



Power of humanity

Council of Delegates of the International
Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

10-11 November 2017, Turkey



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**COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

Antalya, Turkey
10–11 November 2017

Work of the Standing Commission

PROGRESS REPORT

**Document prepared by
the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent**

Geneva, September 2017

1) INTRODUCTION

ROLE AND TASKS

The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission) is the trustee of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) between two International Conferences.¹ The role and tasks of the Standing Commission are derived from Article 18 of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement).²

The Standing Commission has an important formal role in the preparations for the Council of Delegates and the International Conference. As the only permanent body of the Movement, it is a forum for reflection on and development of issues of Movement-wide significance, and has a role in settling differences of opinion, fostering harmony in the Movement, and promoting the implementation of the decisions of the Council of Delegates and the International Conference.

In the course of its work, the Standing Commission carries out extensive consultations with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) across the world.

ELECTION OF THE 17th STANDING COMMISSION (2015–2019)

The 32nd International Conference, held in Geneva in December 2015, elected five members of the 17th Standing Commission. The members of the new Standing Commission since then have been:

➤ Elected *ad personam*:

Dr Massimo Barra (Italy)
Mr Chrystold Chetty (Seychelles)
Mr Greg Vickery (Australia)
Ms Eva von Oelreich (Sweden)
Mr George Weber (Canada)



➤ *Ex officio* members:

ICRC:

Dr Peter Maurer, president
Mr Balthasar Staehelin, deputy director-general

IFRC:

Mr Tadateru Konoé, president
Mr Elhadj As Sy, secretary-general

The Standing Commission appointed Ms Eva von Oelreich (Sweden) as chair and Mr George Weber (Canada) as vice chair.

¹ See the Statutes of the Movement, Article 16: <http://standcom.ch/statutes-and-rules-of-procedure/>

² *Ibid.* Article 18.

Changes in the Standing Commission

At its meeting of 11 September 2017, the Standing Commission noted with profound regret the resignation of Ms Eva von Oelreich, its previous member and chair since 2015, owing to very understandable personal reasons; it unanimously expressed its gratitude to Ms Eva von Oelreich for her remarkable commitment to the Standing Commission over the last two years and for her legacy on which the Commission will continue to work, and further wished her every success in her future endeavours.

The Standing Commission unanimously elected Mr George Weber as the new chair of the Standing Commission and Mr Chrystold Chetty as vice-chair. In application of Article 17.2 of the Statutes of the Movement, Mr Ibrahim Osman of the Sudanese Red Crescent became a member of the Standing Commission.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORK PLAN

Since its election, the Standing Commission has met seven times in ordinary sessions. Members and invited experts also met for three brainstorming sessions (see 4.2) and a concluding meeting of the Advisory Group on 2015 statutory meetings (see 2.2) in 2016.

For 2016 and 2017, the Standing Commission established an evolving work plan that could be adapted to the needs and new opportunities for action. This enabled it to assume its core responsibility for overseeing the preparation cycles of the 2017 Council of Delegates in Antalya, Turkey, (see 2.1) and already of the 33rd International Conference, which will take place in 2019. These preparations were also part of the process of reforming and modernizing the Movement's statutory meetings (see 2.2). This wind of reform had a symbolic influence on the organization of the Movement awards, for which the Standing Commission is responsible and which will be presented in 2017 at a joint ceremony with the IFRC awards (see 3).

The Standing Commission also focused on promoting the implementation of the decisions previously taken by the Movement, with a particular focus on ensuring the inclusion of the "Vision for the Movement" in the strategic planning processes specific to each of its components, and on monitoring important processes related to coordination, cohesion, solidarity and standards of good governance within the Movement (see 4.1). At the same time, the Standing Commission embarked on a cycle of more forward-looking reflections on major humanitarian trends and their foreseeable future consequences for the Movement (see 4.2).

