

Power of humanity

33rd International Conference
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

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**33rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**

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**Time to Act: Working together to prevent and respond to epidemics
and pandemics**

DRAFT ZERO RESOLUTION

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DRAFT RESOLUTION

Time to Act: Working together to prevent and respond to epidemics and pandemics

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

expressing deep concern over the threat that epidemics and pandemics pose to global health, economy, and stability, particularly in the world's most vulnerable areas, and in complex settings where epidemics have unsuspected global health implications,

recalling Sustainable Development Goal 3 and its aim to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,

recalling that the Statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement recognize the cooperation of public authorities and National Societies in prevention of disease, the promotion of health and the mitigation of human suffering for the benefit of the community,

recalling that Resolution 2 of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) recognized that public authorities and National Societies, as auxiliaries in the humanitarian field, enjoy a specific and distinctive partnership at all levels, entailing mutual responsibilities and benefits and based on international and national laws, in which the State and the National Society agree on the areas in which the latter supplements or substitutes for public humanitarian services,

recalling that Resolution 4 of the 31st International Conference encouraged relevant government departments and other donors to provide a predictable and regular flow of resources adapted to the operational needs of their National Societies,

recalling that Resolution 1 of the 30th International Conference stressed the need to strengthen health systems and develop national health plans with the involvement of National Societies, and to include the empowerment of volunteers and affected groups,

acknowledging that epidemics and pandemics may impact differently on girls, boys, men and women, young and old persons, as well as those with pre-existing health issues,

recognizing with gratitude the humanitarian work undertaken by ICRC, IFRC and National Societies in response to recent epidemics and pandemics, such as cholera, measles and polio, Ebola Virus Disease outbreaks in Africa, and the Zika Virus Disease epidemic in the Americas,

acknowledging the wide range of healthcare and disease prevention activities that Movement components regularly undertake to respond to the needs of communities vulnerable before, during and after epidemics and to prepare for pandemics,

acknowledging the commitment of States party to the International Health Regulations (IHR), to ensure the effective core capacities to detect, assess, report and respond to epidemics and pandemics,

emphasizing the role that National Societies, ICRC and IFRC could play in further strengthening countries' epidemic and pandemic core capacities including, but not limited to, early warning, infection control, immunization, community engagement, and emergency response,

acknowledging that neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action extending beyond clinical care is a critical tool in epidemic and pandemic response, particularly in areas where insecurity is prevalent

emphasizing the neutrality and inviolability of medical personnel and medical establishments and units under IHL,

taking into account the particular challenges to meet health needs when epidemics occur in areas where health systems are under-resourced and where access is difficult.

Resolves as follows:

1. *requests* States to enable and facilitate Movement components, as appropriate to their mandates and capacities, to implement a predictable and coordinated approach to epidemic prevention, detection, response and recovery within countries and across borders, and to effectively engage with and support affected communities;
2. *requests* States to include National Societies, according to their capacities, into national disease control and multisectoral preparedness and response frameworks and, where possible, to provide funding in support of their role in this regard;
3. *further encourages* National Societies to offer their support to the public authorities, as appropriate, in their efforts to strengthen core capacities as part of the International Health Regulations, ensuring that special provisions are effectively in place to carry-out an efficient and expedited delivery of a public health response during crisis situations for affected populations, and focusing in particular on building early alert and rapid response capacity in hard-to-reach, vulnerable, underserved and high-risk communities with due attention to the varied needs of girls, boys, men and women;
4. *supports* the promotion of active community engagement in epidemic and pandemic prevention and response *based on an all-hazard and whole-of-society approach*, and *encourages* States and National Societies to build on innovative approaches to community-centric epidemic prevention and control, promoting the further development of tools, guidance and strategies to support implementation by National Societies;
5. *reiterates* the importance of prioritizing and investing in preparedness, as well as providing catalytic funding to support early action;
6. *calls upon* Movement components, public authorities and all other actors to take appropriate steps to ensure as far as possible that the health and safety of volunteers and staff responding to epidemics/pandemics are adequately addressed, including mental health and psychosocial needs;
7. *requests* that the IFRC prepare a progress report on the implementation of this resolution to the 34th International Conference in 2023.