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## **CONFERENCE GUIDE**

### ***FOR THE MEMBERS, OBSERVERS AND GUESTS OF THE 32nd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT***

**8 - 10 December 2015  
Opening ceremony 7 December 2015**

#### **Welcome and registration**

##### Dates and venue

The **32nd International Conference** will take place **8 December – 10 December 2015** in Geneva, following the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) (4 – 6 December 2015), and the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (7 December 2015).

An informal opening ceremony for the 32nd International Conference will take place on 7 December 2015, starting at 18:30.

All meetings will take place at the **International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG)**, Rue de Varembe, 15 – 1211 Geneva 20 (Switzerland).

##### Registration, access to the CICG and badge delivery

All participants are reminded to **register online** as soon as possible at the following address: <http://event.ifrc.org> For more details, please refer to the registration note sent with the Convocation dated 5 June 2015 or contact [event.support@ifrc.org](mailto:event.support@ifrc.org).

For security reasons, anyone entering the CICG must wear the badge provided by the conference organizers.. Please note that the UN badge does not allow access to the CICG. Within the CICG premises, you should have your badge on you at all times. This will facilitate security checks and foster communication among participants. Should you lose your badge, please make this known to the registration stand immediately.

To avoid long waiting time at the CICG entrance, please try to register and obtain your badge prior to the opening times of the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (4 December) and the 32nd International Conference (8 December). The following registration points will be available for your convenience:

- **27 November:** 09:00-12:00 and 13:00-16:00 at the International Federation Secretariat (*17 ch. des Crêts*)
- **30 November:** 09:00-12:00 and 13:00-16:00 at the International Federation Secretariat (*17 ch. des Crêts*)
- **1-2 December:** 09:00-12:00 and 13:00-16:00 at the International Federation Secretariat (*17 ch. des Crêts*)
- **3 December:** 08:30-18:00 at the International Federation Secretariat (*17 ch. des Crêts*) and  
12:00-18:00 at CICG (*17 rue de Varembe*)
- **4-5-6 December:** 07:00-18:00 at CICG (*17 rue de Varembe*)
- **7 December:** 07:00-18:00 at CICG (*17 rue de Varembe*)

- **8 December:** 07:00-18:00 at CICG (*17 rue de Varembé*)
- **9-10 December:** 07:00-18:00 at CICG (*17 rue de Varembé*)

Please note that to obtain a badge, participants must present themselves in person (photos taken on site), with a photo-ID (official document with a picture).

For more detailed information on administrative arrangements of your participation at the Conference please refer to the document “Welcome note” available at the welcome desk at arrival area of Geneva airport or at [www.rcrcconference.org/](http://www.rcrcconference.org/).

#### Opening of the Conference and Reception

The Conference organizers will host a cultural event and a reception on the evening of 7 December 2015. The formal opening of the Conference will take place at 09:00 on 8 December. The Swiss Confederation, and the city of Geneva will offer a cocktail at the end of the first day, on 8 December, starting at 19:00 at the CICG.

#### **Fundamental Principles**

The Fundamental Principles – Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary service, Unity and Universality – are defined in the **Preamble of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**.

All Conference participants shall respect the Fundamental Principles and all documents presented shall conform to these Principles.

#### **Participants at the International Conference**

##### Members

The members of the International Conference are the 189 recognized National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the 196 States Parties to the Geneva Conventions.

A delegation shall not be represented by another delegation or by a member of another delegation.

##### Observers and guests

In addition to the members, observers may attend the meetings of the Conference. Observers have the right to speak only by the invitation of the Chair and to the extent that the Conference has no objections; they have access to the documents of the Conference.

Please note that the plenary meeting room provides for a limited number of seats, therefore each delegation will have maximum four seats at a time for the duration of the plenary meetings.

#### **Provisional Agenda of the Conference**

The Standing Commission has prepared the provisional agenda of the Conference. The Council of Delegates (meeting on 7 December 2015) adopts the agenda of the 32nd International Conference.

