

## 3.5 SUMMARY RECORD

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

Geneva, Sunday, 8 December 2019

*First plenary meeting*

9:00 am

#### 3.5.1 OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

##### Item 1: Opening of the Council by the Chair of the Standing Commission

**Mr Weber**, Chair, Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, warmly welcomed the participants and in particular the National Societies of Bhutan and the Marshall Islands, who were attending the Council of Delegates as new members for the first time.

The Council of Delegates played a crucial role as the forum where all of the components of the Movement could adapt, through policies, strategies and plans, to emerging humanitarian challenges and improve their collective and individual impact on the vulnerable populations they served. It was also a place in which the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement could strengthen its cohesion as a family and foster mutual respect, cooperation and collaboration.

It was a collective responsibility of the Council of Delegates to formally determine the agenda of the International Conference and to address the issues on which the Movement would take concerted humanitarian action with States. The voice of the Movement would only be credible if it entered the Conference united in purpose and with clear and well-defended positions. The Council would focus on issues that were common to all in the Movement in order to make collective actions and advocacy as effective and relevant as possible. The meetings would take place in a fundamental spirit of respect, unity, trust and gratitude and inspire all to do more on their return home.

The Red Cross Red Crescent had a long and proud history and it had placed humanitarian ideals on the map, but it needed to take action in order to be sustainably relevant. A major challenge faced by Movement partners in their collective endeavours was internal and external competition. The growth of the Movement, and of the humanitarian sector as a whole, had been helped by competition: it had given rise to greater accountability; more diverse programmes and services; a larger funding pool; creative adaptation and technological innovation. The Red Cross Red Crescent must be motivated by the desire to be the best performer, but not to the detriment of others. Movement partners inspired each other to achieve on an equal footing, maintaining a healthy, competitive spirit by focusing on the benefits they could bring to others. They accomplished their mission with a commitment to excellence, mutual trust and enhanced cooperation as part of a global and local structure.

The resolutions presented at the Council of Delegates were intended to be truly impactful for those served by the Red Cross and Red Crescent. They were the result of impressive work and intense consultation within the Movement. The decisions taken would only make a difference in operations and in ways of working if all components took responsibility for implementing them. The ten resolutions were divided into three groups: the first group sought to address the effectiveness of the Movement; the second group sought to strengthen action by unifying programmatic and policy approaches; and the third group set the agenda and chose the officers of the International Conference, to ensure that the Council of Delegates' participants chose the topics to be raised with States and identified the officers to manage the Conference in the days ahead. Under the first thematic grouping, the proposed resolutions would uphold high and transparent standards for integrity, accountability and gender parity and they would identify ways to maximize the operational impact of the Movement. The questions of "Trust, Accountability and Integrity" had become a common thread through the agendas and programs of the IFRC General Assembly, the Council of Delegates and the International Conference, and added that the Standing Commission itself had devoted a great deal of work to this topic in recent years. The Statement on the Integrity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which was being brought to the Council, aimed to establish a link between all these efforts, to underline the commitment of

all the Movement components for integrity and ethical behaviour and to set a course for excellence of the Integrity approach across the Movement. Finally, the Standing Commission felt important to involve the Council of Delegates in a debate about whether the Seville Agreement was fit for purpose. The discussion on that sensitive issue should take place in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. The Red Cross Red Crescent had a duty to influence the global humanitarian agenda through the International Conference and to inspire its members to live up to the overarching theme of the meetings: “Act today, shape tomorrow”.

## **Item 2: Election of the Chair, Vice Chairs and Secretaries of the Council**

**Mr Weber**, Chair, Standing Commission, said that the Standing Commission recommended the following officers for election: Chair, Mr Peter Maurer, President of the ICRC; Vice Chair, Ms Brigitta M. Gadiant, Vice-President of the Swiss Red Cross. The Secretaries would be Ms Lucia Cipullo of the ICRC and Ms Anca Zaharia of the IFRC.

**It was so agreed.**

## **Item 3: Adoption of the agenda of the Council**

*(document CD/19/3)*

**Mr Maurer**, Chair of the Council of Delegates, said that the meetings of the Council of Delegates and the International Conference were important opportunities to make progress on the life-saving and life-changing concerns of millions of men, women and children in crisis. He welcomed the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society and the Bhutan Red Cross Society as members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent family. Individually and collectively, there was strength in diversity and unity in the common desire to respond to suffering through principled humanitarian action.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was a powerful force in the world through the values it embodied, the vision it represented and the pragmatism with which it acted. It had common roots in the Geneva Conventions, the Fundamental Principles and the emblems. Red Cross and Red Crescent actors were defined by the trust of populations. Volunteers and staff answered the call of crises, despite tragedies within their own communities and personal risk: he recognized their dedication and sacrifice.

The Movement’s strength lay in its reliable and extensive experience, working closely with affected communities across a broad range of crises, from preventing abuse, mitigating impacts and supporting the recovery of people, systems and structures. In the 19th century, the Movement had established humanitarian action as a central function of modern society and, over decades, it had adapted its response to crises and to the expectations of societies and States.

Innovation was not a new concept for the Movement: it had transformed its health response from providing frontline aid to soldiers to a multidisciplinary approach to global health challenges, pandemics, non-communicable diseases and mental health responses. People in crisis desired effective, integrated support to put lives back on track; caught in upheaval, they expected un-bureaucratic, integrated, fast and unconditional support. Humanitarian institutions must respond to multifaceted and interconnected needs.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent’s unique strength lay in its combination of local, national and international action through its branches and volunteers. The Movement could connect neutrally and impartially with States, non-state organizations and communities, acting both at the grassroots level and at the highest levels of political decision-making. In its encompassing approach, it alleviated the impacts of war, violence, underdevelopment and climate change, while also curbing suffering through international humanitarian law and long-term advocacy and partnership with political powers. From its earliest origins, professionalism and volunteerism had been at the core of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Trust was the backbone of its actions in fragmented and divided societies and its actions were rooted in law – notably the Geneva Conventions – and remain guided by the Fundamental Principles.

At a time of great transformation and rapid change, Red Cross and Red Crescent actors were challenged by the complex dynamics of war, violence and disaster and needs were outpacing the capacity to deliver. There were an increasing number of humanitarian actors and protracted crises which required the Movement to go beyond short-term humanitarian responses and to develop people-centric sustainable responses. Increasingly, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement faced pressure from States and others, infringing on or questioning its principles, tightening humanitarian funding, denying the application of IHL and restricting access to communities in need. The Movement must defend their humanitarian space and attract greater support for neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian action. The Movement must stand together as pressures on it increased and maintain the ability to be both advocates for victims and the privileged interlocutors of States.

Progress was being made, as evident in the strong alignment between the IFRC's *Strategy 2030* and the ICRC's *Institutional Strategy 2019-2022*; notably in promoting a people-centric approach, strengthening trust, boosting prevention and sustainable humanitarian action and embracing digital transformation.

Participants at the Council of Delegates needed to be ambitious and practical as they looked for ways to improve on the key issues before them: committing to upholding integrity and to strengthening accountability to affected communities; taking important decisions to better address changing needs and vulnerabilities, particularly in the areas of mental health and psychosocial support, restoring family links, migration and internal displacement; and strengthening the ways in which the Movement cooperated and collaborated. Efforts must be redoubled to achieve consensus. As they prepared to attend the 33rd International Conference, it was critical that they should present a strong and unified Movement that was fit to face current and future challenges. Humanity would be measured by the recovery of people in need, with continuous improvements in leveraging, scaling and speeding up the response.

He invited Francesco Rocca, President of the IFRC, Yves Daccord, Director General of ICRC and As Sy, Secretary General of the IFRC to the stage, recognizing their work since the previous Council of Delegates in 2017.

He invited the Council of Delegates to adopt the provisional agenda contained in document CD/19/3.

**The provisional agenda was adopted.**

## 3.5.2 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

**The Chair** said that, in accordance with the Statutes of the Movement, participants were requested to respect the Fundamental Principles and refrain from engaging in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

There had been consultation on the resolutions but, if necessary, any changes could be discussed in break out groups. The order in which items were considered might not be the order in which they were listed on the agenda.

### Accountability and Integrity

#### **Item 6: Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability** (documents CD/19/6 and CD/19/6DR)

**Ms Meige** (IFRC), introducing the item, said that, thanks to its volunteers, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had been part of the communities it served since the founding of the Movement. While its work had evolved over the years, much still needed to be done to strengthen accountability to communities by ensuring that they listened to people, acted on what they were told and allowed people to participate in decisions that affected them. In that way, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement would ensure that its work had impact and remained relevant, that communities were more resilient and that it had the trust of the people it served. A workshop at the 2017 Council of Delegates had concluded with a call for a Movement-wide approach to developing shared commitments on community engagement and accountability. The draft resolution on Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability (CD/19/6/DR) was the culmination of consultations with nearly 50 National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC. The resolution was aligned with standards such as the Core Humanitarian Standard on quality and accountability. Senior leaders in the Movement needed to be willing to push boundaries in order to change the way they worked and reshape power imbalances which continued to exist. There would need to be time, funding and space to test and adapt the way the Movement worked while mobilizing staff and volunteers.

Following the introduction by Ms. Meige, **Ms Wertz** (ICRC) went on to explain that the topic of improving accountability was people-focused. Adopting commitments for community engagement and accountability would maintain trust and ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of the Movement and the quality of its work. The Movement's organizations and people must remain deeply connected with communities. People affected by emergencies and crises must be able to participate fully in the identification of needs and in the design and implementation of solutions. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must build on people's existing capacities and implement activities together with communities. People and communities were experts of their own situations although they might need support to solve their problems. Red Cross

and Red Crescent actors must strengthen their abilities to listen to diverse groups, including women, persons with disabilities, children, older people and traditional community leaders, thereby ensuring that they were not excluding or causing harm, and that they were fulfilling their commitments to the principles of impartiality and humanity. The resolution provided a vision and commitments to strengthen accountability to the people they served.

**Mr Saner** (Turkish Red Crescent Society) said that, as member of a National Society experienced in community engagement, he wished to stress the requirement to build the capacities of National Societies. As mentioned in the annex to CD/19/6DR, which contained commitments and minimum actions, “the Movement still lacks a common definition and shared understanding of these concepts” and it needed to embrace the commitments as a tool to improve the quality of operations. The Turkish Red Crescent Society proposed that a joint commission should be established to monitor future progress with respect to community engagement and accountability.

**Ms Balima Nikiema** (Burkinabe Red Cross Society) said that her National Society had already begun to elaborate a strategy on community engagement and accountability and to train staff and volunteers on a corresponding approach. The Burkinabe Red Cross Society supported the adoption of the draft resolution.

**Ms Guitierrez De Leon** (Philippine Red Cross, speaking on behalf of the 11 National Societies of South-East Asia: Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society, Cambodian Red Cross, Indonesian Red Cross, Lao Red Cross, Malaysian Red Crescent Society, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Philippine Red Cross, Singapore Red Cross, Thai Red Cross Society, Timor Leste Red Crescent Society and Viet Nam Red Cross), said that at the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Conference, National Societies of the Asia Pacific region adopted *the Manila Call for Action in a Fast Changing World* including the commitment to “strengthen the culture of humanitarian principles and understanding, while upholding zero tolerance for fraud, corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse, to maintain the highest standards of integrity, probity, transparency and accountability to our communities and partners”. National Societies had also committed to integrate protection, gender, community engagement and accountability into their policies and to include people with disabilities in National Society membership and programmes. The National Societies of South-East Asia fully supported the commitments set out in the annex to document CD/19/6DR and pledged to report on their progress in fulfilling their commitments.

**Mr Kettaneh** (Lebanese Red Cross) welcomed the draft resolution, which built on and clarified the contents of previous resolutions on the subject. He underlined the importance of improving transparency and adopting accountability measures to strengthen National Society work. Every National Society had its own vision and role, but all should devote their resources to local communities. It would have been helpful to have a simplified definition of commitments for community engagement and accountability set out in the annex to document CD/19/6DR. The annex might also have made reference to different expectations and it could have provided more information on the performance-measurement framework that would be developed. He wished to know what would happen to National Societies that were unable to collaborate with local communities. The draft resolution would help to improve National Society transparency and he supported it.

