



**Power of humanity**

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

10-11 November 2017, Turkey



**EN**

CD/17/14

Original: English  
For information

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

Antalya, Turkey  
10–11 November 2017

**Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

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

Geneva, September 2017

## **1) Introduction: the commitment of the Movement to its Vision**

The 2015 Council of Delegates adopted a Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement), calling upon all components of the Movement to take it into account in their own strategic planning processes (Resolution CD/15/R11). It highlighted the many challenges facing humanitarian actors today, especially the magnitude of humanitarian needs, widespread violations of international humanitarian law and increasing risks from disasters, while reaffirming the determination of the Movement, as a unique global humanitarian network, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.

Driven by the desire to revitalize the spirit that had inspired the 2001 Movement Strategy, the Vision has opened new horizons for the Movement to prove itself to be a true champion of humanity, by making a real difference for people suffering the effects of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other crises. Its components have been particularly committed to carrying out their individual and collective prevention, relief and protection activities both nationally and internationally in a way that maximizes their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, transparency and accountability.

The Movement's demonstration of its unity will strengthen its position as a central actor in the humanitarian sphere. This must be done by giving priority to the spirit of solidarity and coordination within the Movement, by respecting the roles and responsibilities of all components and by investing more in capacity and skills development, including the mobilization of the voluntary services of young people and innovative ways of working.

In the resolution adopting the Vision, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission) was requested "to report on the impact of the Vision to the 2017 Council of Delegates".

## **2) Temporary waiver on measuring the impact of the Vision**

At each of its meetings since then, the Standing Commission has discussed the Vision extensively and considered ways to further its implementation and assess its impact. Contacts were made with a few National Societies who had spontaneously shown particular interest in the Vision and its possible future development. However, it has become increasingly evident that such information gathering, impact assessment and reporting work would be particularly difficult to achieve and probably of little significance over the period 2016–2017. At least three observations prevailed in this reflection:

- informal soundings of some leaders of the Movement revealed that the Vision has remained relatively unknown to them or that they were still not fully aware of the practical use they could make of it;
- the nature of such a vision statement and its ambition to influence strategic planning processes mean that it will be at least two years before visible effects can be observed;
- even within a longer time frame, the measurement of the impact of the Vision could be limited to checking references to it in the strategies and policies of the Movement and its components or, on the contrary, require a much more complex evaluation of compliance with the letter and the spirit of its provisions.

Consequently, at its meeting in April 2017, the Standing Commission definitively decided against any measurement work for the years 2016 and 2017, considering it premature and probably of little use at this stage.

## **3) Prioritizing the promotion of the Vision for the Movement**

The Standing Commission agreed that measures to promote the Vision were to be prioritized, primarily to raise awareness of it among the Movement's leaders and decision-makers, so that they could take ownership of it and promote relevant, innovative and exemplary adaptations of it in their respective contexts. It was also considered important to ensure that emphasis

would be placed on promoting the essence and spirit of the Vision, rather than focusing too heavily on the specific wording for its implementation.

On several occasions the Chair and members of the Standing Commission had the opportunity to meet the leaders of National Societies and to recall their commitment to find in the Vision for the Movement a guide to inspire their strategic reflections, including in speeches delivered in 2016 and 2017 during regional conferences. The ICRC and the IFRC committed to lead by example and ensure the Vision is taken into account in their own institutional strategic thinking as well as in relevant global strategies, policies and decisions to be considered at the 2017 IFRC General Assembly and Council of Delegates and at future statutory meetings. Different ongoing policy-making and monitoring processes were regularly flagged as being particularly conducive to the spirit that the Vision seeks to inspire, such as the “Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation” (SMCC), the “Movement-wide vision and principles for resource mobilization” and the “Movement Branding Initiative”.

In order to support this necessary promotion effort, it was decided to address a special communication to all the leaders and decision-makers of the Movement in the form of a joint letter from the Chair of the Standing Commission and the Presidents of the IFRC and the ICRC. The letter was sent out in June 2017 (see Annex), accompanied by a copy of the 2015 Vision, with a request for readers to fully familiarize themselves with the content of the Vision, to make it known and to turn it into a meaningful reality on the ground. This report is also intended as a rallying call, which should mark a step towards other promotional initiatives deemed useful and, above all, pave the way for a more solid verification of the real influence of the Vision.

