aggression, set up a national committee for safeguarding peace and cooperate extensively with the UN for that purpose”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

In view of the controversy within the Red Cross movement on the principle of a direct Red Cross contribution to safeguarding or maintaining peace, the Council of Delegates did not consider that it was its task to put forward a proposal calculated to overcome these differences. It seemed to it more appropriate to study the comments to which the specific tasks allotted under Point 24 of the Programme of Action to the Red Cross international institutions had given rise. These comments are the subject of Section 11 below.

Section 11 – Cooperation with the United Nations



Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference

a) (Programme of Action – para. 24)

“Modify the text of Point 24 of the Programme of Action as follows: ‘Red Cross institutions are asked to:

24.1 cooperate more closely with the United Nations for humanitarian purposes in case of armed conflicts’.

24.2 Delete this paragraph”.

b) (Conference Report – para. 36)

“By taking part in peace conferences organized by public authorities and cooperating with the UN and its special institutions in preparing documents condemning the perpetration of violations of human rights, aggression and discrimination, the Red Cross was in danger of becoming involved in controversy which would inevitably lead it to discord and paralyse its activities”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates,

- mindful of the fact that para. 24 is an invitation which each institution of the Red Cross is free to follow up or not, in accordance with the Principles of the Red Cross and taking into account its own role and its particular position,
- considering that para. 24.1 can in no case be interpreted as implying any discrimination in the protection and assistance which must be given the victims of all conflicts,
- noting that in para. 24.2 “aggression, racial discrimination, apartheid and political detention” are evils that must be understood in a general sense, without reference to a particular situation and that the essential aim of the Red Cross is to help,
- considers that para. 24, thus interpreted, can be maintained.

Section 12 – Return to a single protective emblem

Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference

(Conference Report – paras 30, 31 and 72)

“Include in the Programme of Action the proposal to adopt a new single emblem, viz. a Heart (Humble Heart)”.

Interpretative text by the Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates,

having noted that the question of the return to a single emblem was studied by the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross (Bucharest 1977) and was the subject of Council of Delegates Decision No. 3,

considers that the suggestion to include in the Programme of Action the proposal to adopt a new single emblem, the humble heart, could be taken into consideration by the Working Group set up under Council of Delegates Decision No. 3. It does not feel that it can at this stage make any proposal on this subject.

Section 13 – Organizing and coordinating Red Cross work for peace

Comment expressed during the Belgrade Conference

(Programme of Action – para. 28.7)

“a) At the end of paragraph 28.7, read ‘concerning humanitarian commitment and law’ instead of ‘on the Red Cross’.

b) Add after ‘churches’ – ‘and in some countries trade unions’ ”.

Interpretative text adopted by the Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates, having considered the foregoing comments appropriate, accepts that recommendation 28.7 of the Programme of Action be understood as including, in some countries trade unions among institutions which should be encouraged to produce their own methods and adequate material on the Red Cross.

It accepts moreover that it be understood that these methods and this material concern also humanitarian commitment and law.

Contribution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to safeguarding and consolidating true peace

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Resolutions LXIV of the Seventeenth International Conference of the Red Cross, XI of the Eighteenth, XVIII of the Nineteenth, XXVIII of the Twentieth, XX of the Twenty-first, XII of the Twenty-third and XIII of the Twenty-fourth Conference and Resolutions 23 and 4 adopted respectively by the sessions of the Council of Delegates in 1963 and 1979,

deploring the recurrence of armed conflicts in various parts of the world,

noting with deep concern the deplorable state of international relations and the existence of areas of tension entailing the risk of war, which involves the risk of the use even of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction,

realizing that, while wars are becoming ever more horrendous, a possible large scale use of armaments, including nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, would have effects exceeding by far those of the weapons commonly used so far and would pose grave risks to human civilization,

confirming that the Red Cross, nationally and internationally, through its many and varied activities, is an effective moral force capable of promoting true peace,

supporting the Appeal by the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross, the President of the ICRC and the President of the League to the United Nations General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament,

recognizing that the continuation of the arms race at the present rate may contribute to the risk of war and is not conducive to true peace, which could only be attained through a process involving steps towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective control and the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation among States,

recognizing moreover that a curbing of the present arms race might render it possible for substantial parts of the resources now being used for military purposes to be reallocated to development programmes directed at alleviating human suffering and responding to basic human needs,

1. Urgently appeals to governments of all States to continue to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures leading to the prevention of a further build-up of armaments, including nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction,
2. Expresses its conviction that all Red Cross and Red Crescent members should work for the prevention of war and for constructive efforts towards resolving disputes through peaceful means,
3. Proposes that all National Societies, the ICRC and the League, should use their best endeavours to make the Red Cross members aware of the terrible effects of the use of weapons, in particular of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction,
4. Recommends that the National Societies, the ICRC and the League broaden their contacts and their exchange of views on the most adequate means for the National Societies of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, acting within their accepted area of responsibility, to contribute, in the respect of their fundamental principles, to an improvement of mutual understanding and true peace,
5. Emphasizes that the National Societies, the ICRC and the League should, in all circumstances and in their accepted area of responsibility, use their moral authority to support the efforts made to prevent and end armed conflicts, causing disasters and suffering throughout the world. (Council of Delegates, Geneva, 1983, Resolution 2)



ANNEX 2: Fundamental Guidelines for the Contribution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to a True Peace in the World (1984)

adopted by the Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace (Council of Delegates, Aaland – Stockholm 1984)

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and peace

Since its inception and by its very existence our Movement has striven to contribute to peace in the world.

For over 120 years, it has sincerely attempted to limit by its action and through the provisions of humanitarian law, the horrors of war, from which it was created. In fact, what it does, in time of peace as in time of war, helps – directly or indirectly – to defuse the causes of conflicts and thereby contributes to the

dynamic process that leads to true peace.

Indeed, for our Movement, “peace is not simply the absence of war, but rather a dynamic process of cooperation among all States and peoples; cooperation founded on freedom, independence, national sovereignty, equality, respect of human rights, and a fair and equitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of peoples”.

All components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement undertake to support, in compliance with its Fundamental Principles, efforts to preserve and strengthen true peace.

Fundamental Guidelines

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has already adopted a *Programme of Action for the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace* which is to remain the basis of Red Cross and Red Crescent activities in favour of peace. To facilitate implementation of this programme and to contribute even more constructively to peace, it has

formulated these *Fundamental Guidelines* which are intended to encourage and guide the activities of its members for a true and lasting peace in the world.

As they are fundamental, they focus on essentials and set forth in simple language what the Movement does and wants to do for peace, inspired by the conviction and enthusiasm instilled by its ideals and principles.

A dynamic process and Fundamental Principles

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s strategy for peace is both dynamic and stable.

By their *humanitarian action*, the National Societies, the ICRC and the League constantly further the cause of peace. Through consistent, patient and all-encompassing effort, each component of the Movement contributes to this *dynamic process of cooperation*, which is to build such future of humanity to which

we all aspire. Whereas war is most often the consequence of a long process of increasing tension, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement contributes to reducing tensions and defusing the causes of conflicts. In this way it works constantly – within the limits of its competence – for true peace.

This long-term action is guaranteed by respect for the *Fundamental Principles*, which are an inspiration and a guide for all the Movement’s humanitarian activities and which give it its unity, its strength, its orientation and its staying power.

Contribution of each Fundamental Principle to peace

By respecting and implementing each of these Principles, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is making a specific contribution to a true peace in the world:

HUMANITY *The Red Cross, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours – in its international and national capacity – to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect*

for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Founded on the respect of the human being, this is the superior principle inseparably linked with the idea of peace, the principle that sums up our Movement's ideal and on which all the other principles are based. To see and share the suffering of others, prevent and alleviate it in the face of violence is life-giving work. It is the first step on the road to preventing and eliminating war: Humanity is an essential factor of true peace which can never be attained through domination and military superiority.

"Per humanitatem ad pacem" – Through humanity to peace.

IMPARTIALITY *It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.*

This positive principle of helping others without discrimination reminds us that no distinction should be applied to people in distress. It is the opposite of the feelings of superiority, or acts of discrimination, which are at the origin of so many conflicts.

NEUTRALITY *In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Red Cross may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.*

For the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, neutrality is a means and not an end. Neutrality does not imply indifference to suffering nor acceptance of war.

It is an indispensable condition for effective humanitarian action dependent on the confidence of all.

INDEPENDENCE *The Red Cross is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with Red Cross principles.*

The independence of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from public powers is essential for their humanitarian activities in the respect of the Fundamental Principles. It allows that spirit of peace which is characteristic of our Movement to reign in the hearts of the men and women comprising it. Without isolating the Red Cross and Red Crescent from others, it gives it the necessary autonomy for its humanitarian work, which makes it a unifying force amongst all peoples.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE *The Red Cross is a voluntary relief organization not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.*

To bring relief to one's fellow man, voluntarily and unselfishly, bespeaks the generous spirit of service and the fellowship that opens the door to reconciliation.

UNITY *There can be only one Red Cross Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.*

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement unites all people within each country's borders and so is a factor of internal peace.

UNIVERSALITY *The Red Cross is a worldwide institution in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.*

Our Movement's universality stems from the attachment of each of its members to common values. One of its characteristics being the duty to help one another, it makes for the propagation in all countries of these values, seeds for rapprochement and peace among men.

Fostering a spirit of peace

World solidarity in humanitarian work

Solidarity in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement brings together men, irrespective of their nationality, race, religion, ideology and beliefs: it speaks for human dignity because it exists only to assist and protect those who suffer and are without help in adversity. Solidarity in action is the essence of the whole Movement's contribution to peace.

An ideal to confront violence, fear and distrust

Against the vicious circle of violence, fear, and distrust, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement opposes forces threatening or violating peace by setting up an ideal based on respect for one's fellow man which dispels hatred, encourages confidence and fosters a spirit of peace and cooperation.

Speaking with one voice to the peoples of the world

On peace as on all other matters, our Movement speaks for itself. Being independent of governments and outside the political field, it speaks a univocal humanitarian language: millions of members in over 130 countries share this ideal and address a common message to all their fellow men. Our Movement looks for a true dialogue in the humanitarian field, with a view to a better mutual understanding and dissemination of Red Cross and Red Crescent ideals. It thus brings its specific contribution to global efforts for peace, whenever it takes place with due respect for its independence and its Fundamental Principles.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth: a hope for peace

Youth in today's world is a dynamic, mobile social force. Young people aware of their duties towards all persons contribute to understanding between men. Faithful to the ideals and spirit of the Movement, Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth, by their readiness to work, serve and accept sacrifice, can set an example for others and be a catalyst for peace.

Youth education for peace

The components of the Movement should pay great attention to educating young volunteers in the spirit of peace and friendship among peoples. They should actively encourage the development of Red Cross programmes for strengthening mutual understanding and solidarity among youth, together with the exchange of information of different countries. In particular, Red Cross must fight all attempts to imbue children with contempt or hatred for other peoples.

Red Cross and Red Crescent, peace and human rights

The humanitarian activity of the Movement, undertaken in compliance with its Fundamental Principles, is not only a contribution to peace but also a contribution to the respect of basic human rights.

Consolidating peace by reducing suffering

Solidarity through development

Preservation of world peace is inseparable from cooperation among peoples. Confronted with inequalities of resources and means, the Movement's contribution to the development of National Societies, in the spirit of friendship and mutual understanding, is a positive recognition and is proof in action that we are all united in one cause. This helps decrease inequality and contributes to a more tolerant and thus more peaceful world.

Compassion towards the victims of disaster

Assisting the victims of catastrophes and disasters, whenever they occur and no matter what the cause, is a direct acknowledgement of worldwide responsibility. Understanding and fulfilling this "duty to help" is a powerful factor for peace among peoples.

Prevention is better than cure

The "silent disasters" like hunger, population explosion, drought, lead people to despair and violence. To anticipate silent and other, more sudden, disasters, in order to prevent them or be better able to face them, is to work for peace.

Health through social action

Caring for and assisting the most needy everywhere, improving health, contributes to a more just and humane society and thereby to reducing the causes of tension. This is the daily work of millions of members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement throughout the world.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is peace even in war



Awareness of perils of war

Remembering the sufferings of the peoples during the Second World War and other wars, conscious of the terrible consequences of the use of arms especially nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction, all members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent consider it their moral duty to work, in conformity with the

principles and ideals of the Movement, for the prevention of these sufferings in any part of the world and for a lasting peace as an indispensable condition of social progress. This task is more indispensable than ever in the present international situation where mankind is threatened with huge accumulation of increasingly

sophisticated weapons that are a waste of material and other resources.

Easing the tensions that cause the arms race

Trust leads to disarmament and disarmament to peace. Our Movement supports the final goal of complete disarmament, with the necessary means of control. It can help to create the climate of confidence indispensable to attaining this goal, especially by contributing to reducing, in its specific field of action, the

causes of tension. It appeals to governments to spare no effort for progress towards complete disarmament in conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear arms.

A spirit of peace in the thick of the fighting

Born of the horrors of war, our Movement demonstrates a spirit of peace, even in the heat of battle. By respecting those who can no longer fight, whichever side they are on, by helping the wounded and protecting civilians and prisoners, it creates "zones" of peace in the thick of the fighting, thereby facilitating a process of

cooperation and peace between the belligerents.

Protecting the weak by law

Developing international humanitarian law, teaching the soldier in time of peace to respect non-combatants in time of war, is to try and attenuate the horrors of battle through respect for the defenceless; it is to limit suffering and thereby facilitate the return to peace; it is to contribute to a spirit of peace.

Giving refugees new reasons for and means of living

Providing shelter for refugees, whether temporarily or permanently, helping them live, forwarding their messages, tracing missing persons and uniting families, is to give inner peace, dignity as human beings and hope to those who have left all.

It is an essential contribution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to the bringing of true peace to a world where individuals are threatened by so much violence.

Helping without taking sides

Because it must help the victims of all parties in conflict, our Movement does not choose sides. It remains above all political controversy in its own humanitarian field and thus safeguards its possibilities to carry out humanitarian work for all, without exception.

Laying the ground for prevention of wars and for peaceful solution of armed conflicts The National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and their federation the League, besides their own efforts, support the ICRC in the activities it can undertake to prevent conflicts or to facilitate their peaceful solution, its resolve strengthened by the universal confidence it has won.

THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT HOPES THAT, BY FOLLOWING THESE GUIDELINES, IT WILL GIVE INSPIRATION TO ALL THE PEOPLES AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD, AND WILL THUS CONTRIBUTE TO FINDING THE PATHS WHICH WILL LEAD HUMANITY TO LASTING PEACE.