**The Chair** said that the comments made by the Turkish Red Crescent and the Lebanese Red Cross could be accommodated in the annex to document CD/19/6DR.

**The draft resolution entitled “Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability” in document CD/19/6DR was adopted. (Resolution 1, CD/19/R1)**

#### **Item 4: International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Statement on Integrity** (document CD/19/4DR)

**Mr Weber**, Chair of the Standing Commission, said that he was pleased that questions of trust, accountability and integrity had become a common theme of the 2019 Statutory Meetings; they had been at the core of discussions in the Standing Commission in the previous four years, which had led to the development of the Statement on Integrity of the Movement, jointly proposed by the IFRC and the ICRC.

Trust in humanitarian action had been chosen as one of the central themes of the International Conference. Trust in the actions of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was no longer a given: the assertion of sovereignty created new constraints to international humanitarian actions and could undermine efforts to reach vulnerable populations; more involvement of local authorities and communities was required; and more integrity, accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour was demanded.

The requirement for integrity and ethical behaviour was not new to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, but principles themselves were not enough. Organizations must ensure compliance with ethical standards

and fight against corruption, fraud, discrimination, abuse, harassment, exploitation and other unethical behaviours. A lot of very good work had already been done within National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC, but efforts must continue and intensify.

The Statement on the Integrity of the Movement acknowledged current efforts and underlined the commitment of all Movement components to integrity and to ethical behaviour. The Statement would provide an additional instrument on the eve of an open dialogue with States on Trust in Humanitarian Action at a time that States were being requested to support the Red Cross and Red Crescent in a collective mission.

The Statement expressed the seriousness with which all components of the Movement took integrity and ethical behaviour, and to the Fundamental Principles and basic values and to statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks. It reiterated that all components of the Movement wanted to gain and maintain the acceptance and trust of the people they served and reinforced respect for inclusion, diversity and gender balance, in line with the Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability. It committed the Movement to build on existing structures and to pool resources to provide all components with guidance, support and training.

The Statement had been developed jointly by the IFRC and the ICRC, with input from the Standing Commission. Unfortunately, there had been limited time for National Societies to provide input, but the contributions they had made had been reflected in the Statement. All components of the Movement were requested to engage in the development of a plan “to consult on, implement and monitor an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement” so that progress could be reported to the Council of Delegates in 2021.

**Ms Rhodes** (Australian Red Cross) warmly welcomed the focus on integrity and accountability in the Statutory Meetings. The conversation on compliance and integrity concerned more than policies and procedures: it was about trust in the mandate, operations and emblems of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Trust took years to build, seconds to break and forever to repair. The General Assembly of the IFRC had taken important steps forward on integrity and the Movement Statement on Integrity was the next crucial element in establishing how all of the components of the Movement could strive to meet the best possible integrity standards.

**Ms Kuang** (Australian Red Cross) said that the most important element of the Statement was the final paragraph, which focused on consulting on implementing and monitoring an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement and in particular on developing a vision of how to improve a culture in which integrity was embedded in all institutional practices and individual behaviours. The Australian Red Cross strongly encouraged that the implementation process should include an action-focused dialogue, which involved listening to those who struggled most to meet integrity-related requirements, building a system that could provide ongoing support, and nurturing a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

**Mr Al Razwan** (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, speaking on behalf of the National Societies of the South Asia region from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka), welcomed the focus on integrity. The “Manila Call for Action in a Fast-Changing World” adopted at the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Conference in November 2018, had established the clear target that 100 percent of National Societies should have in place policies on integrity and the prevention of fraud and corruption and sexual exploitation and abuse. All National Societies were committed to the target and recognized that strong leadership would be necessary in order to implement the policies. They also recognized that integrity was linked to the topics of protection, gender and inclusion, as well as community engagement and accountability. Integrity was a prerequisite at institutional level as well as in guiding behaviours and mechanisms. Investment was needed to scale up capacities and skills. It was strongly recommended that guidelines were developed to measure trust as an institutional asset.

**Dr Abbas** (Iraqi Red Crescent Society) expressed strong support for the Statement on Integrity and in particular the emphasis placed on the accountability of the Red Cross and Red Crescent towards the communities in which it worked, which would allow the voices of those they served to be heard and preserve the dignity of beneficiaries through their inclusion in decision making. Further information should be included in the Statement on the resources to be deployed in the assistance provided to communities, which made clear how money would be allocated and spent. He looked forward to the progress report at the Council of Delegates in 2021 on the development of the plan to consult on, implement and monitor an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement.

**Mr Tofinga** (Kiribati Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of 14 Pacific National Societies attending the meeting), welcomed the Statement on Integrity and the inclusion of all components in a “One Movement” approach which recognized that upholding integrity was the responsibility of all. The National Societies of the Pacific sub-region were committed to reinforcing trust through upholding individual and collective integrity and

they had taken a number of steps to that end, through the 'Presidents' Network' that supported collaboration in governance, creating a target for all Pacific National Societies to comply with the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee's (CMC) Dashboard criteria. A constitutional advisory committee in the Pacific, comprised of constitutional and local experts, had been established to provide peer support on constitutional compliance. Five National Societies had complied with a new guidance document on statutory compliance while others had already made progress towards compliance. The sub-region had struggled to achieve compliance with respect to external audits but 67 per cent of National Societies were currently up to date. The aspiration of the Pacific 'Presidents' Network' was that 100 per cent of National Societies would be up to date with their audited financial statements by the end of 2020. Transparent reporting would be key to progress and the IFRC was called upon to make reporting on the CMC Dashboard more transparent in future. The ICRC and the IFRC were requested to report more transparently on a set of common standards that would be developed collectively by their boards. The ICRC and the IFRC were also requested to work together, including through their own decentralized structures, to build the governance capacity of National Societies, to enable them to uphold integrity and build local expertise. National Societies must be supported locally to address their own issues of integrity, including through risk management training packages and plans. The Pacific National Societies would be pleased to share their experience of success in being open and transparent with each other and in developing local expertise through effective use of their peer network.

**Mr Valastro** (Italian Red Cross) welcomed the Statement on Integrity. The ethical behaviour of each component of the Movement, both at the individual and the institutional level, affected the entire Movement. Breaches of integrity undermined trust and credibility in the communities they served and undermined the principles of humanitarian action. Strong cooperation was required to address integrity issues, with pooling of resources and experiences to produce capacities and mechanisms for the early detection and effective management of risks. Integrity included respect for and inclusion of diversity and gender balance, with accountability and transparency and attention given to partnerships. The Italian Red Cross had contributed to programmes on integrity protection in strategic planning in the Americas in recent years. The programmes were intended to strengthen National Society leadership, develop internal controls and accountability systems as well as sustainable development plans, supporting the revision of statutes and codes of conduct. The Italian Red Cross placed special emphasis on prevention, with a broad and crosscutting National Society development approach that would create an enabling environment in which the potential of the National Society could be fully expressed and in which misconduct would be discredited. The Italian Red Cross renewed its commitment to cooperating on integrity within the Movement.

**Mr Gyimah-Akwafo** (Ghana Red Cross Society), whilst welcoming and supporting the Statement on Integrity, wished to emphasize the related importance of resource mobilisation and sustainability. Current members of the Movement must demonstrate integrity, accountability and trust as an example to the young people who would take over after them.

**Mr Kari** (Finnish Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Icelandic Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross and the Norwegian Red Cross), expressed full support for the Statement on Integrity, which laid out ambitious goals and principles to which all should be able to adhere. In order to be a reliable humanitarian actor and a partner in the humanitarian field, the Movement must express its commitment to ethical behaviour and to the integrity of its components. Special attention should be paid to accountability and to transparency of operations, to funding and to the results of their work. Components of the Movement should openly communicate their successes, their failures and their challenges. The commitments should also be backed up with concrete actions. He looked forward to the detailed plan on how an enhanced approach to integrity would be implemented and monitored across the Movement. The implementation of the plan would require strong leadership on the part of the IFRC and National Societies; he hoped that the CMC would be given a role in the preparation and monitoring of the implementation plan.

**Mr Sy** (IFRC) said that the IFRC supported and embraced the full scope of the Statement on Integrity, which included ethics, transparency and delivering results through policies, in behaviours and in practice. The Red Cross and Red Crescent must deliver on integrity not only for others but for its own sake: in the work place and in the way it treated its partners and colleagues, in the way it treated women and in the way it included people with disabilities. Integrity should also be present in the way it managed the resources that were entrusted to it. The IFRC had strengthened its internal functions, such as audit and investigation, as well as its culture of zero-tolerance of fraud and corruption. The IFRC General Assembly had just adopted a strengthened Integrity Policy and amended the IFRC Constitution in order to strengthen the Compliance and Mediation Committee (CMC). Vigilance would be required in order to preserve the gains that had been made, working to maintain an environment that supported the right behaviours and taking the right decisions.

**Mr Carbonnier** (ICRC) said that all humanitarian organizations were coming under mounting scrutiny, and integrity had become ever more critical to build and maintain trust. The ICRC welcomed the Statement on Integrity, to which it had contributed during the drafting process, and was committed to contributing to its effective implementation. It was particularly pleasing that the Statement welcomed the collective commitment of the Movement to further pool resources “to provide all components with effective support, training, education, and guidance in strengthening integrity, accountability and rules, processes and mechanisms”. It would be necessary to strengthen National Societies’ statutory legal base and to share standards, know-how and experience in managing integrity issues. The ICRC was committed to work with Movement partners to design and implement a plan that would enhance the Movement-wide approach to integrity and on which a report would be provided to the Council of Delegates in 2021. The ICRC had invested significantly in order to establish solid integrity and compliance frameworks and it was committed to ensuring that ICRC partnerships, including within the Movement, reflected a firm commitment to integrity and ethical standards. The ICRC had also started to work with Partner National Societies to strengthen Host National Societies’ capacities, including in financial management. The ICRC welcomed the Statement and was committed to its implementation.

**Dr Chabbou** (Tunisian Red Crescent) said that integrity was at the heart of the Movement, yet it was difficult to achieve. The Movement was “committed to ensuring the protection of whistle-blowers” and in a world of mass media it must be prepared to react promptly when in the media spotlight and to demonstrate the application of ethical standards in line with the Statement on Integrity.

**Mr Traoré** (Red Cross Society of Guinea) said that the Statement on Integrity would underpin humanitarian action, which was based on trust, accountability and transparency. He appealed to all members of the Movement to commit to the Statement in practice since it would only be possible to mobilise all partners through trust.

**Ms Touqan** (Jordan National Red Crescent Society) said the Jordan Red Crescent had made it obligatory for all staff and volunteers to take an online course on integrity and fraud and the National Society had conducted a workshop on fraud, corruption and integrity. It had also amended its statutes and policies to enable work with partners to be conducted with integrity, transparency and accountability. The Jordan Red Crescent supported the Statement on Integrity.

**Dr Bwito** (Rwandan Red Cross) said that transparency and accountability were crucial to fulfilling the mission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The Movement was responsible for a very large pool of staff and volunteers who were responsible for carrying out activities and for integrity on the ground. In order to apply integrity effectively, National Societies would require strengthening of their capacities, including through the training of staff and volunteers.

**Mr Esfandiari** (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed the focus on integrity and accountability. The Iranian Red Crescent fully supported the Statement on Integrity and was committed to linking the Statement with its own policies and strategies in order to protect trust at the national and international level. By applying integrity and accountability, National Societies would do better and achieve their objectives in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.

**Dr Emam** (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) welcomed the Movement Statement on Integrity; the Egyptian Red Crescent was following the steps outlined in the Statement in order to ensure that integrity was embedded within the National Society and in its cooperation with partners. The steps had comprised institutional development, auditing on different levels, and working on financial stability with a framework of accountability and fulfilment of due diligence requirements. The National Society ensured that staff and volunteers and partners in the community complied with integrity standards.

**Mr Fayia** (Sierra Leone Red Cross Society) said that the Sierra Leone Red Cross had developed an Integrity Pact, which all volunteers were required to sign, in order to ensure that all of its humanitarian work was carried out with integrity. The National Society had implemented a policy to combat fraud and corruption and a further policy on whistleblowing. Stronger internal controls had also been put in place. The Sierra Leone Red Cross fully supported the Statement on Integrity.