With some organizational adjustments, the Secretariat of the Standing Commission remained on the same track as before in terms of administrative and financial management. The Standing Commission would like to express its sincere gratitude to the National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC for their financial contributions and support for its work (see 5 and annex).

2) PREPARATION AND REFORM OF THE MOVEMENT'S STATUTORY MEETINGS

No sooner has one International Conference ended than another begins, triggering the next four-year preparatory cycle. The same applies to Council of Delegates in a two-year superimposed cycle. The Standing Commission saw one of its central functions as assuming its responsibilities in terms of accompanying and approving preparations while continuing its reflection on the evolution and reform of the Movement's statutory meetings.

2.1. PREPARATION OF THE 2017 COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

The preparation of the 2017 Council of Delegates obviously became a dominant task of the Standing Commission. With the decision to accept the generous invitation of the Turkish Red Crescent to host the statutory meetings, it



was eventually decided that they would be held in the coastal city of Antalya. The Standing Commission welcomes the remarkable work done by the Joint Organizing Committee, involving the teams from the IFRC, the ICRC, the Turkish Red Crescent Society and the Secretariat of the Standing Commission. Under the guidance of the Standing Commission, the Joint Organizing Committee was able to mobilize and coordinate the efforts required to develop the Council's agenda and programme, and hold consultations about it and about the decisions to be submitted to the Movement, and of course make all the practical arrangements.

In addition to important discussions and decisions on the Movement's positions, strategies and policies, a space for free-flowing and inspiring discussions was created with the RC² Forum – to be held between the IFRC's General Assembly and the Council of Delegates. In preparation of the RC² Forum, various engagement sessions were proposed to National Societies by the ICRC, the IFRC and several hosting National Societies, with the aim of identifying trends and emerging humanitarian issues, understanding their impact on people, and preparing the Movement's response. The RC² Forum should help create a continuum between the 32nd and 33rd International Conferences and potentially shape the 33rd International Conference so that it is relevant to the people we work for, to the Movement and, more broadly, to the global humanitarian community.

Participation in the 2017 Council of Delegates

The Standing Commission was regularly faced with questions relating to participation in the Movement's statutory meetings. On the basis of the provisions of the Movement's Statutes and Rules of Procedure and established practice, the Standing Commission agreed to invite as observers or guests two National Societies in the process of recognition and admission and three other Red Cross or Red Crescent entities.

In addition, taking into consideration the significant evolution within the Movement, notably within the IFRC, of mechanisms for monitoring and sanctioning ongoing breaches of integrity,³ the Standing Commission decided to examine the possibility of extending to the statutory meetings under its responsibility potential decisions by the IFRC to suspend any of its members.

2.2. FURTHER REFORM OF THE STATUTORY MEETINGS

The Standing Commission, in collaboration with the ICRC and the IFRC and in consultation with National Societies and other stakeholders, was committed to continuing its work on the reform and modernization of the Movement's statutory meetings, exploring further ways and means to improve the meetings' effectiveness and impact. A series of reports and recommendations have been discussed by the Standing Commission in the past five years,

³ In particular, procedures established for the implementation of the "Policy on the protection of integrity of National Societies and the bodies of the International Federation", adopted at the IFRC General Assembly in 2005 and reviewed in 2009, including the role of the Compliance and Mediation Committee established by the IFRC Constitution (Article 32), of other IFRC authorities and of the ICRC.

including those produced by the former Working Group on Movement Fora (2012–2013),⁴ as well as, in 2016, by Ambassador Nicolas Lang, the Commissioner for the 32nd International Conference, by the Advisory Group on 2015 statutory meetings, and in the *Evaluation of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Participant Feedback*.⁵

Indicative objectives of the 33rd International Conference

Based on the statutory functions and long-term vision of the International Conference, the Standing Commission endorsed in September 2016 four indicative objectives to guide the organization of the next International Conference(s):

Objective 1: Contribute to respect for and development of international humanitarian law, with the aim of better protecting people affected by armed conflict.

Objective 2: Improve the safety, security and dignity of individuals by strengthening legal frameworks and policies related to humanitarian action and promoting their effective implementation.

Objective 3: Shape the global humanitarian agenda, raising the Movement's collective voice on pressing humanitarian concerns, grounded in its practical experience and its principled approach to humanitarian action.

Objective 4: Foster relationships, alliances and synergies among Movement components, and between the Movement and governments and other humanitarian partners, in order to enhance the implementation and impact of previous and future International Conference outcomes.

Furthermore, the Standing Commission was particularly driven by its wish that statutory meetings in 2017 be harnessed, in their formal and informal segments, as a platform for consolidating the Movement's positions and to explore subjects of common humanitarian interest, which could then be placed on the agenda of the 2019 or later meetings depending on their degree of maturity.

Structure and organization

The reports, lessons learned and recommendations made available also encouraged the Standing Commission to continue its reflection on the structure of the Council of Delegates and the International Conference, including possible combinations and synergies with the IFRC statutory meetings (General Assembly, Regional Conferences, etc.) – an issue to be discussed with the IFRC. The changes favoured could in particular lead to:

- a simplification of the agendas and programmes, focused around relevant and reasonably numerous subjects that meet the aforementioned objectives;
- an offer made to participants to take part in more informal exchanges in addition to official discussions, negotiations and decisions, including on more forward-looking themes and trends for which the Movement and the humanitarian community should be prepared;
- a reinforcement, before the meetings, of the processes for engaging with and consulting National Societies and States, and for their participation during meetings;
- a clarification of the processes and responsibilities for monitoring the Movement's decisions and a revitalization of voluntary pledges;

⁴ On the outcome of that working process, see the [report of the Standing Commission to the 2013 Council of Delegates on the Strategy for the Movement and Movement Fora](#) as well as the related Resolution 3 of the 2013 Council of Delegates.

⁵ <http://rcrcconference.org/international-conference/evaluation/>

- greater openness to interactive participation by humanitarian actors and organizations from outside the Movement;
- a sustained communication effort to raise the profile of meetings and public interest in the Red Cross and Red Crescent in a competitive international and media environment.

Bearing in mind the need to improve the processes for organizing statutory meetings, the Standing Commission has encouraged and welcomed a new concept for the functioning of the Joint Organizing Committee, which should be put in place gradually. The Standing Commission also welcomed a study by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, on the participation of small States and small National Societies in the International Conference, which was forwarded to the Joint Organizing Committee for further consideration.

Refining the Standing Commission's electoral criteria and procedures

Various developments in the organization of the Standing Commission election have been introduced in recent years, including the highly appreciated use of electronic voting in 2015. The Standing Commission wishes to continue studying the options available to ensure that the results of the elections are seen as inclusive and fair, reflect the diversity of the Movement and are in line with the Fundamental Principles and the Movement's Statutes and Rules of Procedure. If this work were to lead in 2018 to further proposals to improve electoral criteria and procedures, their implementation would be envisaged by 2019.

3) MOVEMENT AWARDS

In accordance with the regulations and criteria for awarding the Henry Dunant Medal and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity, the Standing Commission decided to honour two individuals with the Henry Dunant Medal for their extraordinary achievements and commitment to the Movement's cause.

The Standing Commission and the IFRC Governing Board approved (in April and May 2017, respectively) the proposal to merge the awards ceremonies of the Council of Delegates (Henry Dunant Medal; Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity) and the IFRC General Assembly (Henry Davison Medal; Youth on the Move Award; Volunteering and Development Award). A **joint awards ceremony** will therefore take place in the evening of 9 November 2017 to celebrate the highest international distinctions of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

4) PROMOTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND HARMONY WITHIN THE MOVEMENT

Among its functions, the Standing Commission shall "encourage and further the implementation of resolutions" of the International Conference and the Council of Delegates and "promote harmony and ... coordination" in the Movement.⁶

4.1 ENSURE FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOVEMENT'S DECISIONS

Vision for the Movement

When adopting the "Vision for the Movement" in 2015,⁷ the Council of Delegates requested the Standing Commission to report in 2017 on the impact of the Vision. In the initial phase of

⁶ Article 18(3)(a) and (b) of the Statutes of the Movement

⁷ See [Resolution 11 of the 2015 Council of Delegates](#)

implementation, the Standing Commission agreed that it would be difficult and premature to measure the impact on the strategic planning processes specific to each component of the Movement. Rather, the Standing Commission's priority should be to raise awareness of the Vision among the Movement's leaders and decision-makers, so that they can take ownership of it and promote relevant, innovative and exemplary adaptations in their respective contexts. *For more information, see the related progress report (CD/17/14).*

Movement-wide implementing processes

The Standing Commission regularly received updates and exchanged views on processes that are important for coordination, cohesion, solidarity and standards of good governance within the Movement, such as: the implementation and adaptation of the action plan for **Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC)**, the development of a **vision and principles for Movement-wide resource mobilization**, and the **revision of National Society statutes and legal base**. *For more information, see the related progress reports and draft resolutions (respectively CD/17/5, CD/17/6 and CD/17/19).*

The Standing Commission was also kept informed of developments with the **investment mechanism for National Societies**, especially those in fragile contexts, to strengthen their skills and widen their reach.

Memorandum of Understanding

In early 2016 the Standing Commission endorsed the appointment of Mr Robert Tickner of Australia as the new independent monitor for the implementation of the **Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements**, dated 28 November 2005, between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel. The Standing Commission was kept regularly informed of efforts to make progress on this issue. *For more information, see the related report of the independent monitor (CD/17/16).*

Promoting the red crystal

The Standing Commission decided to initiate a discussion on the future prospects for the promotion and expansion of the use of the red crystal established by [Protocol III of 2005 additional to the Geneva Conventions](#). It expressed the wish to include this issue on its agenda regularly in order to understand the evolving challenges and opportunities.

4.2 NEW TRENDS AND IMPACT ON THE MOVEMENT

A think tank to advance ideas for the future of the Movement

In a rapidly changing humanitarian landscape, the Standing Commission, as the only permanent body of the Movement on which all components are represented, was willing to adopt think-tank methods and explore future humanitarian trends and their consequences for the Movement as a whole and for the people it works for, with a view to shaping the global humanitarian agenda. It thus included in its work plan informal brainstorming sessions, open as necessary to external experts.

Among the wide range of topics considered during the first two informal brainstorming sessions, the following five trends emerged as bearers of hugely important consequences for the Movement in the future:

- uneven economic growth and increasing inequality

- digital disruption
- loss of sense of shared humanity and values
- lack of integrity
- water, demographics and population movements.

Effective governance, transparency, accountability and the fight against fraud and corruption

At its third brainstorming session, the Standing Commission chose to discuss the major challenges surrounding effective governance within the Movement – particularly with regard to integrity, transparency and compliance – when confronted with the risks of corruption and fraud. The intention was not to engage in a critical review of the work and existing mechanisms that may already address these issues in the Movement. Rather, the Standing Commission wished to take advantage of its unique position to create momentum and reflect on developments on these issues in the outside world and the foreseeable consequences for which the Movement must be prepared.

Despite the Red Cross and Red Crescent actors' generally positive reputation and the high regard in which their principles and values of humanity and integrity are held, it is necessary to bear in mind that fraud and corruption can exist anywhere and in very sophisticated forms. Unfortunately, experience has shown that detecting and sanctioning fraud at the level of one component of the Movement may – despite good faith, the effectiveness of the measures taken and the efforts at transparency – cause profound damage and loss of trust.

While each individual component of the Movement has the primary responsibility to handle integrity and compliance issues properly, there is also a need to work together on such issues, as the exposure of the failures of one might potentially discredit the collective reputation of part or all of the Movement.

