



**Our world. Your move.**

31<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent  
Geneva, 28 November–1 December – For humanity



## **31st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**

28 November – 1 December 2011

### **Agenda Item 12. Overview of pledges made at the 31st International Conference**

*Report delivered by the officer of the pledges – Mr. Christian Ndinga, President of the Congolese Red Cross.*

Madam Chair, in recent years, pledges have become an important element and outcome of the International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. They allow Movement components, governments and observers to show their commitment to take action to deal with the humanitarian problems addressed at the International Conference. Today, there are many forms of vulnerability and they are becoming more and more complex. All the countries around the globe face different challenges, and this makes pledges all the more crucial, because they provide an opportunity to translate the resolutions adopted into clear and concrete actions adapted to each particular context. Collective pledges, particularly between the government and the National Society of a country, favour the establishment of solid partnerships capable of tackling humanitarian problems effectively. It gave me great satisfaction to see that the pledges desk was very busy with visitors submitting their pledges during the conference.

In the spirit of the conference theme "Our world. Your move • For humanity", 79 governments, 132 National Societies, the International Federation, the ICRC and eight observers submitted a total of 377 different pledges for the period 2012-2015 and beyond. These pledges attest to the real commitment and involvement of the participants to address the humanitarian challenges identified. Associated with the resolutions adopted at the conference, they define our programme of humanitarian action and our priorities for the next four years and beyond. A full report on the implementation of these pledges will be presented at the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference to be held in 2015. This will allow us to measure our progress towards achieving our common humanitarian objectives.

The pledges complement the resolutions adopted and therefore relate to the objectives and issues on which the work of the 31<sup>st</sup> International Conference was focused. Allow me now to briefly review the pledges that the participants have made in relation to the four conference themes:

First of all, in relation to the question of strengthening international humanitarian law (IHL), a large number of participants, recognizing the need to clarify and strengthen IHL in order to protect people affected by armed conflicts and better respond to current and future needs in this field, made a variety of pledges. They were mainly concerned with the adoption of concrete measures aimed at improving the implementation of IHL. Specific pledges were made to address the objectives established in the four-year action plan for the implementation of IHL, such as ensuring the civilian population access to humanitarian assistance in times of armed conflict and strengthening the protection granted to different categories of people, including women and children. Several States also pledged to adopt an effective treaty on the arms trade.

Governments and National Societies expressed their commitment to work together in their respective countries in order to strengthen disaster laws and create a legal framework permitting rapid and effective

disaster response, acknowledging that national legislation should facilitate the organization of emergency response. Several participants pledged to take measures at the international and regional level to improve legal preparedness for international disaster response. Other pledges were concerned with the adoption of risk reduction strategies, including climate change adaptation measures, for example.

Numerous pledges stressed the importance of strengthening local humanitarian action, highlighting the need to facilitate and support the work of volunteers. Several National Societies and States pledged to create an environment promoting dignity and respect for diversity, specifically for the vulnerable population. Values and skills-based humanitarian education was identified as a tool to create a more peaceful environment. Other pledges addressed the need to ensure access of all National Societies to information and communication technology.

In relation to the question of addressing barriers to health care and, more particularly, the problem of insecurity resulting from violence and threats to health care, many governments and National Societies pledged to support the "Health care in danger" initiative, particularly with a view to ensuring safer access for health care services and personnel. Various pledges to reduce health care inequalities affecting women, children and migrants, among others, were widely supported, particularly those concerning the prevention of diseases, such as HIV and tuberculosis.

Ladies and gentlemen, those delegations who have not yet signed pledges can still do so after the conference up to the end of 2011. These pledges will be recorded in the database, which can be accessed from the conference website ([www.rcrconference.org](http://www.rcrconference.org)).

Dear friends, may I express my own opinion and suggest that we start implementing the Pledges today. Indeed, the pledges are our commitment for concrete actions! It is our responsibility to move our world towards more humanity. "Our World. Your Move – For Humanity"

Let me end this report by thanking you for trusting in me with my appointment to be your rapporteur in this important matter. I would like to thank Emilie Goller from the International Federation and Corinne Nunes from ICRC for preparing the draft for this report.