**The draft Statement on Integrity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, contained in document CD/19/4DR, was adopted. (Resolution 2, CD/19/R2)**

**Mr Weber**, Chair, Standing Commission, said that he appreciated the comments made. Speaking as the former Chair of the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee, it was heartening to hear the robust support for the Statement on Integrity. The comments made on the areas in which reinforcement was needed had been noted.

He hoped that a robust report on the implementation plan would be presented to the Council of Delegates in 2021.

## **Item 5: Movement approach to strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base and complementary frameworks**

*(documents CD/19/5 and CD/19/5DR)*

**Ms Aït-Mohamed Parent** (Chairperson, Joint ICRC/IFRC Commission for National Society Statutes) introducing the draft resolution CD/19/5DR, recalled that the mandate of the Joint Statutes Commission was to support and advise National Societies in strengthening their legal and statutory base; and to contribute to the process of recognition by the ICRC and admission by IFRC of candidate National Societies. The draft resolution highlighted that strengthening statutory and legal base instruments contributed to the ability of National Societies to carry out their activities in accordance with the Fundamental Principles. Indeed, the Joint Statutes Commission had been created to assist National Societies to achieve that aim almost 50 years previously.

The present guidelines for National Societies on strengthening their statutory and constitutional base instruments and complementary frameworks had been developed following a consultation process over a period of two years by a core group composed of National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC. They had been adopted by the IFRC Governing Board in October 2018 and were currently presented to the Council of Delegates for adoption. Special thanks were due to the Danish Red Cross, which had chaired the Group, and to the National Societies that had participated in its deliberations, as well as to those that had contributed to the consultations and to funding the process.

The guidance was a new tool that would provide the opportunity for National Societies to revise and strengthen their statutory and constitutional base instruments, regulations and policies within a five-year period. Some 40 National Societies had already begun to revise their statutes on the basis of the new guidelines. The tool placed emphasis on the rights and status of volunteers and on preserving the integrity of National Societies. There was also a more flexible approach to different operational realities and national contexts. National Societies were invited to share examples of their statutory and constitutional base instruments, as well as examples of relevant policies and good practices. The new guidance was intended to reflect modern trends in the humanitarian field, with the focus on the increased accountability of humanitarian actors towards beneficiaries, the wider public and donors, in particular in the new Chapter 6 entitled “Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution”, which contained a series of recommendations on mechanisms for prevention and management of integrity issues.

The Joint Commission was committed to strengthening the capacities and commitments of the Movement by ensuring that the Movement provided more support to National Societies through, for instance, providing expertise on the ground; and by performing a monitoring, oversight and guidance role. The Joint Commission encouraged National Societies to confirm their pledges during the International Conference concerning their commitment to revise their national statutes and to retain a copy of the guidance document for daily use as an organizational development tool.

**Mr Bak-Jensen** (Danish Red Cross, speaking on behalf of the members of the core group: the National Societies of Argentina, Burundi, Cook Islands, Denmark, Haiti, Mongolia, Palestine, Spain, Turkmenistan and Uganda), which had led the review of the guidance document on National Society statutes, recommended the adoption of the guidance. The National Society members of the core group were from different parts of the world, acted in different humanitarian contexts and faced different external requirements, but they shared the Fundamental Principles and their joint commitment to the statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks adopted in the Movement and in the IFRC. The guidance had been developed to assist all National Societies in making informed choices when updating their statutes. The statutes should be up-to-date, compatible with national, legal and operational contexts and comply with the Fundamental Principles and the key policy decisions of the IFRC and the Movement. The document was intended to be user-friendly and accessible from a leadership perspective, with illustrations and examples from National Societies. Having strong and sound statutes would not solve every problem, but it was a good start in terms of safeguarding the Fundamental Principles, providing an element of stability and predictability, supporting productive and transparent working relations, helping to protect integrity, and serving as a confidence-building measure towards all stakeholders. The Guidance Document was already reflected in other documents, such as the IFRC Integrity Policy, the CMC Dashboard and the Movement Statement on Integrity. The statutory revision process was more than a desktop exercise: it was a process that should be led by National Societies and involve discussion of National Society perspectives and consultation with all stakeholders. National Societies were encouraged to engage based on the new Guidance Document.



**Mr Mirzayev** (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that the draft resolution welcomed the Guidance Document, which set new standards to which National Societies must adhere. National Societies must be supported in reviewing and strengthening their statutory base and complementary frameworks. The existing statutes of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan had already been revised after consultation with the IFRC, the ICRC and the Joint Commission. Some of the amendments in the Guidance Document had already been reflected in the statutes of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan.

**Mr Diallo** (IFRC), said that the 2018 Guidelines and the complementary frameworks were highly relevant to National Societies and the IFRC had fully supported strengthening them. The IFRC congratulated National Societies for the progress made thus far and encouraged them to continue to review their statutory base and to adopt the guidelines. The IFRC would support and facilitate the work of National Societies. He thanked the core group for its work in elaborating the guidelines, which had been taken into account in the recent revision of IFRC documents, such as “policy on the protection of the integrity of National Societies and organs of the IFRC” and the “Red Cross Red Crescent integrity framework”. The Volunteer Charter, adopted at the 21st session of the IFRC General Assembly and attached to the draft resolution CD/19/5DR, was an important document that formalized and operationalized the responsibility of National Societies to their volunteers and set out their rights, including the right to protection, to be heard, to be recognized for their contribution, and the right to be insured. In order to make concrete achievements, the Red Cross and Red Crescent needed a clear legal base and frameworks.

**Mr Mehra** (Canadian Red Cross) said that he supported the draft resolution and the ongoing commitment to improving the regulatory base of National Societies. He recalled the National Society Development Compact, which highlighted that National Societies were responsible for their own development and that National Society leaders were responsible for ensuring that their National Societies were fit for purpose and able to identify priorities for their own development. With the National Society Development Compact in mind, he proposed to amend operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution by removing the words “and at their request” from the second subparagraph and inserting the words “at the request of National Societies” after “regions and field representations” in the introductory part of the paragraph: in that way, the words would apply to the whole paragraph.

**Dr Ruiz Rodas** (Salvadorean Red Cross Society) recalled that the Salvadorean Red Cross had successfully revised and adopted its own legal statutes following consultation and support from the IFRC. The statutes incorporated key elements for its development, such as on youth and integrity. A strong and transparent statutory base, developed in consultation with the Movement, was the best foundation for National Societies.

**Mr Hori** (Japanese Red Cross Society) welcomed the Guidance Document for National Society statutes. He commended in particular the inclusion of flexible and innovative approaches that respected different legal traditions and the wide variety of existing organizational models in National Societies, while at the same time adapting to contemporary challenges such as strengthening compliance and securing integrity. He highlighted the Movement Volunteer Charter, which had become an integral part of the legal base of the Red Cross Red Crescent and praised the able leadership of the Standing Commission. The Volunteer Charter, adopted in 2017 at the IFRC General Assembly, was a much-needed document that reflected the realities for millions of volunteers who were working in conflict zones and the many who had lost their lives in the course of duty. It was the hope of the Japanese Red Cross Society that the Volunteer Charter would be recognized beyond the Movement, in the same way as the Fundamental Principles.

**Mr Valastro** (Italian Red Cross) said that the Italian Red cross had welcomed the adoption of the Volunteer Charter at the 21st session of the IFRC General Assembly and the proposal to include it in the present Council of Delegates draft resolution on strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base. There was a need to promote, protect and recognize volunteers and community actors and to be clear about their roles and engaging volunteers required a duty of care, supporting them and providing proper training, the right information and equipment, and security management, including safety nets and insurance, as well as psychological support. Recognizing that volunteers were vulnerable in different ways was essential to ensure their protection and they should be recognized beyond their position as givers. In order to achieve cross-organizational dialogue, a knowledge sharing and cooperative approach were essential.

**Mr Kende** (Nigerian Red Cross Society) thanked the Joint Statutes Commission, the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies for their assistance in helping to review and develop the Nigerian Red Cross Society statutes and financial guidelines.

**Mr Baialinov** (Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan, speaking also on behalf of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan), expressed support for the draft resolution and endorsed the remarks made on behalf of the Italian Red Cross and the Japanese Red Cross Society. The revised guidelines would make an important contribution

to the development of well-functioning National Societies and the Volunteer Charter would help to improve the management of volunteers, including by providing insurance and focusing on security. He called on the IFRC and the ICRC to invest more in National Society development, education and training programmes and called on all National Societies to pay special attention to the Volunteer Charter.

**Ms Deroin de Gaillande** (Vanuatu Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the Pacific National Societies of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), applauded the work carried out on the revision to the Guidance for National Society Statutes and supported the draft resolution. A sound legal framework and statutory base was a precondition for a strong National Society and for upholding the integrity standards of the Movement. She further applauded the inclusion of best practices, which would allow National Societies reviewing their statutory and constitutional base to make informed choices that were compatible with their own legal, operational and cultural context. Pacific National Societies were making great progress in fulfilling their commitment to review their statutes in accordance with the new guidance document within five years. Five Pacific National Societies had revised their constitutions and others had already started the process under the leadership of the 'Presidents' Network' and a regional constitutional advisory committee comprised of governance experts and professional volunteers. Capacity building of National Society constitutional expertise was essential in order to meet the ambitious targets set and to build a global network of local expertise that the Movement could draw on and be inspired by. She called on other regions to take similar initiatives in order to commit to constitutional amendments within the given timeframe and to ensure that the integrity of the Movement was upheld. She also called for a review of the Joint Statutes Commission's operational modalities to be more aligned with IFRC National Society development support in order that appropriate and tailored support could be provided: the review could be conducted in conjunction with the review of the mandate of the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee. She would welcome consultation with the Pacific constitutional advisory committee to discuss further with the Joint Statutes Commission and IFRC National Society development team's guidance on how similar modalities could be accomplished in other regions.

**Mr Gouaye** (Central African Red Cross Society), referring to the some 12,000 volunteers in the Central African Red Cross Society and commending the work of the Joint Statutes Commission, said that the guidance and Volunteer Charter would serve to strengthen the rights and status of volunteers and contribute to strengthening of National Society governance. The Movement had lost a number of staff and many National Society volunteers had lost their lives in the events that had affected the Central African Republic between 2013 and 2017. Using the guidance as a base, the Central African Red Cross Society had already begun to revise its statutes, incorporating youth members in its governing board and giving the right to vote to local branch representatives.

**Ms Benhabyles** (Algerian Red Crescent Society) said that thanks to the experience of the 20,000 volunteers in the Algerian Red Crescent Society, the National Society had been chosen to preside a national committee for the promotion of civil society and to create a national volunteer charter. By scrupulously respecting its statutes, the National Society had been able to strengthen its ranks with volunteers of all ages. With integrity and transparency at the heart of its work, the National Society had been able to engage with national and international partners, such as the World Food Programme and UNHCR, and to build its capacities.

**Mr Lobar** (South Sudan Red Cross) said that he welcomed the adoption of the Volunteer Charter, which would promote and strengthen the work of volunteers across the globe, as well as in fragile environments such as in South Sudan. He also supported the adoption of the guidance document that would assist National Societies in aligning their statutes. The revision of the statutes of the South Sudan Red Cross had begun in 2018, in consultation with all key stakeholders in the units, the branches and staff at headquarters. The constitutional amendments had been shared with stakeholders and included provisions on gender, integrity, youth participation, and people with disabilities. The first and second drafts had been shared with the Joint Statutes Commission and the IFRC and the comments and amendments had been incorporated in the new statutes. The constitution of the National Society was currently in compliance with the new guidance. The South Sudan Red Cross strongly supported the adoption of the draft resolution.

**Dr Avgerinos** (Hellenic Red Cross) said that accountability and integrity remained top priorities for the Hellenic Red Cross. The National Society had successfully revised its constitutional base as part of its integrity status. The Hellenic Red Cross was committed to strengthening the community engagement and accountability that had developed during the migration crisis. Volunteer insurance and a code of conduct and were crucial for accountability and integrity.

**Mr Merha** (Canadian Red Cross Society) intervened to clarify that the phrase "and at their request" could be deleted from the second subparagraph as it had been already moved to the introductory paragraph.