#### 4) Next step: measuring the strategic influence of the Vision

The Standing Commission, while pursuing its work to make the Vision more widely known and operational within the Movement, wished to reassess as early as 2018 the opportunity and the possibilities of measuring its concrete impact on the strategic and political instruments of the Movement globally and among its components.

The practical modalities of such an assessment exercise remain to be defined. They should, however, combine the development of simple questionnaires focused on the knowledge of the Vision and factual checks on references that are included in it with the use of the communication possibilities offered by the Internet and random interviews with a representative panel of Movement leaders. The potential use of existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms will be explored, particularly those relating to processes of building or steering Movement policies and strategies that are considered to be particularly relevant and illustrative of the spirit of the Vision.

In 2019, the Standing Commission will prepare an initial review of the strategic influence of the Movement Vision, including the question of the effectiveness of such an instrument and the possibilities for its evolution.

The Standing Commission welcomes experiences, remarks, questions and suggestions on the implementation of the Vision for the Movement.

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#### Annexes:

- Joint letter to the Movement on the 2015 Vision from the Chair of the Standing Commission and the Presidents of the IFRC and the ICRC (20 June 2017);
- Copy of the 2015 Vision for the Movement.



## Our Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Geneva, 30 June 2017

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

More than a year has passed since the adoption of the bold and inspiring *Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* at the Council of Delegates in December 2015. As the chair of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the president of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, we would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the value – and the galvanizing power – of our shared vision.

To this end, we call upon all of you, as Movement leaders and decision-makers, to fully familiarize yourselves with the vision and promote it in your respective institutions. We ask you to use it as a source of inspiration to guide your strategic and operational decisions, and as the foundation of all your individual and collective endeavours. And we ask you to help ensure that it is dynamic in nature, adapting it to the changing realities of our complex global environment in a relevant, innovative and exemplary way.

The vision is premised on the assertion that “the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a unique global humanitarian network that serves to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found”. This ambitious statement essentially serves as a motto, encapsulating our aspirations and values, as well as the scale of the challenges facing us. And the desire to uphold human dignity, even in the midst of armed conflict or disaster, remains as strong today as it was 150 years ago.

The vision has perhaps never been more resonant than it is today, given the sheer scale and complexity of humanitarian needs in a great number of concurrent crises around the world, widespread violations of international humanitarian law, increasing risks from disasters that exacerbate vulnerabilities, and the many challenges facing humanitarian actors in responding effectively.

Let us unite in the spirit of the Movement, urging people everywhere and from every walk of life to be humane, inspiring them to mobilize and offer voluntary services to prevent, and ultimately to bring relief to, the suffering of others. The onus is on all of us to turn the words of the vision into a meaningful reality on the ground. We must prove ourselves to be true champions of humanity, through the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of our preventive action and response, and ultimately by making a real difference for people suffering the effects of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other crises. The magnitude of humanitarian needs around the world today demands nothing less.

Yours faithfully,

Tadateru Kondo  
President  
International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Eva von Oelreich  
Chair  
Standing Commission  
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Peter Maurer  
President  
International Committee  
of the Red Cross



# Vision

## for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Adopted by the Council of Delegates

December 2015

[www.rcrcconference.org](http://www.rcrcconference.org)



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## Resolution of the Council of Delegates

Geneva, December 2015 (CD/15/R11)

### Vision

#### for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Council of Delegates,

*noting with appreciation* the work undertaken by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to produce, as an alternative to a Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement), a concise document taking stock of the current realities and an inspirational Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,

*welcoming* the aspiration for a collective strategic direction for all the components of the Movement in response to changing contexts and new challenges,

1. *adopts* the Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;
  2. *calls upon* all components of the Movement to take the Vision into account in their own strategic planning processes;
  3. *requests* the Standing Commission to report on the impact of the Vision to the 2017 Council of Delegates.
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Water system newly constructed by the Nepalese Red Cross Society, in partnership with the IFRC, the Canadian Red Cross and the Danish Red Cross, in the remote earthquake-affected village of Kharelthok, Nepal  
©Canadian Red Cross, Marko Kokic, March 2017

#### The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

welcomes your experiences, remarks and questions on the implementation of the Vision for the Movement.