#### **Debates, languages and documents**

##### Non-political nature of the Conference

In order for the debates of the Conference to command the confidence of all, the Chair and any elected officer responsible for the conduct of business shall ensure that none of the speakers engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature. The Bureau of the Conference, as defined in the Rules of Procedure, shall apply the same standard to documents before authorizing their circulation.

#### Languages

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in **English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian** during **plenary meetings, general debate**, meetings of the **Commissions** and in the **Drafting Committee**. Several side-events will provide interpretation (as per information provided on the Conference website).

#### Right to speak

Delegates representing **members of the Conference have the right to take part in all discussions in plenary meetings, general debate, Commissions, the humanitarian dialogue - a vision lab<sup>1</sup> and the side events.**

**Observers** have the right to speak only by the invitation of the Chair (of the Conference or of a Commission) and to the extent that the Conference has no objection.

No delegate may take the floor without permission from the Chair.

A speakers' list for the general debate will open on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015 on the website of the Conference. For more information, please contact the Office of the Commissioner of the 32nd International Conference (Ms. Amelie Larocque at <[amelie.larocque@eda.admin.ch](mailto:amelie.larocque@eda.admin.ch)>).

There will be no pre-registered speakers' list for the **Commissions, plenary meetings, Humanitarian Dialogue or side events**; the desire to speak is expressed by the show of hands after the Chair opens the discussion.

Delegations should refrain from making general statements, which are not related to the specific theme of the debate, should limit their comments to **three** minutes or, when speaking on behalf of a group of participants, to **five** minutes.

#### Working documents

The official working documents, **including draft resolutions**, were approved by the Standing Commission and are available on the website of the 32nd International Conference [www.rcrcconference.org](http://www.rcrcconference.org). Participants are invited to refer to these documents in preparing for the Conference.

#### Consensus and votes

The Conference endeavours to adopt its resolutions by consensus, as provided in the Rules of Procedure. If no consensus is reached, a vote is taken in accordance with these Rules. Consensus is understood to mean the absence of any objection expressed by a delegation and submitted by it as constituting an obstacle to the adoption of the resolution in question. If no consensus is reached, resolutions are adopted by the majority of members present and voting.

As a general rule, the vote is taken by a show of hands. At the request of at least ten delegations, a vote is taken by roll call or by secret ballot. The vote of each delegation shall be expressed by its head or by the delegate he/she has designated to replace him/her.

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<sup>1</sup> The description of the Humanitarian dialogue – a vision lab is provided in an annexed document.

## **Architecture of the Conference**

### **Plenary meetings**

*Opening plenary (8 December 2015 9:00 – 12:30)*

The opening and the closing of the Conference will take place in plenary meetings.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, art. 15 (2) - the first plenary meeting of the Conference shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Standing Commission until the new Chairman of the Conference has been elected.

At its first plenary meeting the Conference shall elect the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary General and two Assistant Secretaries General on the proposal of the Council, according to art. 15 (3) of the Rules of Procedure.

*High-level panel discussion on Fundamental Principles*

As part of the opening plenary, the opening panel on “Power of Humanity: the Fundamental Principles in action” represents an opportunity to lay the foundation for the subsequent days’ meetings, discussions and decisions. The panel will focus on the Fundamental Principles and the ways in which they are applied in times of peace as well as in times of conflict or disasters. Recognising the importance of principles in daily life, the panel will not only focus on Red Cross Red Crescent action but will draw perspectives from a wide range of global senior figures representing a broad range of sectors and interests. Speakers and panellists will be invited from government, humanitarian organisations as well as the corporate and military sectors. Each will be invited to contribute their thoughts on how the Fundamental Principle of Humanity is relevant to today’s society.

The opening plenary and the high-level panel discussion will be live streamed in the four working languages of the conference. The link will be available on the website of the Conference.

*Plenary session on “Focus on migration” (9 December 9:00 – 9:45)*

This session will place a spotlight on our shared humanitarian concern for the situation of vulnerable migrants throughout migration routes – in origin, transit and destination countries – with the aim of enhancing the humanitarian response to migrants’ protection and assistance needs.

The plenary will also take note of the Progress report (2011-2015) on the implementation of Resolution 3 of the 31st International Conference, “Migration: Ensuring access, dignity, respect for diversity and social inclusion” and its recommendations.

*Last plenary (10 December 14:30)*

The last plenary session will start with the election of the members of the Standing Commission (see item 16 - Standing Commission election). The Chair of the Drafting Committee will report on the work done by the Committee and recommend on the adoption of the resolutions.

*Closing panel discussion*

This panel discussion will feature a reflection on the implementation of the outcomes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, in a coordinated and inclusive manner.

### **General debate**

The main purpose of the general debate, is to provide a space for delivering formal statements with a view to achieving the overall aims and objectives of the Conference.

*Procedure*

The general debate is open to all members and observers of the Conference. Observers have the right to speak by the invitation of the Chair.

The rules of the Conference apply and speakers shall not engage in controversies of political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

For information on order of speaking (incl. speakers' list see above under "Right to speak"). For more information on the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement that apply to the Conference, please refer to <http://rcrcconference.org/international-conference/about-the-conference/>.

### *Schedule<sup>2</sup>*

- Tuesday 8 December 14:30 – 19:00
- Wednesday 9 December 10:00 – 18:00
- Thursday 10 December 09:00 – 11:30

### **Commissions**

The Commissions are subsidiary bodies open to all participants in the Conference. They function as workshops aimed to offer a space for an exchange of best practices and experiences.

The outlines of the Commissions can be found on the Conference website (<http://rcrcconference.org/international-conference/documents/>). Participants are invited to refer to these in preparing their participation.

### *Schedule*

The Commissions will take place from **Tuesday 8 December until Thursday 10 December**.

The following four commissions will have two sessions, each lasting 2 hours, providing at least once each working language. The schedule of the commissions and their language combinations are as follows (the information on the **exact venue** of the sessions will be shown on the electronic screens at the lobby of the Conference Centre):

- Commission A: Fundamental Principles in Action  
9 December, 15:45-17:45 (English, Spanish and Russian)  
10 December, 9:30–11:30 (English, French and Arabic)
- Commission B: Contemporary challenges in international humanitarian law  
9 December, 15:45–17:45 (English, French and Arabic)  
10 December, 9:30–11:30 (English, Spanish and Russian)
- Commission C: Joint action on the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence  
8 December, 15:00 – 17:00 (English Spanish and Russian)  
9 December, 10:00-12:00 (English, French and Arabic)
- Commission D: Health Care in Danger: continuing to protect the delivery of health care together  
9 December, 15:00-17:00 (English, French and Arabic)  
9 December, 13:30-15:30 (English, Spanish and Russian)

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<sup>2</sup> The timing is indicative. Possible changes will be announced.

- Commission E: Building Resilience by scaling up local action and strengthening legal frameworks. It will present two complementary perspectives “Launch of the One Billion Coalition for Resilience” and “Strengthening legal frameworks for disasters and emergencies”, being scheduled only once and providing interpretation in all languages.
  - “Launch of the One Billion Coalition for Resilience”  
9 December, 10:00-12:00 (English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian)
  - “Strengthening legal frameworks for disasters and emergencies”  
9 December, 13:30-15:30 (English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian)

**The organizers will make the necessary arrangements for the recording of the plenary meetings, the commissions and the general debate. The plenary commissions will produce reports that will be made available on the website of the Conference.**

### **Drafting Committee**

The Drafting Committee is tasked to review and consolidate – in terms of substance and form - draft resolutions and documents submitted to the Conference for adoption, in the light of relevant background reports provided.

The Drafting Committee is open to all members and observers of the Conference. Only members of the Conference can participate in the discussions.

The work of the Drafting Commission is foreseen to take place daily 8 December – 10 December.

The Chair of the Drafting Committee is responsible for the organisation of the work, the good conduct, the order and the efficient procedure of the debates. Delegations may take the floor more than once at the Chair's discretion and time allowing the Chair endeavours to finalise official documents for adoption by consensus. The rules of the Conference apply to the Drafting Committee. Speakers shall not engage in controversies of political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Documents finalised by the Drafting Committee will be submitted to the final plenary session on 10 December for adoption in the working languages (English, French, Spanish and Arabic) by the Chair in the report to the Conference on the work of the Drafting Committee.

### **Side Events**

The **side events** will supplement the official proceedings of the Conference by providing informal discussions on humanitarian topics related to the Conference themes and objectives. They are an integral part of the Conference but not of its formal agenda. There is no requirement for decisions or consensus in side events, which will take place throughout the 3 days of the Conference.

The **programme and summary outlines of side events** are available at <http://rcrcconference.org/-cointernationalnference/side-events/>.

### **Pledges**

In addition to the resolutions submitted to the 32nd International Conference for adoption, the participants will be invited to undertake voluntary individual or collective/joint, humanitarian commitments for the period 2015 - 2019 in the form of **pledges**.

Model/example pledges texts on the Conference topics are now available on the [pledge database](#). These examples are provided as a basis for specific pledges and are intended to be modified according to the contexts, interests and capacities of pledge signatories.

In addition to the pledges initiated by participants, a number of **open pledges** are submitted for consideration prior to and during the Conference. You can sign up to open pledges at <http://rcrcconference.org/international-conference/pledges/>.

During the Conference, a **pledge stand** will be open in the Conference Centre (8-10 December). For National Societies, the stand will also be open during the General Assembly of the International Federation, 4 – 6 December and during the Council of Delegates, 7 December. Participants can join pledges after the close of the Conference via the [online pledge database](#).

For further information, please refer to the **Guidelines for pledging at** <http://rcrcconference.org/international-conference/pledges/> or write a message to [pledge@rcrcconference.org](mailto:pledge@rcrcconference.org).

## **Election of members of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent**

The Standing Commission (SC) is the "*trustee of the International Conference between two Conferences, carrying out the functions laid down in Article 18*" of the Statutes of the Movement.

### Composition

The Standing Commission comprises nine members, namely:

- a) five representatives of different National Societies, *each elected in his or her personal capacity* by the international Conference;
- b) two representatives of the ICRC;
- c) two representatives of the International Federation.

### Nomination of candidates

A profile for candidates, recommendations and guiding principles for the election of the Standing Commission are available at <http://rcrcconference.org/international-conference/standing-commission-election/> and at [www.standcom.ch](http://www.standcom.ch). For any inquiries, please contact the Secretariat of the Standing Commission: [contact@standcom.ch](mailto:contact@standcom.ch)). All nominations submitted prior to the Conference will be published in all working languages on the Conference and the Standing Commission websites.

During the Conference, nominations for the Standing Commission have to be delivered in closed envelopes, with the curriculum vitae of each candidate, to the Chairman of the Bureau, at the latest forty-eight hours before the opening of the meeting in which the election will take place **i.e., at the latest at 14:30 on Tuesday 8 December**. The Bureau will circulate the curriculum vitae of each candidate twenty-four hours before the election.

On Wednesday evening 9 December between 18:00-19:00, an **informal meeting** with the candidates running for the Standing Commission, will take place at the Conference Centre.

### Election process

The International Conference shall elect in a personal capacity those members of the Standing Commission mentioned in Article 17, paragraph 1 a) of the Statutes, taking into account **personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution**. Consideration of gender balance is encouraged.

The members of the Standing Commission are elected by secret ballot by the members of the Conference. The voting procedure will be held electronically<sup>3</sup>, and it will start on Thursday 10 December immediately after the roll call at 14:30 (beginning of the final plenary session) to determine the absolute majority required for election in the 1<sup>st</sup> ballot.

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<sup>3</sup> A **guide for electronic voting** will be made available in due course and on-site support will be provided by organizers.

If five candidates obtain an absolute majority in the 1<sup>st</sup> election round, they are declared elected. If less than five candidates in the 1<sup>st</sup> round obtain an absolute majority, a second ballot will be held in which the candidate(s) obtaining the largest number of votes are elected.