**Resolution 3, as amended, entitled “Movement approach to strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base and complementary frameworks such as the Volunteer Charter”, which included the Guidance for National Society Statutes, 2018, contained in document CD/19/5DR, was adopted. (Resolution 3, CD/19/R3)**

**Item 8: Enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission**  
(document CD/17/8DR)

**Mr Chetty** (Standing Commission) introduced the draft resolution on enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission contained in document CD/17/8DR, which included guidelines for candidates for election. The guidelines proposed an in-depth review of the profiles of candidates, which had been in use since 1995. Since the beginning of its mandate in 2016, the Standing Commission had studied ways to enhance inclusiveness, transparency, diversity and fairness of the election of the members of the Standing Commission, which took place every four years at the International Conference. The matter had been energised by the adoption of Resolution 12 by the Council of Delegates in 2017, which called for the components of the Movement and the Standing Commission to “take concrete measures to address the question of gender equality and equal opportunities at all levels of their own leadership”. The Standing Commission had been responsive to the call and had reviewed its own election processes. The statutory recommendation to ensure balanced geographical distribution was an important aspect of the Standing Commission’s work, but it had also undertaken a broader review of the existing statutory and policy framework within the Movement and of the evolution of electoral standards and practices. Key issues had emerged, such as achieving equitable gender balance in its composition, ensuring the personal qualities and integrity of candidates, aligning its rules with current election standards regarding transparency of nominations, and the limit on the number of terms served. The Standing Commission had approved proposals targeted at two levels: those to be immediately achieved through administrative arrangements for the nomination process for the 2019 election, as well as policy changes to be submitted to the Council of Delegates in the form of the proposed resolution and guidelines for candidates. The draft resolution included strong commitments from the Movement components concerned, including an earlier submission of nominations 60 days before the opening of the International Conference and a maximum of two four-year terms for elected and *ex officio* members. The draft resolution also urged members of the International Conference to take into account the principle of geographical distribution, as well as equitable gender balance, with at least two women and two men being chosen as candidates, during the election of the five members of the Standing Commission at the 33rd International Conference. In addition, some further considerations were included in the draft resolution, which would potentially have a direct impact on equitable gender balance in the Standing Commission: the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the Movement, essentially drafted in 1986, included provisions unduly marked by the masculine gender and therefore the draft resolution proposed that “the Statutes and Rules of Procedure shall be considered as gender neutral” and that, unless the contrary intention appeared, words indicating masculine or feminine were not limited to the indicated gender. The draft resolution also encouraged all members of the Movement to ensure equitable gender representation in their delegations when attending the Council of Delegates and the International Conference. The guidelines included more sensitive and comprehensive provisions on duties concerning the integrity and ethical behaviour of all candidates and elected members, in accordance with current standards and ambitions.

**Mr Rocca** (IFRC) expressed support for the draft resolution, which sought to express gender balance within the composition of the Standing Commission. Empowering women in leadership was important to ensure effective and inclusive governance in the Movement. Women were also a vital component of the volunteer base and it was therefore fundamental that they were represented equally and that their voice was heard. It was vital that opportunities for women were found within the governance structure of the Movement. As an *ex-officio* representative of the IFRC in the Standing Commission, he had strongly advocated that the terms of the draft resolution should be included in the Statutes of the Movement as a constitutional requirement. After a lively discussion, the IFRC General Assembly had just adopted amendments to the Constitution of the IFRC in the same vein. Nevertheless, the draft resolution before the Council of Delegates, as it stood, was a step in the right direction, since it encouraged delegations to choose at least two women and two men among the five Standing Commission candidates. He looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolution and hoped very much that it would be taken into account by delegations in the elections for the Standing Commission that would be held at the International Conference.

**Mr Carbonnier** (ICRC) said that, from the outset, the ICRC had actively participated in the discussions to prepare proposals on strengthening transparency and rotation in the elections of the Standing Commission members

and ensuring gender balance in its composition. The ICRC welcomed the adoption of the commitments, together with the new guidelines for candidates contained in the draft resolution. As announced at previous sessions of the Standing Commission, the ICRC had made the commitment that it would abide by the principle of equitable gender representation in the composition of the Standing Commission regarding the two *ex officio* ICRC members. Mr. Carbonnier thanked Mr. Balthasar Staehelin, ICRC Deputy Director General, for his decision to step down from the Standing Commission and welcomed Ms. Katrin Wiegmann, Head of the Division for Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement, as new member in the forthcoming Standing Commission together with ICRC President. The ICRC welcomed the recommendations and practical measures introduced through the resolution, which would ensure greater transparency, protection and equitable gender balance in the Standing Commission.

**Mr Kettaneh** (Lebanese Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society), welcomed the reference in the draft resolution to taking into account personal qualities, fair geographical distribution and gender equality at all levels of leadership. It was also important to establish that all persons had fair access to positions based on experience and competence and that equal access should be granted to all. Nevertheless, care should be taken that application of the new rules did not limit access to positions by competent candidates and more flexible wording could be introduced in that regard. He was in agreement that candidates should serve a maximum of two terms in order to make way for new candidates. With those comments, he expressed agreement with the draft resolution.

**Ms Wahlström** (Swedish Red Cross) welcomed the efforts of the Standing Commission to follow up on Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates, which represented an important step forward. She called on National Societies to put forward the very best female and male candidates in order to improve the quality of all candidates and to ensure that the membership of the Standing Commission was representative of the Movement. She thanked ICRC for walking the talks on the issue and helping the Standing Commission in moving forwards in its efforts towards gender equality.

**Mr Esfandiari** (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed support for the draft resolution. He called upon Members of the Movement to improve gender balance in the Standing Commission and welcomed the decision of the ICRC to ensure that one of its *ex officio* delegates to the Standing Commission would be a woman. He expected that a similar practice would be followed by the IFRC.

**Ms Koursoumba** (Cyprus Red Cross Society) said that it was very important that women were present in decision making in all components of the Movement. Gender equality and equal opportunities must be in place at all levels of leadership, with representation of women from diverse backgrounds in management positions and in governing boards. Of course, women candidates would be knowledgeable and competent, since women were no less competent than men. It was to be hoped that gender balance would be introduced across the Movement: of the current members of the CMC, only three were women. She supported the remarks of the President of the IFRC.

**The resolution entitled “Enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission” (CD/19/8DR) was adopted. (Resolution 4, CD/19/R4)**

## Addressing needs and vulnerabilities

### Item 9: International Red cross and Red Crescent Movement Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs

*(documents CD/19/9 and CD/19/9DR)*

**Mr Somer** (Danish Red Cross) introduced the resolution by recalling experience driving a minivan in 2015 with 20 Syrian refugees housed by the Danish Red Cross. He had realised that a four-year old Syrian girl sitting beside him had never known a home before, since she had been on the move her whole life, being born into a world of turmoil in Syria. The girl was hurt, but her wounds were not visible: they were those of a detached, distressed and deprived childhood. For the girl from Syria and for countless others, he was honoured to present the first ever Movement-wide policy addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, which had been developed by National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC.

The Movement had long worked in the area of mental health on a worldwide scale, and almost all National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC provided basic psychosocial support. Many were also offering more specialized services for people with mental health concerns. More than 90 per cent were providing mental health and

psychosocial support to emergency affected populations. Support was also provided to marginalized groups, such as homeless people and persons with addictions. Since 2018, more than 42,000 staff and volunteers had been trained in psychological first aid, and 6 out of 10 National Societies were planning to expand their work in mental health and psychosocial support.

With the new policy, the Movement would be able to speed ahead. Currently, there were large and growing gaps between needs and the care provided. Mental health problems often developed at an early age, and suicide was the second leading cause of death amongst young people, prompting the need for both prevention and treatment for children and young people. At the 33rd International Conference it was hoped to adopt a strong resolution together with States, which would help to advance that work through strong partnerships, capacity building and investments in local response. The new policy before the Council of Delegates would write a new chapter in the history of the Movement, with a promise to heal both visible and invisible wounds, to fight the stigma of mental health and to close the gap between needs and response.

**Ms Osorio** (ICRC) said that the ICRC was very proud to have worked alongside National Societies and the IFRC to develop the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. Ten years previously, there had been eight ICRC programmes providing mental health and psychosocial support while currently, there were some 130 ICRC programmes worldwide, many of which had been built and implemented with National Societies. That exponential growth in programmes was in response to the immense suffering of millions of people who were affected by conflict and violence. It was also because the ICRC recognized that mental health was not an afterthought, but it was lifesaving – and there was ‘no health without mental health’. She acknowledged the work of volunteers and staff who were themselves the victims of conflicts and emergencies and who, in helping those affected in their communities, were exposed to sorrow twice over. More must be done to support them. She also acknowledged the mental health workers and psychologists who had made mental health and psychosocial support a humanitarian priority for the Movement, building culturally diverse and appropriate approaches to provide meaningful care. By adopting the policy, the Movement would be committing to strengthening its collective capacity, acting as one powerful workforce to address psychosocial and mental health needs.

**Mr Capobianco** (IFRC) said that mental health conditions were often invisible and silent, yet they were among the leading causes of ill health, disability and mortality worldwide. Nearly two-thirds of people with known mental health issues and psychosocial needs never sought help due to a lack of access and lack of treatment and due to the stigma surrounding the issue. Early access to affordable, accessible and quality mental health care was a matter of life and death. The IFRC was very pleased to see that, after an extensive consultation process, the policy presented for adoption recognized the variety of complementary activities carried out by National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC in different contexts and in accordance with their mandates: in natural disasters, in conflicts, in socially excluded communities and in migration settings. He commended National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support for their work on the policy. The IFRC would support National Societies around four objectives: training 14 million volunteers and staff in psychological first aid; including psychological support interventions in all IFRC support and emergency operations; prioritizing the mental health of volunteers; and supporting National Societies in their advocacy roles to raise the needs of people in need of psychosocial support. Through investment in those priorities, the IFRC hoped that the invisible would become visible and that the silent pain of millions of people would be heard and responded to.

**Dr Carvajal de Álvarez** (Colombian Red Cross Society) recognized the major work that had been carried out in drafting the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. At the statutory meetings in 2017, her National Society had shared its experience in providing psychosocial support to those suffering in armed conflict and had called on the Movement to draw up a policy on the issue. Providing mental health support should be a crosscutting theme in all programmes since it was essential to address mental health in all types of situations, including armed conflict and migration. It was also important to care for the mental health of National Society volunteers and staff who were affected by their humanitarian work, with permanently available psychosocial programmes and debriefing sessions. The Colombian Red Cross Society supported the policy.

**Dr Kinik** (IFRC), emphasized the importance of the draft resolution on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, given that two-thirds of people who needed mental health care and psychosocial support had no access to care and treatment. Every year, 800,000 people died due to suicide and millions attempted it. The Movement policy provided a uniform and current approach to mental health and psychosocial needs in different contexts and it reflected the work carried out by National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC in developmental, humanitarian and emergency settings and in prevention, preparedness, response and long-

term recovery. It was particularly important to note the first policy statement on ensuring impartial access to mental health and psychosocial support and prioritizing prevention and early response. The IFRC committed to include mental health and psychological support in all emergency assessments and subsequent plans of action, ensuring early detections and interventions with children to prevent mental conditions from developing and accompanying them across the life course. The policy had recognized and focused on caring for staff and volunteers, a duty of care on which the IFRC had been working with National Societies as part of its core development mandate. The IFRC was committed to support National Societies in operationalizing the policy, which was linked to the related topic of restoring family links.

**Mr Dewar** (British Red Cross) said that the British Red Cross welcomed the policy, which built on Resolution 7 of the 2017 Council of Delegates on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. He wished to propose an amendment to operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which referred to the guarantee of “a minimum mental health and psychosocial support response” without defining it. The second part of paragraph 2 would read: “calls on all National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to guarantee a “basic level” of psychosocial support response as contained within the Movement’s mental health and psychosocial support framework; develop their capacity to provide services at other levels of the framework; and assess, refer and advocate in relation to the full spectrum of mental health and psychosocial support within the framework.”