The resolutions of the Council of Delegates and International Conferences are available on [www.rcrcconference.org](http://www.rcrcconference.org)

*Cover photo: International Red Cross medical teams work tirelessly to rescue and assist migrants in operations in the Mediterranean sea.*

©Yara Nardi, Italian Red Cross, October 2016

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## Preamble

Guided unequivocally by the common goal of better serving people in need, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its components have taken stock of their collective strengths and weaknesses in the light of the challenges and constraints of the global humanitarian environment. The following vision serves to build on these strengths and rectify weaknesses, setting out an aspirational view of the Movement as a unique

humanitarian network, unparalleled in the relevance and effectiveness of its action. The hope is that this vision serves as a guide to inspire future strategic reflections for the Movement and each of its components. It is the basis for the development of appealing communications tools, a condensed guide to lead us in a common direction in the spirit of Henry Dunant.

## Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

*In a complex, turbulent and politicized humanitarian landscape, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) is a unique global humanitarian network that serves to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. It is a torchbearer for a relevant, effective humanitarian response to the multifaceted needs of people suffering the effects of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other crises. With humanity, impartiality, neutrality and*

*independence as the bedrock of its unity and universality, the Movement consistently demonstrates the application of its Fundamental Principles on the ground. Harnessing the strength of its relations with States and of its vast community-based volunteer networks embodying the principle of voluntary service, the Movement works optimally across its local, national, regional and international levels.*

### Mission of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

*“... to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, to protect life and health and ensure respect for the human being, in particular in times of armed conflict and other emergencies, to work for the prevention of disease and for the promotion of health and social welfare, to encourage voluntary service and a constant readiness to give help by the members of the Movement, and a universal sense of solidarity toward all those in need of its protection and assistance.”*

Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

## ❖ A complex, fragmented and unpredictable world

The Movement – encompassing 190 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – is working in an environment that is increasingly diverse, fragmented and unpredictable: where unexpected emergencies unfold alongside drawn-out and complex armed conflicts; where violence and instability are both causes and consequences of recurring conflict and

suffering; and where natural disasters, environmental problems and socioeconomic crises further exacerbate situations of chronic vulnerability and hardship. In parallel, there is a widening gap between diverse, multi-layered humanitarian needs and the overall ability to deliver an effective response, marked by a striking absence of international convergence to resolve armed conflicts, the flagrant politicization of aid and the decreasing proximity of many international humanitarian actors to the people they aim to help.

## ❖ Responding to growing needs

In such a fragmented and divided environment, the Movement as a whole steps up its operations to respond to growing needs that would otherwise

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*« The Movement steps up its operations to respond to growing needs, reduce the underlying causes of vulnerability, and prevent and alleviate suffering. »*

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remain unmet, working to reduce the underlying causes of vulnerability, and to prevent and alleviate

## ❖ Health-care and social services

Responding to the health-care and social service needs of vulnerable people and communities affected by conflict, disasters and socio-economic crises, in all their many dimensions, is one of the defining features of the Movement's operational identity – a key strength and a major common focus. The Movement and its components are perceived as



*First Aid Team of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent lifts an emergency case.  
©IFRC, Samer Abo Alway, 2015*

## ❖ Harnessing the diversity and strength of the Movement

The distinct roles and particular strengths of each of the components of the Movement are properly used to achieve the most effective response possible to multi-layered humanitarian needs in a broad spectrum of crisis-affected contexts, reinforcing the Fundamental Principles of unity and universality.

suffering. It strikes the appropriate balance between its solid tradition and innovative approaches, while adhering absolutely to its Fundamental Principles. Historically bound by these Principles and by its protective emblems, rooted in international humanitarian law, the Movement builds on and cements its particular strengths, which are greater than simply the sum of its parts. They lie not just in numbers and outreach but in quality and diversity – of its workers and volunteers, their knowledge, skills, experience and motivation, and the synergy of the complementary roles, responsibilities and capacities of its components.

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*« The Movement and its components are perceived as a globally relevant and effective provider of health care and social services. »*

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a globally relevant and effective provider of health care and social services that has unparalleled access and proximity to people in need, offering services such as first aid in emergencies, surgical care for the war-wounded, psychosocial support for conflict- and disaster-affected people, primary community health care, and social-inclusion and livelihood support for vulnerable people. Closely linked to this, promoting food and nutrition security and increasing access to safe water and sanitation are, for many, common programmatic priorities.

With a mission focused on meeting humanitarian needs, complementary areas of competence of the Movement's components – such as capacity building and resilience strengthening, disaster risk reduction and preparedness, conflict prevention and preparedness, protection and assistance, and early recovery and development – are contextualized and effectively coordinated to best respond to a range of



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*« The Movement reinforces its preparedness and ability to deploy rapidly and effectively, and it strengthens relations and key partnerships, engaging in humanitarian diplomacy, consolidating its acceptance and trust, and enhancing its impact. »*

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needs. The components of the Movement thereby also reinforce preparedness and their ability to deploy rapidly and effectively and, more broadly, to tackle issues of common interest. At the same time, the Movement in its different dimensions strengthens relations and key partnerships with a diverse range of external stakeholders – engaging in humanitarian diplomacy, consolidating its acceptance and trust, and ultimately enhancing its impact. It makes full use of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent as a key opportunity to better humanitarian outcomes.

## ❖ Relevance of National Societies in their countries

Relevance is demonstrated first and foremost at a local level: the localization ensured by National Societies is central to the depth and breadth of the Movement's reach. Each National Society ensures relevance primarily in its own country – supported by the international components of the Movement – capitalizing on its community roots and strong volunteer networks as well as its privileged relationship as an auxiliary to its government in the humanitarian field, while demonstrating its professionalism, accountability and adherence to the Fundamental Principles. Working in a multiplicity of contexts that go well beyond armed conflicts and emergencies, a key strength is providing a wide range of quality services to persons in vulnerable situations and people and communities facing social exclusion, regardless of their background or status,

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*« The localization ensured by National Societies is central to the depth and breadth of the Movement's reach. »*

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and regardless of how "developed" the particular country might be. These might include migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers; trafficked women and children; families of the missing; the chronically unemployed; the hungry; as well as any other groups facing severe deprivation, in both rich and poor countries. Not only National Societies but ultimately the Movement as a whole proves its relevance in the light of this test.

## ❖ Embracing new ways of working

The Movement in general continues to improve the ways in which it interacts with and involves the people it seeks to help, and meets their growing expectations, as they become increasingly empowered through better access to information and communication technologies. The Movement welcomes the increased influence and positive participation of its beneficiaries, and enjoys public support more broadly. To this end, the Movement increasingly embraces the enormous opportunities – and manages the risks – posed by new technologies; it places emphasis on innovation and seeks new ways to better communicate with and involve beneficiaries in the most appropriate and well-adapted response to their diverse needs. Winning trust, acceptance and legitimacy through physical proximity to the beneficiaries remains indispensable.



*In the remote area of Akobo, State of Jonglei, teams of South Sudan Red Cross volunteers and the ICRC help displaced people find and contact loved ones through satellite phone and online photo publication services.  
© ICRC, Giles Duley, October 2015*

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*« The Movement places emphasis on innovation and seeks new ways to better communicate with and involve beneficiaries. »*

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Beyond strengthening beneficiary engagement, innovation and new technologies are optimally used

## ❖ Appealing to youth



*Young volunteers of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Cyclone Preparedness Programme warn coastal communities to evacuate to safety as Cyclone Mora makes landfall.*

*©Bangladesh Red Crescent Society / IFRC, May 2017*

to enhance service delivery – be it in the domain of communication or mapping technologies, innovative health-care and social services, shelter solutions, water or sanitation management, disaster risk reduction and the impact of climate change, among various others – and to improve internal management and coordination.

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*« The Movement appeals especially to the youth in society, motivating them to volunteer. »*

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The spirit of the Movement urges people everywhere and from every walk of life to be humane, inspiring them to mobilise and offer voluntary services to bring relief to the suffering of others. It appeals especially to the youth in society, motivating them to volunteer in large numbers and dedicate themselves to responding to crises and developing local capacities across the globe.

## ❖ A champion of humanity through the power of its deeds

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*« The Movement is seen as a champion of humanity, a universal beacon of hope in a divided world. »*

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By promoting humanitarian values and demonstrating a relevant, effective and coherent humanitarian response in these vital areas, the

Movement is seen as a champion of humanity, a universal beacon of hope in a divided world, united in the strength of its principles and visionary in its approach. It consistently proves its worth – not least through its transparency, accountability and efficiency – to all relevant stakeholders, including States, donors, the public and, most importantly, the people it tries to help.

*By delivering timely and effective results with and for people in need, it earns its reputation as a unique, truly global humanitarian network.*