## **Humanitarian Village**

Delegates can learn more about International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actors and their programmes, dialogue with each other and exchange ideas in the Humanitarian Village. The Village will be located within the Conference Centre on level -1 and level 2, and will include exhibition stands of the National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation.

### **Media**

During the Statutory Meetings, media based in Geneva and within the region will be invited to attend specific events of the Conference. They will be asked to register prior to the conference.

To ensure participants can speak openly and engage in healthy debate, media will not be granted unlimited access to sessions likely to feature sensitive topics. A list of open sessions will be provided to media and participants as described below:

#### *General Assembly of the International Federation:*

- Access to the opening session and panel
- Access to side events on demand

#### *Council of Delegates:*

No media access

#### *International Conference:*

- Access to the plenary sessions
- Access to the awards ceremony (7 December, evening) and opening (8 December, in the morning)
- Access to side-events on demand
- Access to the closing panel

#### *Accompanying Journalist*

National Societies may bring journalists with them to the meetings. This is allowed and the same access to sessions will be granted to them as to other journalists. National Societies planning on bringing journalists or wishing to organize a press briefing should contact Reeni Amin Chua, [reeni.aminchua@ifrc.org](mailto:reeni.aminchua@ifrc.org), to enquire about the accreditation process.

#### *Accreditation*

A media accreditation process will be in place to ensure that we know the credentials of journalists attending. They will have media badges so they are identifiable as such and be restricted to areas and sessions they are able to access. The media and communication team will supervise journalists attending as far as is possible.

#### *Proactive media outreach*

In addition to inviting domestic and international / regional media to the activities outlined earlier, the International Federation and ICRC communications teams will carry out proactive outreach to regional and global media through multilingual press releases, use of social media and targeted media pitches and briefings on key themes and newsworthy topics, for example, the recognition of new National Societies into the International Federation, the Migration and Syria crises.

All media requests for interviews or information about the meetings should be forwarded to the International Federation or ICRC press officers: At the International Federation - Reeni Amin Chua, [reeni.aminchua@ifrc.org](mailto:reeni.aminchua@ifrc.org) and Benoit Matsha-Carpentier, [benoit.carpentier@ifrc.org](mailto:benoit.carpentier@ifrc.org) and at ICRC - Alexis Heeb, [aheeb@icrc.org](mailto:aheeb@icrc.org) and Philippe Stoll, [pstoll@icrc.org](mailto:pstoll@icrc.org)

#### *Information available for the media*

Dedicated spaces on the [www.rcrcconference.org](http://www.rcrcconference.org), [www.IFRC.org](http://www.IFRC.org) and [www.ICRC.org](http://www.ICRC.org) websites provide media materials and information will be sent proactively. .

## **Social Media**

Delegates at the Statutory Meetings are encouraged to use social media to help build a global conversation around the overarching themes of the meetings. However, there will be a few of sessions where Chairs will ask delegates to exert caution and careful judgement in posting to social media, so as not to hamper healthy debate.

#### *Posting and Tweeting*

Here are some tips and suggestions to help engage your online communities in the global conversation on the Statutory Meetings.

- Include **#PowerOfHumanity**, the official hashtag of the Statutory Meetings 2015, in all your social media posts
- Focus on themes and issues of interest to your context and online communities
- Promote inspirational people and stories, rather than concentrating on the structure of the meetings or on the fact that they are happening
- Follow the [International Federation](#) and [ICRC](#)'s official social media channels and like, comment, share content from their posts and tweets
- Engage people in your network(s) in conversation about the key issues that are being discussed
- Post and tweet about the work of your National Society and relevant humanitarian issues in your region
- Promote your National Society's social media channels and encourage people to follow you
- Direct people to learn more about the meetings at the [official website](#), or to articles on the [International Federation](#) and [ICRC](#) websites

#### *Internet Access*

There will be wireless internet available throughout the venue for the Statutory Meetings. Delegates will be able to use their own computers or mobile devices to access the internet. Alternatively, there will be computer pods available at the venue for delegates to access their own online channels.