**Ms Chatoor** (Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the National Societies of Belize, Grenada and Guyana), said that the National Societies of the Caribbean wished to express their full support for the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs in times of armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies. The Caribbean had been spared the consequences of armed conflict, but it was overwhelmed every year in the rainy season by catastrophic floods, strong winds and tidal surges, while in 2019, the harmful effects of hurricane Dorian had devastated the Bahamas. It had become the norm for staff and volunteers in the Caribbean to be called out to assist those affected and therefore National Societies had instituted programmes to ensure that all volunteers and staff were provided with mental health and psychosocial support. The Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Health had mental health practitioners who worked closely with volunteers and the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society had a doctor assigned by the Ministry of Health to its governing council and its executive committee, so that it was assured of close collaboration on all health issues. The complementary strategies in the policy would enable National Societies to fulfil their roles as auxiliary to the public authorities and it would therefore be appropriate for National Societies to strengthen their codes of conduct so that all would function on the same level and ensure that the mandate “do no harm” was realized. As small National Societies, those in the Caribbean would welcome additional human and financial resources to build on what it had been possible for them to operationalize. In the future, Caribbean National Societies expected to devote more energy to health, wellness and first aid programmes, including psychosocial first aid, which would be further developed through the adoption of best practices and training. Caribbean National Societies looked forward to the adoption of local and national mental health and psychosocial support policies and regulations.

**Ms Ibraimova** (Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan) said that volunteers and staff in Kyrgyzstan faced difficulties on a daily basis in emergency situations such as earthquakes, floods and mudslides, in which those affected lost family members and their homes. The crash of a cargo plane on a village in 2017 had caused many casualties among local residents and the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan had helped to identify the victims. With respect to restoring family links, psychological support was provided to returning migrants and to victims of human trafficking and to young women in situations of vulnerability. It was the duty of every National Society to take care of their staff and volunteers and to provide timely psychological support. Her National Society would continue to develop mental health support for beneficiaries and for volunteers and staff in order to defend human rights and dignity and thereby fulfil part of the auxiliary role in relation to the State.

**Dr Mohammed** (Kenya Red Cross Society) said that psychological and social impacts of emergencies had an immense long-term effect on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of staff and volunteers within the Movement, as well as on the communities affected by crises. It was also true that many of those affected by mental health conditions were not able to access the care and treatment that they needed.

The Kenya Red Cross Society had been working to mainstream psychosocial support as a key element of all interventions for staff, volunteers and the communities they served. Basic and focal psychosocial support was deployed as a package in all preparedness, response and recovery teams. It was compulsory for all staff and volunteers to receive psychosocial and psychological support for more protracted and traumatic crises. The Kenya Red Cross also provided staff, volunteers and the public with telephone-based toll-free 24-hour counselling by both internal and external counsellors. The revised policy on addressing mental health and



psychosocial needs captured the needs of staff, volunteers and communities. In future, she would propose an addition to the policy on vicarious trauma, which was the cumulative mental strain on those working with survivors of traumatic life events. The presence of vicarious traumatization had been noted in many of those who provided psychosocial support and who had close contact with people who had experienced traumatic events. Caregivers were at an even higher risk if they had experienced trauma in their own background and if they extended themselves beyond the boundaries of good self-care. The Kenya Red Cross appreciated the Movement's commitment to address mental health and psychosocial needs and supported the adoption of the policy.

**Mr Kristinsson** (Icelandic Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Danish Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross), strongly endorsed the Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs. The five National Societies on behalf of which he spoke had been meeting mental health and psychosocial support needs since their inception and they continued to be critical areas of importance. The policy document would serve as a key reference point, guiding the members of the Movement as they continued to refine and augment implementation of evidence-informed mental health care and psychosocial support services. It also served as a reference point in assessing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy clearly showed a path forward and demonstrated the Movement's ambitions to do better in addressing enormous needs, reaching the 80 percent of people with mental health conditions who did not have any form of affordable mental health care and those in crisis situations. Ensuring the early and sustained reach of quality services would require new and innovative ways of working, demanding an appropriate workforce and volunteers with access to quality supervision and support. New ways of allocating resources and new partnerships would also be required. The policy laid out a clear path forwards in terms of harmonized, integrated and contextually appropriate Movement responses to mental health and psychosocial needs.

**Mr Valastro** (Italian Red Cross) said that the Italian Red Cross deeply valued and agreed with the draft resolution. He highlighted the need for stronger prevention as a means to ameliorate mental health at community level and, specifically, the role that mental health and psychological support policies could play in building positive and proactive healthy habits among the general population and with health-related topics such as cardiovascular health. There was also a need for mental health and psychological support among the elderly, since depression was recognized as worsening cognitive impairment in that population group. The disruption in traditional social relationships and unprecedented urbanization were leading to isolation and depression in the elderly. There was a need to support substance users and those with other addictions. Mental health and psychological support could also be used to help children and adolescents to fight bullying, assisting both victims and their attackers.

**Dr Radovanovic** (The Red Cross of Serbia) considered the draft resolution to be important since mental health disorders were among the leading causes of global health problems. It was the duty of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to ensure that its activities in psychological first aid and psychosocial support built the resilience of individuals and communities and helped them to overcome hardships. The presence of the Movement in almost every community around the world gave it the power to contribute to well-being and to the preservation of mental health. When responding to emergencies, staff and volunteers not only saved lives, but also improved mental health through building the resilience of individuals, families and communities. Another important aspect of the resolution was the emphasis on providing services to helpers as well as to affected communities, thereby building the knowledge and skills of volunteers and staff. The policy would enable National Societies to standardize activities, make it easier to share experiences and to scale up good practice. By focusing more on preventive measures, the Movement would contribute to preserving and improving mental health and to improving its complementary and supporting role in addressing the psychosocial needs and mental health of people everywhere.

**Ms Koon Wai You** (Samoa Red Cross Society speaking on behalf of the Pacific National Societies of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), fully supported the policy which called for a strengthened commitment to meeting the mental and psychosocial needs of affected populations, as well as staff and volunteers. The provision of mental health and psychosocial support was a core element of building individual and community resilience through strengthening coping mechanisms; it was vital in preserving and restoring the resilience and well-being of those affected and in facilitating their active involvement in the recovery process while respecting their cultural needs. More should be done to invest in building the skills of young people to give them the capacity to support each other's mental health, improve their resilience and build their decision-making skills. There had been an exponential rise in the need for psychosocial support in the Pacific region to enhance social cohesion and assist disaster-affected people in the face of frequent extreme weather

and health events. All National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC should commit to ensuring that relevant staff and volunteers received psychosocial support training with first aid training.

**Dr Yorulmaz** (Turkish Red Crescent Society) welcomed the draft resolution on the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs and emphasized the need to support people traumatized by the effects of man-made and natural disasters. Building up capacity for psychosocial first aid should be one of the most important elements of work in that field so that first responders could respond to trauma without delay. Such an approach, grounded in the skills of volunteers at community level, would enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial support by providing the means to reach victims in the early phases and before situations deteriorated. He strongly recommended investment in capacities at community level as the lynchpin for addressing psychosocial and mental health needs.

**Ms Curry** (The Bahamas Red Cross Society) said that the Bahamas had just recovered from a natural disaster in which it had been necessary to rapidly increase the National Society's mental health and psychosocial support unit due to the volume of persons needing assistance. Mental health and psychosocial support were crucial during times of disaster when people had lost their life's possessions and wondered how they would move beyond the disaster mentally. The draft resolution would add resources and assistance to National Societies and the proposed policy laid out a clear path to dealing with mental health and psychosocial support needs. In the Bahamas, the National Society worked with a national association for psychosocial support and with the Ministry of Health on training and the provision of assistance to those in need. The Bahamas Red Cross Society commended and approved the draft resolution.

**Dr Al Khatib** (Palestine Red Crescent Society) said that the Palestine Red Crescent Society provided assistance to a population that had suffered psychological and physical trauma during years of embargo. Between 12 and 17 November 2019, the National Society had assisted 360 injured people and their families. The Palestine Red Crescent Society benefited from 250 volunteers specializing in mental health and psychosocial support; a psychosocial support programme had been developed and first aid training included psychosocial support, in particular for children and victims of armed conflict. The National Society had established a centre to provide mental health and psychosocial support and other centres in the region gave support to volunteers and staff. The Palestine Red Crescent Society supported the resolution, and reaffirmed the need to increase the resources available to strengthen National Society capacity. He called on the IFRC and the ICRC to support National Society staff and volunteer training programmes in which experiences could be shared, with a focus on areas such as discrimination, trauma, equity and respect. He expressed support for the amendment by the British Red Cross.

**Ms Jaoude** (Lebanese Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and the Jordan National Red Crescent Society), said that every National Society should offer mental health and psychosocial support, including to its staff and volunteers. She supported the remarks of the Swedish Red Cross and the Danish Red Cross and called for the resolution to be implemented as soon as possible. Many National Societies would require the support of the IFRC in order to improve their capacity to provide mental health and psychosocial support, in particular during social conflict and natural disasters.

**Mr Carbonnier** (ICRC) echoed the powerful words of previous speakers and emphasized that the need for mental health and psychosocial support might be less visible than the needs related to physical injuries, yet daily interactions with children, women and men living in armed conflicts showed that they were no less urgent, nor less life-threatening. Acknowledging the collective and consultative process undertaken to develop the policy, he was proud of an achievement that showed the significant strides that the Movement had taken to address mental health and psychosocial needs which were particularly acute among the most vulnerable in crisis situations. Protecting and promoting the mental health of staff and volunteers, as enshrined in the draft resolution, was a priority deserving attention. The ICRC welcomed the Movement Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs and was ready to support the amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the British Red Cross.

**Dr Chabbou** (Tunisian Red Crescent Society) said that the draft resolution was fundamental and perhaps even a little late in being brought to the table since many National Societies had already begun to work on mental health and psychosocial needs. With respect to the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, he would prefer the words: "the Movement's volunteers and staff is often affected in the course of their work" to be amended to read: "the Movement's volunteers and staff may be affected in the course of their work", since the resolution should remain evidence based. Reference could be made to the fact that volunteers and staff worked under pressure and in stressful situations. In the third preambular paragraph, a reference to "addictive





practices” could perhaps be added to the reference to “substance use” and “the harmful use of substances” and mention made concerning the situations of vulnerability that often led to addiction.

**Dr Emam** (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) said that, as many speakers had mentioned, it was important to take care of the mental health and psychosocial needs of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers, especially those working in situations of crisis and emergencies. National Societies must also take into account the health insurance cover and other expenses related to mental health and psychosocial support for volunteers and staff that would allow them to continue their work.

**Mr Lobor** (South Sudan Red Cross) said that mental health and psychosocial support needs were on the rise as a result of armed conflict, natural disaster and other emergencies and should be considered a priority. One quarter of the global population was affected by mental issues, but the mental health situation in South Sudan was much worse, after 20 years of war and conflict. The situation had been exacerbated by other emergencies such as floods, economic stress and communal violence, coupled with a lack of skilled personnel in the field of mental health and lack of access to proper health care. The population of South Sudan, and in particular, internally displaced persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities, had been seriously traumatised and needed support. The South Sudan Red Cross had begun to integrate psychosocial support into all programmes, with its different partners, in order to address issues of mental health within the population and it was supporting volunteers with whom it worked in communities. The South Sudan Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

**Dr Bwito** (Rwandan Red Cross) said that there was limited access to mental health professionals in Rwanda and a lack of basic knowledge on mental health. The lack of mental health services and the stigma of sufferers contributed to a large gap between needs and support. Through their volunteers, National Societies had the capacity and the opportunity to bring assistance to those suffering from mental health illnesses and other psychosocial problems, who were often isolated from mainstream health services. Community-based interventions seemed to be the most effective for those with psychosocial needs. Mental health and psychosocial support must be integrated into National Society programmes so that interventions were adapted to the local cultural context. The Rwandan Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

**Ms Picado Díaz** (Nicaraguan Red Cross) commended the draft resolution, which reaffirmed the commitment to help those in need and which included support for volunteers working in the field. The Nicaraguan Red Cross had provided psychological support services for some 15 years and it had established a mental health and psychosocial support centre to provide services in a holistic manner, fulfilling the humanitarian mandate to be close to those in need. Within the Nicaraguan Red Cross, 65 percent of staff and volunteers had been trained in the provision of psychosocial support and in specialized psychiatric interventions. The draft resolution must bring progress in the field of mental health and emphasize the need to deal with mental as well as physical health in disaster situations.