The brainstorming session was an opportunity to explore ways for the Movement's governance, individually and collectively, to demonstrate and reinforce its commitment to effectively prevent, control, detect, investigate and sanction the phenomena of fraud and corruption. In a spirit of collective responsibility, the Standing Commission stands ready to continue discussing these issues with Movement-wide implications, and to contribute to strengthening or establishing relevant Movement mechanisms.

4.3 HARMONY IN THE MOVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN (EXTERNAL) MEETINGS

The Standing Commission, its chair and individual members have attended, as and when invited, regional, sub-regional and thematic meetings, which were an excellent opportunity to meet and consult with National Society leaders and other humanitarian actors:⁸

- World Humanitarian Summit (Istanbul, May 2016)
- 41st General Assembly of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization (Amman, April 2016)
- 9th Middle East and North Africa Conference of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Amman, January 2017)
- Bangladesh Red Crescent Society Partnership Meeting (Dhaka, February 2017)
- [31st Annual Meeting of ALNAP](#) (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance) on the theme “Changing Humanitarian Action” (Stockholm, February 2017)

⁸ Some of the Standing Commission speeches (in English only) are available here: <http://standcom.ch/speeches/>

- 9th Pan-African Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Abidjan, April 2017)
- IFRC Governing Board meetings (Geneva, June and November 2016, May and September 2017), including its Working Group on Statutory Meetings.

5) MANAGEMENT OF THE STANDING COMMISSION SECRETARIAT

The Standing Commission wishes to express its gratitude to Mr Tore Svenning, who performed the role of head of the secretariat with efficiency and dedication from early 2012 to November 2016, when he left to take on new responsibilities within the Movement. He was succeeded by Mr Yves-Jean Duménil in March 2017.

In 2016, contributions to the budget of the Standing Commission amounted to an actual sum of 474,216 Swiss francs, approximately a third of which came from National Societies, a third from the IFRC and a third from the ICRC. There were 63 National Societies that made contributions (see annex). The 2017 and 2018 budgets were established respectively at Sfr 559,020 and Sfr 529,500.

An independent financial review was conducted by KPMG on the 2015 accounts in accordance with the International Standard on Review Engagements 2400 (ISRE 2400), confirming the compliance of the financial statements with the basis and standards of accounting. Considering that large parts of the Standing Commission budget are reviewed as part of the Human Resources accounts of the ICRC and the IFRC, it was agreed that such an independent financial review would take place once every four-year electoral term of the Standing Commission, preferably in the year before the election.

The Secretariat of the Standing Commission welcomes visits by National Society officials in Geneva. The chair and other members of the Standing Commission are at your disposal if you have any questions, remarks or suggestions regarding their roles and functions within the Movement.

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ANNEX: LIST OF DONOR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

At the time of writing this report, the National Societies of the following countries had generously contributed to the budget of the Standing Commission for the years 2016 and/or 2017. The Standing Commission wishes to reiterate its thanks to each of them.

Albania	Republic of Korea
Andorra	Romania
Argentina	South Sudan
Australia	Spain
Austria	Sweden
Bahrain	Switzerland
Belgium	Thailand
Bulgaria	Tonga
Cambodia	Turkey
Canada	Turkmenistan
China	United Kingdom
Cook Islands	Vanuatu
Costa Rica	Viet Nam
Croatia	
Cyprus	
Czech Republic	
Denmark	
Egypt	
El Salvador	
Estonia	
Ethiopia	
Finland	
France	
Germany	
Honduras	
Iran	
Iraq	
Ireland	
Israel	
Italy	
Japan	
Jordan	
Kenya	
Latvia	
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Maldives	
Micronesia	
Monaco	
Montenegro	
Morocco	
Myanmar	
Netherlands	
New Zealand	
Norway	
Pakistan	
Palestine	
Philippines	
Qatar	