



## MESSAGE ON WORLD RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT DAY

**8 May 2022**

“Tutti Fratelli!” We are brothers and sisters, exclaimed the women of Castiglione after the devastating battle of Solferino in 1859. With these very words, they sparked the flame of Humanity among the wounded and dying soldiers, while providing them with care and assistance, regardless of which side they had fought for. Their courage, compassion and kindness in saving lives and alleviating suffering amid the chaos of war inspired Henry Dunant, whose birthday anniversary and founding legacy of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement we celebrate today.

In the last two years, crises and disasters have spared almost no one. The COVID-19 pandemic, armed conflicts and violence, the climate crisis and climate-related disasters, environmental degradation, food insecurity and massive population displacements are hitting the world’s most vulnerable groups hard, and many lack the means and resources to adapt.

Against this backdrop, indifference, misinformation and hate speech are creeping into the common consciousness, which is fracturing and polarizing societies and leading to people being rejected and dehumanized.

Even those who champion the basic principles and rules of protection and assistance are not spared, with those who strive to provide care and support to people in need finding themselves the target of unjust and sometimes violent attacks. When the flame of Humanity flickers, we must be alarmed and we must act!

This 8 May is an opportunity for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, our staff and 14 million volunteers worldwide to unite in our unwavering commitment to a common humanity. We also reaffirm our Fundamental Principles, which are at the heart of everything we do to assist people in need.

Our commitment mandates us to advocate for the world’s most vulnerable people, wherever they may be. When the outbreak of war or a disaster diverts the attention or generosity of the public, the media, public authorities and donors, it is to the disadvantage of millions of people affected by a protracted, forgotten or invisible humanitarian crisis.

Our Fundamental Principles carry the flame of Humanity across the world and its divides. They help to refocus the world's attention on all people in distress. They are the basis of our solidarity with the Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and staff in action around the world. On this 8 May, we commend their admirable work and unwavering commitment as first responders in their communities.

Together, let's spread the flame of Humanity and believe in the power of kindness.

Happy World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day to all!



**Francesco Rocca**  
IFRC President



**Mercedes Babé**  
Standing Commission Chair



**Peter Maurer**  
ICRC President