**Mr Conde** (Red Cross Society of Guinea) reaffirmed the support of his National Society for the draft resolution on mental health needs and psychosocial support, which had been a long-neglected humanitarian issue. Mental health and psychosocial support services were an essential part of assistance in emergency situations and were important for affected communities and volunteers. Those exposed to extreme stress, such as refugees, survivors of disasters and epidemics, and migrants, were most in need of such help. The exposure to such stress would grow in the coming years, leading to an increase in social problems, especially in Africa. The Red Cross Society of Guinea had partnered with National Societies to provide psychosocial support services to migrants and people living with HIV/AIDS in Guinea. Quality services could only be provided if capacities were strengthened through training programmes for volunteers working in the field. It was hoped that the proposed policy would promote leadership and a framework for policies and interventions in the field.

**Ms Fowler** (Canadian Red Cross Society) welcomed the draft resolution, as amended, and recognized the commitment of communities and components of the Movement to prioritize the issue of mental health and psychosocial needs. As a member of the Movement Project on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Consequences of Armed Conflicts, Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies (MOMENT), the Canadian Red Cross acknowledged the good work and collaboration of the group. The Canadian Red Cross would continue to work closely with Movement partners to ensure implementation of the resolution, and to enhance coordination, preparedness and response aligned to growing the Movement’s evidence base at all levels.

**Ms Marques Motta** (Brazilian Red Cross) said that the policy was very important to the Brazilian Red Cross and would help it to build a stronger National Society when responding to disasters, health emergencies and migration and in providing support to staff and volunteers. National Societies would need technical support, including in the provision of training in order to deliver the policy. The Brazilian Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

**Ms Kumasheva** (Kazakh Red Crescent) expressed support for the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy would assist the Kazakh Red Crescent in facing new challenges such as the reintegration of mothers and children returning from conflict zones and the response to internal and external migration and to suicides among young people. Mental health challenges were increasing and the components of the Movement would need to extend their partnerships and become more agile in their response. The National Society of Tajikistan would be grateful to receive help in training volunteers to provide psychosocial support.

**Ms Mirova** (Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan) expressed full support for the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy was particularly relevant to her National Society in providing psychosocial support to migrant workers working outside Tajikistan and in supporting people living with HIV/AIDS and those facing other epidemiological challenges. The assistance of Movement partners in providing training to volunteers would be particularly appreciated.

**Ms Osorio** (ICRC) thanked participants for their comments. The language with respect to preambular paragraph 2 had been agreed in 2017 and would therefore remain unchanged but a reference to “addictive behaviours” as well as substance abuse had been added to preambular paragraph 3.

**The Chair** said that, given the positive response from delegates, he would take it that the amendment to operative paragraph 2 proposed by the British Red Cross, would be accepted.

**Resolution 5, as amended, entitled “International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs”, contained in document CD/19/9DR, was adopted. (Resolution 5, CD/19/R5)**

*The meeting rose at 1:15 pm*



## Second plenary meeting

2:35 pm

### 3.5.2 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION (*continued*)

#### Addressing needs and vulnerabilities

##### **Item 10: Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025**

(documents CD/19/10 and CD/19/10DR)

**Ms Anselmo** (ICRC) commenced the introduction to the proposed resolution and explained that restoring family contacts was a need that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has worked to address for over a century, and it was one of the first requests expressed by people affected by humanitarian crises. All could relate to the suffering caused by the uncertainty of not knowing the fate and whereabouts of a loved one. Separation caused vulnerability and it was widely acknowledged that people remained more resilient if connected with loved ones. The draft resolution contained in document CD/19/10DR referred to the one humanitarian activity that truly functioned as a global network: in an age of digitalization, and with the increasing movement of people across the world and when humanitarian crises were rarely contained within national borders, the family links network was more relevant than ever.

In order to leverage the power of its network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent must strengthen its collaboration, harmonize its practices and solidify its foundations. Safe and secure ways must be found to connect with affected populations and to protect their personal data. The new RFL Strategy, which aimed to achieve those ends, had been developed through a highly participative and consultative process. The active involvement of the RFL Leadership Platform, which had been established at the 2017 Council of Delegates, had also been instrumental in providing strategic support and recognition of the importance of the endeavour.

**Dr Mohammed** (Kenya Red Cross Society, speaking as a member of the RFL Leadership Platform), said that the purpose of the draft resolution was the adoption of the new Restoring Family Links Strategy for the Movement. Substantive discussions had been held on the collective vision of future restoring family links services which had been defined as: placing stronger emphasis on collective efforts to protect family unity, prevent family separation and maintain family links; ensuring that services were accessible to all those in need; collectively increasing capacity to provide answers to families who were living in anxiety about the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones; and being conscious of the importance of personal interactions of staff and volunteers with relatives searching for loved ones, reinforcing the support and making sure that it was understood by all stakeholders. She encouraged participants to visit the display on Restoring Family Links in the humanitarian village.

**Mr Chapagain** (IFRC), said that discussions in the RFL Leadership Platform had been driven by two essential themes: how to connect over one hundred years of cherished history with the opportunities available through modern digital technologies, a field in which young people were active, while keeping people at the centre of the strategy and providing them with comfort and support. At the same time, there was a focus on how to keep families together and prevent them from becoming separated. The IFRC had incorporated elements of the Restoring Family Links Strategy into its new Disaster Management Policy and its Global Migration Strategy. The bulk of RFL services were provided by the membership on the ground.

**H.E. Ms Fernandes Hanjan Costa Soares** (Timor-Leste Red Cross Society) expressed full support for the Restoring Family Links Strategy. Family reunification programmes in situations of armed conflict and natural disaster were a unique facet of Red Cross and Red Crescent activity that had been appreciated by the people of Timor-Leste. The policy of integrating RFL into a multidisciplinary response to families, including psychosocial support, socioeconomic assistance and legal and administrative assistance, required long-term commitment on the part of all stakeholders, including political support, since government support for people's safety was crucial to humanitarian assistance.

**Mr Senoussi** (Red Cross of Chad) expressed support for the new Restoring Family Links Strategy; the importance of restoring family links had been experienced in conflict situations in Chad where the National Society had worked with the support of the ICRC. The subject of RFL was wide-ranging and included psychosocial support for family members suffering separation.

**Mr Mirzayev** (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that his National Society had experience of restoring family links, a topic on which it worked closely with the ICRC. He noted the important and successful role played by the ICRC in active collaboration with government bodies. Over one million people had been displaced as a result of the conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and relatives were seeking answers concerning the location of over 4,500 people. It had been possible for the National Society to connect people not only by letter and telephone but also by video link. He suggested that some information should be added to the preamble of the draft resolution and to the Strategy itself concerning the issue of hostages and illegal imprisonment.

**Mr Al Razwan** (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society) welcomed the draft resolution and the new RFL Strategy. Historically, people had become separated as a result of armed conflict, but natural and man-made disasters and other situations of violence were creating RFL needs in many contexts. The proposed RFL Strategy included relevant, emerging and fast-changing issues, such as internal displacement, migration, climate and environment, and the digital revolution, which needed better and wider collaboration among all the actors involved. From its experience in implementing the RFL Strategy 2008–2018, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society had learned that leadership commitment, high turnover of staff and volunteers and other organizational matters had a strong influence on how the RFL Strategy was delivered on the ground. Hence, it was important to integrate the measures outlined in the strategy in wider organizational plans at all levels in order to address the issues that affected implementation. There would also be a need for better collaboration on resource mobilization.

Better collaboration, both within the Movement and with non-Movement partners, and a focus on digital communication could transform RFL actions. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society requested the ICRC, the IFRC, the RFL Leadership Platform and the RFL Strategy Implementation Group to enhance collaboration and coordination within and outside of the Movement and to build the capacities of National Societies to implement and monitor the RFL Strategy 2020–2025.

**Ms Khorrambagheri** (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed full support for the draft resolution on restoring family links, as the issue of missing people had become part of the daily work of National Societies. With the help of the ICRC, the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran made RFL services accessible to all documented and undocumented refugees and migrants in Iran and provided training to NGOs and local actors. The National Society had integrated RFL into emergency response teams as part of its rescue and relief services.

**Dr Traoré** (Mali Red Cross) underscored the importance of restoring family links and the provision of information to anxious families seeking loved ones in the aftermath of armed conflicts and natural disasters. In Mali, armed conflicts, intercommunity conflicts, terrorist attacks, banditry, and migration, were all causes of family separation, which had caused the sudden internal displacement of entire families, some of whom were to be found in refugee camps in neighbouring countries. The ICRC helped the Mali Red Cross to restore family links for those living in refugee camps, for those detained as a result of the conflict and for minors who had been drawn into armed groups. Restoring family links was an effective way to end the suffering of separated families. The Mali Red Cross had participated fully in the RFL Strategy Implementation Group and encouraged all to adopt the new Strategy, emphasizing in particular the need to strengthen the capacity of volunteers.

**Mr El Haddad** (Lebanese Red Cross) emphasized the connection between restoring family links and the protection of personal data and the need to respect cultural differences when assisting those receiving RFL services. The new RFL Strategy would guide National Societies in assisting minors traveling without adults, the elderly living alone and those suffering from chronic illnesses, people in captivity, women and small children, especially those who did not have diplomatic protection. He expressed support for the draft resolution.

**Mr Ärnlov** (Swedish Red Cross), speaking also on behalf of the Danish Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross, and the Icelandic Red Cross, said that family members often spared no effort or expense in trying to find their missing relatives or in trying to navigate complex family reunion policies. The new RFL Strategy would boost the prospects of National Societies responding to the needs of affected families and would enable them to strengthen a protection-oriented approach to family reunification. He welcomed adoption of the draft resolution and encouraged all components of the Movement to confirm their commitment to sustaining and building the Family Links Network and to recognize RFL as a core activity of all National Societies.

**Dr De la Fuente Díaz** (Bolivian Red Cross) drew attention to the problems of migration and natural disasters caused by climate change in Bolivia. Migrants came from vulnerable populations who suffered from abuse as they travelled along migration routes and the numbers who became separated from their families were increasing each year, causing immense anguish to loved ones. The new Strategy for the Movement on Restoring Family Links would enable National Societies to work on prevention, to restore family links and to manage



solutions. Improvements were needed, including the adoption of the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection. The Bolivian Red Cross had contributed to the development of the new Strategy, the implementation of which would help to improve coordination within the Movement.

**Mr Saner** (Turkish Red Crescent Society) welcomed the new Strategy and endorsed the draft resolution. He emphasized the need for a more structured framework in which sensitive cases could be addressed with a clear-cut methodology. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was experiencing many challenges in different contexts regarding data protection. It was necessary that States should refrain from requesting personal data from Movement components and maintain a humanitarian space for RFL services. Implementation of the RFL Strategy would require strong Movement components; the ICRC and the IFRC were requested to help National Societies to develop their capacities in the provision of RFL services.

**Mr Senghore** (Gambia Red Cross Society) welcomed the important work that had been accomplished by the RFL Strategy Implementation Group; its work was timely in light of the IFRC Global Strategy on Migration and the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. In a recent capsizing of a boat near the coast of Mauritania, many young lives had been lost: the role of the Gambia Red Cross Society in repatriating survivors and informing relatives had been acknowledged by the International Organization for Migration. It was very important that there should be more emphasis on data protection and data management by National Societies at the local level and that they should receive assistance from the ICRC and the IFRC in that regard. More broadly, there should be more focus on strengthening and sustaining National Society capacities.

**Mr Sonko** (Senegalese Red Cross Society) recognized that restoring family links had been a core activity of the Movement since its inception. The Senegalese Red Cross Society supported the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and the adoption of the draft resolution. However, while the development of digital technology had enabled the collection of personal data, it also carried risks with respect to the regulation of data privacy. He recommended that there should be discussions with governments prior to the International Conference to ensure that National Societies could continue to protect data.

**Ms Park** (The Republic of Korea National Red Cross) highlighted the crucial role played by the Red Cross and Red Crescent in restoring and maintaining family links across borders and in situations of armed conflict. She drew attention the separation of families in the Korean Peninsula, where more than 130,000 families were separated between the North and the South. In order to alleviate the pain of the separated families, the Republic of Korean National Red Cross worked to provide face-to-face exchanges, correspondence and video letters as well as a consolation event for separated families and psychosocial support. The work of the National Society could be replicated in situations of disasters and armed conflict. The ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies and governments should support RFL programmes.

**Ms Llovet Alcalde** (Cuban Red Cross), speaking on behalf of the 47,000 volunteers of the Cuban Red Cross, said that migration had existed since the origins of humanity and it had become more complex. Vulnerable migrants were forced to travel along dangerous and unstable routes, generating an increase in separated families and disappeared persons. The Cuban Red Cross had contributed to the drafting of the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 through regional consultation meetings and had helped to prepare information for the RFL Network. Expressing support for the draft resolution, she highlighted the role played by National Societies in preventing family separation, in restoring and maintaining any links and in managing any requests for searches. The Strategy highlighted the progress still to be made with regard to the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection and the need for families to be able to trust the network to which they were providing personal data. The Cuban Red Cross supported adoption of the draft resolution.

**Dr Leroux de Ramírez** (Dominican Red Cross) said that the Dominican Republic was a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants. Migration was complex, with many migrants losing their lives in taking dangerous migration routes. The Dominican Red Cross provided information and guidance to migrants and provided support, including RFL services, to the families of migrants seeking news of their loved ones. RFL services included the transmission of data, a subject that involved regulatory and legal frameworks, standards and data protection. The Dominican Red Cross supported the new Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and drew attention to its focus on Movement coordination.

**Mr Kende** (Nigerian Red Cross Society) affirmed support for the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and for the draft resolution, noting that there were some two million people missing in Nigeria, in particular as a result of the insurgency in the north east of the country. With the support from ICRC we had managed to reach almost one million. There were also refugees from Cameroon in southern Nigeria. Restoring Family

Links had therefore become a critical aspect of the work of the Nigerian Red Cross Society and almost one million people had been contacted thanks to the help of the ICRC. Work had been done with the help of the Italian Red Cross on mitigation in difficult situations.

**Dr Schön** (German Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Austrian Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Swiss Red Cross), thanked all those that had contributed to the Family Links Network. Restoring Family Links services acknowledged and supported the family; not knowing the fate of loved ones caused families around the world to live in the anguish of uncertainty. The four National Societies on behalf of whom he spoke strongly supported the adoption of the new RFL Strategy and were dedicated to building and operating within a strong Family Links Network. While welcoming the achievements since 2008, he underlined that further comprehensive action regarding resource mobilization would benefit joint tasks. The Restoring Family Links Strategy enhanced the ambition of further improving the ability of the Family Links Network to assist individuals separated from their loved ones as a result of armed conflict, violence, disaster, migration or other situations requiring humanitarian action. Restoring Family Links services were central to the identity of the Movement.

**Mr Villarroel** (IFRC), said that the IFRC joined the ICRC and National Societies in expressing deep concern for the suffering endured by those who had lost contact with loved ones as a consequence of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies, as well as in the context of migration and internal displacement.

Recent changes in the external environment, notably the growing phenomenon of migration, the emphasis across the humanitarian sector of accountability to affected people, as well as the digital revolution, demanded that Restoring Family Links services should adapt in order to remain relevant in response to growing demand. National Societies had a crucial role as components of the international network for tracing and reuniting families and carried out a substantial part of RFL activities through the work of their volunteers.

On the role of the Central Tracing Agency, the IFRC encouraged close coordination with National Societies and the IFRC on services undertaken that were outside armed conflict, in full respect of the respective mandates. Every revision of the mandate of the Agency required the involvement of all Movement components.

The IFRC supported and welcomed the Council of Delegates draft resolution and the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025, especially its focus on prevention of family separation, increasing the accessibility of the service, and supporting families of missing persons. The IFRC was committed to promoting the Strategy and to implementing it through its own strategies, policies, and plans, and to allocating the necessary resources to carry them out. The IFRC would ensure that its prevention, preparedness and response work included measures to prevent family separation, as well as facilitating access to RFL services. It would work together with National Societies to promote their integration in their respective country's disaster preparedness plans and disaster risk management laws.

In the context of migration and displacement, the IFRC had adopted its first Global Migration Strategy in 2017, which included actions to restore family contacts and reduce family separation. Through the Global Migration Strategy, the IFRC had committed to work with the ICRC to enhance the strategic integration of RFL in National Societies' organizational development, operational response and strategic plans.

**Mr Soumaili** (Comoros Red Crescent) expressed support for the draft resolution and the Strategy on Restoring Family Links. Comoros was suffering the full effects of migration and many lives had been lost by those seeking to reach the islands. With the ICRC, the National Society had trained staff and volunteers to assist those seeking family members. He appealed to the ICRC to return to Comoros to continue to provide RFL training. He thanked National Societies and the IFRC for their assistance in disaster management and in providing psychosocial support.

**Ms Yu** (Red Cross Society of China) said that the Red Cross Society of China supported the draft resolution. Restoring Family Links embodied the fundamental humanitarian principles of the Movement and it was an area in which the Red Cross and Red Crescent could play an essential role. RFL was used to help those fleeing armed conflicts and natural disasters and emergencies as well as those separated by other factors, such as social development: in rural areas in China, children were left behind while their parents went to work in the cities. The need for RFL was relevant even in developed areas. She recommended that RFL should be integrated into National Societies' emergency response systems and capacity building as it was in China.

**Dr Al-Hadid** (Jordan Red Crescent, speaking on behalf of the National Society members of the Restoring Family Links Leadership Platform, which comprised 14 National Society Leaders, the IFRC and the ICRC), said that as a member of the RFL Strategy Implementation Group, the Jordan Red Crescent had also helped to shape the substance of the new Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and fully supported its adoption.

The Movement had made remarkable progress over the previous ten years in implementing dimensions of the previous RFL Strategy 2008–2018 and the Network was clearly stronger. However, there were many challenging areas in restoring family links with strategic implications. The profoundly humanitarian aspect of the RFL service was uncontested, as was the expertise of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in delivering the service worldwide. The new Strategy would help the Red Cross and Red Crescent to reinforce its leadership role in RFL. Since its establishment in 2017, the RFL Leadership Platform had proved to be the right forum to engage in critical issues, explore ways to strengthen partnerships within the Movement, and change the perception that RFL was solely an ICRC service by fully integrating RFL into National Societies' strategic and operational plans in view of providing a multidisciplinary service. However, it required better ICRC and IFRC coordination of providing support to National Societies.

The RFL Leadership Platform had been the driving force in preparing the draft resolution that would be proposed to the International Conference and it had developed concrete, evidence-based guidance on how to shape the service together with the people served by the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The purpose of the RFL Leadership Platform had also been to explore new partnerships with humanitarian, academic, technology and private sectors with the specific purpose of helping families to maintain and restore contact with loved ones and clarify the fate of missing family members. The RFL Leadership Platform would review and, if necessary, adjust the Strategy and it would report back to the Council of Delegates in 2023 on what had been achieved. He drew attention to the proposal in the draft resolution to create a Movement RFL Medal for outstanding services in the field of RFL. He urged all to support the Strategy and to engage in negotiations for a successful resolution on RFL at the International Conference.

**Mr González** (Red Cross Society of Panama, speaking also on behalf of the National Societies of Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan and the United States of America), expressed concern for the vast numbers of missing family members and underlined the need for the Red Cross and Red Crescent to come together to restore family links. The adoption of the new RFL Strategy would assist National Societies in responding to situations where there were forced disappearances; victims of armed conflict, banditry and internal displacement; continental migration; and major natural disasters and environmental emergencies. The Strategy placed a focus on strengthening the capacities of National Societies and on the collection and analysis of data within innovative frameworks to manage new technologies, and especially the adoption of new security measures for data protection. Collective and collaborative action, as described in the Strategy, would be important in providing assistance to migrant workers and in helping family members to identify the bodies of their loved ones. Movement tools, such as a database of cases, a website of family links and an extranet for the promotion and handling of all RFL services was essential, as well as the training of staff and the introduction of a code of conduct on handling personal data. The National Societies on behalf of which he spoke endorsed the draft resolution and the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025.

**Mr Combe** (French Red Cross) said that there was a vital need for families to learn the fate of their loved ones. Each year, thousands of families were separated as a consequence of wars, natural disasters and humanitarian crises. Henry Dunant had understood the needs and suffering of families seeking to restore family links and a message of hope and daily action for those families had been at the heart of the Movement since its inception. The Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025, to which the French Red Cross had contributed, had the ambition of redoubling those efforts. The French Red Cross was particularly proud to carry the mission to those who needed it most and to present the Strategy to the Council of Delegates.

It would be necessary for each link in the chain of the Family Links Network to mobilize and increase its operational capacity, particularly along the routes of exile and migration. The worldwide Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must be relevant and operational in order to cover the needs of all affected persons. The Movement must act to prevent separation, carry out research in the field, and accompany family reunification. The right to family life and the principle of the family unit must be at the heart of its concerns. The components of the Movement must adapt, by mobilizing additional resources and adapting to the technological challenges of the future. An example of a new tool was the website 'Trace the Face'. Finally, humanitarian diplomacy must be developed to ensure that governments recognized their responsibilities with respect to restoring family links and to protecting the humanitarian space and the confidentiality of data management. The Red Cross and Red Crescent must be the voice of those waiting for news of family members and bring their suffering to the attention of governments. The French Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

**Prof Kamel** (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) praised the efforts that had led to the establishment of the new Strategy on restoring family links. She drew attention to the successful collaboration between the Egyptian Red Crescent Society and the Libyan Red Crescent, with the support of the ICRC, which had allowed the repatriation

of 12 children who had lost their parents during the conflict in Libya. Humanitarian diplomacy with the official authorities and maintaining confidentiality had been essential in that case and had demonstrated the importance of the auxiliary role of the National Society. The Egyptian Red Crescent Society was also providing psychosocial support and health services to the orphans repatriated from Libya. The National Society looked forward to the implementation of the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025.

**Ms Marques Motta** (Brazilian Red Cross) said that it was very important that the draft resolution should be adopted in order for the Movement to continue its work on RFL. The work of the Brazilian Red Cross depended on data processing under a code of conduct that respected national legislation. The new Restoring Family Links Strategy, with its focus on psychosocial support for families seeking loved ones and the provision of multidisciplinary services, would enable the Red Cross and Red Crescent to provide a rapid response, engage with new technologies and ensure data protection for beneficiaries.

**Mr Lobor** (South Sudan Red Cross) said that conflicts caused the displacement of people but, crucially, they also affected infrastructure, including telecommunications and mobile networks, thereby making it difficult for people who had been displaced to connect with their families. In South Sudan, war had caused the internal displacement of two million people, with a further two million refugees from South Sudan having been displaced to neighbouring countries. Some 300,000 refugees from Sudan had sought refuge in South Sudan. The implementation of the Strategy on Restoring Family Links would be key in helping to connect such a large number of displaced and separated families. The trauma and stress experienced by those who had been displaced was high. He was grateful to the ICRC and the international community for helping to build the capacity of the volunteers and staff of the South Sudan Red Cross and for providing logistical support and equipment that had helped to reconnect the South Sudanese population and refugees living both within and outside the borders of the country. The introduction of the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 was timely and it would help National Societies to alleviate the suffering caused by conflicts and migration. He called on all to strongly support the draft resolution.

**The Chair** said that he hoped that participants would continue to be strong, unified and engaged in discussing the challenging issues surrounding restoring family links with States in the coming days. He noted the request to stress some points further in the draft resolution but, in the light of the overwhelming support received, he called on delegates to accept the draft as presented.

**The resolution contained in document CD/19/10DR, entitled Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025, was adopted. (Resolution 6, CD/19/R6)**

*Ms Gadiant, Vice-Chair of the Council of Delegates, oversaw the discussion on the following item:*

**Item 11: Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on**  
(documents CD/19/11 and CD/19/11DR)

**Mr Stillhart** (ICRC), introducing the item, recalled that the Movement had adopted its first policy on internal displacement at the 2009 Council of Delegates in Nairobi, providing a clear focus and practical guidance for the Movement's response to internal displacement in line with the Fundamental Principles. At the start of 2019, some 41.3 million people were internally displaced: the highest number on record. Conflict and violence had caused 10.8 million new internal displacements in 2018 and natural disasters had triggered a further 17.2 million new displacements.

The voices of internally displaced people remained largely unheard and the response to their needs inadequate. Many lived in precarious situations, unable to rebuild their lives and make progress towards durable solutions. Internally displaced people were found in remote rural areas and living in camps where they were dependent on humanitarian aid, while growing numbers of people were displaced in urban centres where they often received no assistance. The Council of Delegates was called upon to renew its focus on the critical humanitarian issue of internal displacement, to take stock of the significant achievements made in responding to the internally displaced and to acknowledge that more must be done to prevent displacement and to protect those in need.

The draft resolution under consideration had been built on the premise that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must strengthen its humanitarian response. The resolution reaffirmed the Movement's commitment to improving protection and assistance for internally displaced people and requested all of the components of the Movement to step up efforts in three critical areas: preventing the conditions leading to displacement; improving responses to needs created by urban internal displacement; and supporting durable solutions



based on people's wishes and priorities. The resolution recommended several measures to improve Red Cross and Red Crescent responses in those areas, including meaningful participation of internally displaced people and communities affected by displacement in the design of responses, dedicating more resources to strengthening the capacity of National Societies to respond to internal displacement, stepping up efforts to promote development of relevant domestic laws and policies and the creation of a Movement Reference Group on Internal Displacement to foster exchanges of experience and to promote implementation of the resolution. The ICRC strongly supported adoption of the resolution and looked forward to contributing to its implementation and to helping to enhance the quality and cohesion of the Movement's response to internal displacement.

**Mr Mirzayev** (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that internal displacement was caused by man-made and natural disasters and focused and current approaches would be needed to resolve them. As a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, over one million people had been internally displaced in Azerbaijan or were refugees. The Government of Azerbaijan had taken action to improve the living conditions of affected persons, including through a law that protected refugees and the internally displaced. He requested that the eighth preambular paragraph beginning "stressing the importance of respect for international humanitarian law" should be amended to make reference to "emphasizing the necessity of taking effective measures to address the causes of internal displacement and preventing any actions that prolonged the displacement period and that aggravated the humanitarian situation of IDPs, as well as providing them with the right to voluntary, safe and dignified return to their homes and places of habitual residence". He paid tribute to the IFRC President who had recently taken action with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in order to repatriate an 11-year old boy and to the leadership of the Turkish Red Crescent which had helped to repatriate refugees.

**Ms Bilous** (Ukrainian Red Cross Society) said that internally displaced people were often forgotten in the discussion on forced displacement and the impact on internal displacement was often severe at the level of the individual and society. In the protracted crisis in Ukraine, for instance, it had been crucial to pay attention to the social and economic situation of IDPs, who had suffered trauma and separation from their families. The economic situation meant that employment opportunities for internally displaced people were limited and conflicts further paralysed economic activity. A growing number of IDPs in Ukraine expressed the wish to remain in their new place of residence as integration improved, while some planned to return to their original location once the conflicts had subsided. The current crisis of internally displaced people in Ukraine was the largest in Europe since the Balkans conflict. The Movement had adapted to the needs of beneficiaries over time, recognizing that many internally displaced persons had already integrated into new communities. The Ukrainian Red Cross Society supported the resolution and asked for more attention to be paid to resource generation.

**Mr Zoungrana** (Burkinabe Red Cross Society) recalled that, in February 2019, four Burkinabe Red Cross Society staff members on a mission to assist internally displaced persons had been the victims of a serious security incident; efforts were still under way to secure the release of the fourth person who had been held captive by a radical armed group. The three staff members who had been released were even more motivated to pursue the humanitarian action of the Movement in assisting internally displaced persons. The security situation had deteriorated, and the number of internally displaced people currently exceeded 500,000, thereby giving rise to the need for even more effective humanitarian assistance. For that reason, the Burkinabe Red Cross Society supported the draft resolution, which aimed to strengthen implementation of the Movement policy on Internal Displacement and encouraged all participants to adopt it. The National Society expressed sincere gratitude for the support it had received from the Movement in providing assistance to internally displaced people in a difficult security context.

**Mr Rocca** (IFRC), said that, at the end of 2018, some 17.2 million people had been displaced as a result of disasters, most of which were the result of weather-related events. Disasters had triggered 61 per cent of internal displacement globally. In 2018, the IFRC had undertaken a review of IFRC and National Society engagement on internal displacement as a result of disasters and crises and in the context of climate change. The main findings and conclusions of the review, which were contained in the report *Strengthening IFRC Responses to Internal Displacement in Disasters: Challenges and Opportunities* were: the main interventions of National Societies were focused on response with emphasis on prevention of the conditions of displacement and preparedness in line with climate change adaptation and resilience; and more understanding of the drivers of internal displacement and the possibility for durable solutions. National Societies were ideally placed to understand the localized complexity of displacement and engage in humanitarian dialogue with relevant authorities. Significant opportunities existed for National Societies to strengthen their capacities on internal displacement,

with support from all components of the Movement. The Red Cross and Red Crescent could play an essential role to integrate support to IDPs, and their rights, into broader risk management laws and policies.

The IFRC had informed the drafting of the resolution “Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on” to which the IFRC would make a series of strategic commitments to improve the understanding of internal displacement as a risk triggered by disaster or climate change which could be reduced or prevented. It would support the review of preparedness and contingency plans by National Societies through an internal displacement lens, for better anticipation of internal displacement scenarios, considering the broader needs for host communities and others impacted by displacement. To deploy displacement advisers in particularly complex internal displacement situations would better inform IFRC operational and strategic directions.

The resolution emphasized the importance of tackling internal displacement in the urban contexts in which an increasing number of people were being displaced. The IFRC and National Societies had many positive examples of programmes, including cash, livelihood support, to address the needs of IDPs in urban contexts. IDPs could fall into the category of the most vulnerable, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent had a duty to protect and to understand their needs as well as those of the host community. Ensuring the participation of IDPs and host communities in active engagement and meaningful consultation in the planning and implementation of responses and durable solutions would be key to achieving positive results. The IFRC strongly welcomed and supported the resolution and believed that it would guide the IFRC and National Societies to scale up initiatives to address internal displacement, in line with national and international frameworks, based on the respective mandates and in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

**Ms Bader** (Lebanese Red Cross) called on the components of the Movement to provide more humanitarian aid to IDPs, especially to the large majority who lived outside of camps. Humanitarian aid should also focus on the challenges posed by urban displacement. The draft resolution underlined the different needs of IDPs, in terms of the services required and the need to respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The Lebanese Red Cross supported the resolution and emphasized the need for the voluntary return of IDPs to their homes while preserving their dignity as well as having regard to the needs of the host community.

**Mr Valastro** (Italian Red Cross) said that the Italian Red Cross supported the draft resolution entitled “Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on”. The Italian Red Cross particularly wished to endorse the request for the components of the Movement to “integrate both the short- and longer-term needs of urban IDPs outside camps and those of their host communities into their analysis and responses, including by combining structural interventions at the level of urban services and domestic legal and policy frameworks with tailored responses to help IDPs rebuild their lives”; as well as for the components of the Movement to “help prevent the conditions leading to displacement and, where not possible, to ensure people’s safety, dignity and physical and psychological integrity throughout their displacement, keeping in mind” the different vulnerabilities of internally displaced people. Lastly, the Italian Red Cross agreed with the recommendation to strengthen “National Society capacity to assess and respond to IDP protection needs by implementing the “minimum protection approach”, as described within the “Protection within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement” paying specific attention to the prevention of family separation during displacement in line with the Movement’s RFL Strategy 2020–2025”.

**Dr Yorulmaz** (Turkish Red Crescent Society) welcomed and strongly supported the draft resolution. The approach to support the needs of the host communities along with those of IDPs was of paramount importance in ensuring cohesion and inclusion in consideration of the limited resources available and the overstretched capacities in the places where IDPs settled. The approach for a constructive impact on relations between IDPs and host communities should also be supported. Protection was a central component of humanitarian assistance to IDPs that should be applied to all persons in all circumstances. Displacement was a phenomenon that could occur as a result of any event and National Societies should prepare in ordinary times by improving their own capacities in preparation for times of crisis. There should be a minimum standardized protection approach in operations. The Movement should promote durable solutions, such as local interventions and the voluntary return of IDPs to their places of origin when conditions were appropriate.

**Dr Abbas** (Iraqi Red Crescent Society) endorsed the draft resolution and emphasized the importance of taking into account long-term internal displacement and the needs of displaced persons, including protection so that they could become part of host societies or undertake a safe voluntary return.

**The Vice-Chair** inquired whether there were any objections to the addition of a new paragraph in the draft resolution in accordance with the proposal by the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan and, hearing none, took it that the amendment was accepted.

**The draft resolution, as amended, entitled “Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on” contained in document CD/19/11DR, was adopted. (Resolution 7, CD/19/R7)**

*Mr Maurer, Chair of the Council of Delegates, oversaw the following discussion:*

**Item 12: Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity**  
(document CD/19/12DR)

**Mr Rocca (IFRC)**, read out the “Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity” contained in document CD/19/12DR. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was a neutral humanitarian organization that did not encourage or discourage migration. The Movement recognized that the management of migration posed significant challenges for States, however it was increasingly concerned for the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection. All migrants had human rights and must be protected from torture and ill-treatment and must have access to justice and essential services. International law also required special protection for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons and gaps in implementation of protection could have life-threatening consequences.

In 2017, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had made a “Call for Action on the Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Migrants”, drawing attention to the steps States should take to protect migrants from harm, calling on them to use migration-related detention as a measure of last resort and to commit to ending the detention of children and family separation for immigration-related reasons. In 2011, States Parties to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 represented at the 31st International Conference were requested to ensure that relevant laws were in place to enable National Societies to enjoy safe access to all migrants, irrespective of their legal status. States were called on to support National Societies in carrying out their humanitarian mandate and to ensure that assistance of a strictly humanitarian and impartial character was never considered unlawful. The Red Cross and Red Crescent stood ready to support States in implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. As auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, National Societies were committed to supporting States to ensure that the humanitarian needs of migrants and of vulnerable persons in host communities were met. The Red Cross and Red Crescent sought to foster collaboration with States in a climate of mutual trust, with positive solutions and frank and constructive dialogue.

The IFRC and the ICRC proposed that the 2019 Council of Delegates should endorse the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity. The Statement was necessary in light of the continuing challenges in the protection of vulnerable migrants and displaced persons, the narrowing of the humanitarian space and the increasing barriers to access resulting from States’ policies. Migration and displacement were not new to the Movement; the Red Cross and Red Crescent had committed to providing humanitarian assistance and protection to migrants and displaced persons, irrespective of their legal status. However, migrants continued to face risks to their safety and wellbeing and every day brought news of those who had drowned at sea.

Humanitarian access was failing to be addressed by some States and in some cases becoming increasingly restricted. The Movement had observed a rise in anti-immigration sentiment in many countries and mounting pressure not to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants. In some States, to talk about the dignity of migrants or saving their lives was considered to be a political issue but it was not a political issue to save lives. As the former president of the Italian Red Cross, Mr Barra, had said: “we must never be silent when the dignity of a human being is threatened”. The Red Cross and Red Crescent was always on the side of the most vulnerable and that was not a breach of neutrality or impartiality. Everything possible must be done to enter into dialogue and engage with States but since preparations for the International Conference had met with vetoes from some, the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity had been drafted for presentation at the International Conference. Many National Societies had written asking for presentation of a resolution, but the proposed Statement appeared to be a good basis on which to engage in dialogue. The IFRC restated its commitment to help those escaping from violence, misery and other causes of migration.

**Ms Mohamed** (Maldivian Red Crescent, speaking also on behalf of National Societies in South Asia from: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; India; Nepal; Pakistan; and Sri Lanka), expressed gratitude to those involved in drafting the Movement Statement. There was unprecedented global attention on migration and increased recognition of the humanitarian needs and of the risks faced by migrants.

With reference to the humanitarian needs of many people on the move for work and livelihoods, often called labour migrant workers, and their families, South Asia had been exposed to population movement due to the combined drivers of protracted conflicts and crises, extreme events and disasters, rural impoverishment and

socio-economic inequalities. Climate-induced displacement was also increasing due to the accelerated pace of climate change. Whether in a crisis situation or in peace time, migrants had unique vulnerabilities and needs, such as access to essential services and social inclusion. