**Voluntary Pledge on strengthening implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) by the 19th  Southern African and Indian Ocean Island States Regional Seminar on International Humanitarian Law, Pretoria, South Africa**

We, Governments\* (list below) who attended the Annual Regional Seminar on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Island States held in Pretoria, South Africa from 22 to 24 October 2019, are committed to strengthening the implementation of IHL in the Southern Africa region (and including Indian Ocean Island States in the region), specifically through:

1. Continuing to support the establishing of national mechanisms that seek to strengthen implementation of IHL;
2. Striving to enhance cooperation on IHL with relevant stakeholders at the domestic level; and
3. Promoting peer to peer exchanges between IHL focal points at the sub-regional level.

Pretoria, South Africa

24 October 2019

\*Angola, Comoros, eSwatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe

**Action plan**

In light of the foregoing, we hereby endeavour to:

1. Continue supporting the co-hosting of the Annual Regional IHL Seminar by the ICRC and the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation in the period 2020 – 2023;
2. Initiate sub-regional working groups within the Annual Regional IHL Seminar for relevant peer-to-peer discussions, which can be continued through National IHL Committees;
3. Support the rotational chairship system for the Annual Regional IHL Seminar commencing in 2021;
4. Work towards the establishment of various national mechanisms on the implementation of IHL, including drafting of annual national IHL work plans; and
5. Broaden engagement on IHL at the national level, notably with National Parliaments.