

Power of humanity

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

8 December 2019, Geneva



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

Geneva, Switzerland
8 December 2019

**Strengthening civil–military relations for disaster management
throughout the International Red Cross and Red Crescent
Movement**

Draft elements of resolution

March 2019

Strengthening civil–military relations for disaster management throughout the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Background

The draft elements of the proposed resolution on positioning the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on civil-military relations (CMR) seek to provide an outline of the possible substance of individual paragraphs, without providing a definitive text for the proposed resolution.

Each paragraph is followed by a rationale explaining why it would be useful to include such a paragraph in the resolution.

This document is being shared for consultation with the members of the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in order to gather a first round of comments and feedback, and to gain an initial understanding of whether the proposed approach on the substance would be acceptable and garner consensus.

When providing comments and feedback on this document, please consider the following questions:

- Do you agree with the proposed elements for the preambular and operative paragraphs of the proposed resolution?
- Are there any elements that are missing or should be included in the resolution?

Detailed comments on the wording of the draft elements of this resolution are not expected at this stage. There will be opportunity to comment on specific wording once the draft zero of the resolution is available at a later stage.

Introduction

In 2005, the Council of Delegates adopted a guidance document on relations between the components of the Movement and military bodies, hereafter referred to as the guidance document.¹ The guidance document recommends a common and more coordinated approach to CMR throughout the Movement, in both national and international contexts and in accordance with the Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance.²

The guidance document has helped the Movement be more consistent and coordinated in its disaster preparedness and response over the past 13 years. The Movement components have taken steps to operationalize the guidance document by adopting tools and approaches that enhance cooperation and coordination on CMR for disaster-response operations, mostly at the regional level. Specifically, the work undertaken in the Asia–Pacific region has laid the groundwork for the cross-fertilization of practices, the secondment of staff and the development of common guidance and training. Similar efforts have begun in the Americas region (with other regions also committed to furthering their regional CMR approaches), and have been undertaken by some National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies at the domestic level.

¹ 2005 Council of Delegates, Resolution 7, “Guidance document on relations between the components of the Movement and military bodies”.

² Revised version adopted by the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 2013 and endorsed by the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2015 (Resolution 7).

While this progress is welcome, National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) have implemented the guidance document only partially and to varying degrees, shaped by operational challenges, their interpretation and pursuit of their mandate and the Fundamental Principles, their understanding of their role vis-à-vis the public authorities, and the resources available to engage in CMR.

Additionally, the need for a renewed, global, Movement-wide approach to CMR has increased due to several factors, including:

- Military bodies³ are increasingly likely to have a role in disaster preparedness and response, as the scope, scale, complexity and duration of disasters outweigh the capacity of domestic and international civilian entities to respond effectively. Their various motives for this increasing role might create perception issues for the Movement components.
- The presence of domestic and foreign military forces and the multiplication of non-State armed groups in humanitarian operating environments further increase both the complexity and likelihood of the Movement components' contact with military bodies.
- Other humanitarian organizations are engaging with military bodies using different approaches on a variety of topics, often based on their interpretation of what constitutes a principled approach during a disaster response. The absence of a common approach among humanitarian organizations confuses militaries and weakens efforts to preserve humanitarian space and principles.

Disaster response is now often transnational in nature, with both military forces and other humanitarian organizations operating globally, which requires the Movement to adopt a global CMR approach in order to preserve its humanitarian space in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.

As a result of these developments and the increased interaction between Movement disaster responders and military bodies, there is now a need to operationalize the guidance document further and to enhance it by generating renewed support at the national and regional levels as part of a broader, common, global CMR approach.

Based on regional experience, three core areas of activity have been identified to further strengthen the Movement's common, global CMR position:

1. **Develop common operational guidance** on CMR for Movement disaster-response practitioners by identifying, sharing and approving lessons learnt and best practice for implementation at the global, regional and national levels.
2. **Develop a Movement-wide network** that uses common, consistent resources to enhance CMR authority, knowledge and expertise.
3. **Conduct outreach and advocacy work vis-à-vis external stakeholders** to preserve the Movement's humanitarian space and be an influential voice on future CMR developments globally.

These three areas of activity delineate a global road map for the Movement to ensure that our CMR in disaster preparedness and response are consistent, framed by common operational guidelines, and supported by appropriate expertise, tools and training, and that our humanitarian space is preserved. Moreover, by reflecting the Fundamental Principles, this cohesive CMR approach will not only foster a more effective response, but also enhance access and acceptance, thereby improving the Movement's capability to serve affected people and communities.

³ As per the guidance document, military bodies are defined as "all bodies and groups carrying out military tasks and operations".

It is essential to mobilize all the Movement components by means of a resolution that maps out a global approach to strengthening the Movement's common position on CMR and operationalizing the guidance document by developing the three above-mentioned areas of activity.

Preambular paragraphs (PP)

PP1 *A preambular paragraph could recall the humanitarian impact of disasters.*

Rationale: This paragraph is intended to emphasize that the focus should be on the people affected by disaster whom the Movement has a duty to assist and protect.

PP2 *A preambular paragraph could describe the increasing prevalence of military bodies responding to disasters, which leads to greater interaction between the Movement components and military bodies.*

Rationale: This paragraph should stress that military bodies, both domestic and foreign, are increasingly among those responding to disasters, hence their growing interaction with the Movement components involved in disaster response.

PP3 *A preambular paragraph could recall Resolution 7 of the 2005 Council of Delegates, "Guidance document on relations between the components of the Movement and military bodies", as well as the Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance, revised by the IFRC General Assembly in 2013 and endorsed by States through Resolution 7 of the 32nd International Conference, "Strengthening the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement response to growing humanitarian needs".*

Rationale: This paragraph should recall that in 2005 the Council of Delegates endorsed guidance on relations between the various Movement components and military bodies. This paragraph would also recall that the Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance refer to such relations between National Societies, their International Federation and military bodies in international humanitarian assistance (excluding armed conflict, internal strife and their direct results), adopted in their revised version by the IFRC General Assembly in 2013 and endorsed by States at the 32nd International Conference.

PP4 *A preambular paragraph could express the Council of Delegates' appreciation for the work undertaken by National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC in accordance with their respective mandates to operationalize the guidance document at the regional level.*

Rationale: This paragraph is to acknowledge that some regions and National Societies have endeavoured to implement the guidance document, but that those efforts, whilst commendable, are not coordinated globally and have been implemented to varying degrees.

PP5 *A preambular paragraph could take note that the three above-mentioned areas of activity should be pursued for the sake of a more effective global approach to CMR that fits in with the Fundamental Principles and secures a humanitarian space for effective assistance and protection of affected populations.*

Rationale: This paragraph notes that the three above-mentioned areas of activity delineate a global road map for the Movement to ensure that CMR in disaster preparedness and response are consistent, framed by common operational guidelines, and supported by appropriate expertise, tools and training, and that our humanitarian space is preserved. Moreover, by reflecting the Fundamental Principles, this cohesive CMR approach will not only foster a more

effective response, but also enhance access and acceptance, thereby improving the Movement's ability to serve affected people and communities.

Operational paragraphs (OP)

OP1 An operative paragraph could call upon National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC to prioritize resources and collectively adopt a renewed, strengthened global approach to CMR based on the 2005 guidance, designed to strengthen Movement cooperation and coordination in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, and focused on the three above-mentioned areas of activity.

Rationale: This paragraph is intended to mobilize the Movement to operationalize the guidance document through renewed support at the national and regional levels as part of a broader, common, global CMR approach based on consistent, principled engagement with military bodies in disaster preparedness and response. The operative paragraph would outline the three key areas of action identified as crucial for enhancing CMR throughout the Movement. These three areas are interrelated and require the support of all the components of the Movement, especially as they all frequently interact and engage with military bodies.

OP2 An operative paragraph could request the Movement components to further develop and strengthen common operational guidance on CMR for disaster-preparedness and response practitioners, including by identifying, sharing and approving lessons learned and best practice for implementation at the global level.

Rationale: Regional experience has shown that developing common operational guidance for Movement practitioners in disaster response by identifying, sharing and approving lessons learnt and best practice for implementation at the global, regional and national levels is one key way to establish a common global approach.

OP3 An operative paragraph could recommend dedicating greater resources to develop CMR authority, knowledge and expertise.

Rationale: To strengthen CMR throughout the Movement will require dedicated resources to build and connect a network of staff assigned to handle CMR who are endowed with the authority, knowledge and expertise to deal with military bodies on behalf of the Movement and who use common, consistent resources. Furthermore, this would ensure that CMR are mainstreamed throughout disaster-management activities and training, thereby promoting effective, principled disaster management.

OP4 An operative paragraph could invite the Movement to conduct outreach and advocacy work vis-à-vis external military and civilian stakeholders to preserve the Movement's humanitarian space and be an influential voice on future CMR developments globally.

Rationale: Critical to developing a global CMR approach is conducting outreach and advocacy work vis-à-vis external stakeholders with a view to achieving greater respect for the Fundamental Principles, preserving the Movement's humanitarian space, and securing its global voice and influence regarding future CMR developments, including through partnerships.

OP5 An operative paragraph could request the Movement components to support and contribute to this collective endeavour in accordance with the frameworks and policies designed to strengthen the Movement's ability to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

Rationale: This paragraph is intended to request all the Movement components to support this effort to strengthen CMR with a view to enhancing how the Movement relates to military bodies and ultimately improving disaster management.

OP6 An operative paragraph could request that the progress made on this initiative and the results of the three above-mentioned areas of activity be reported to the 2021 Council of Delegates.

Rationale: To ensure progress is made, it is recommended that a report on operationalizing the guidance document by pursuing the three areas of activity be submitted to the 2021 Council of Delegates.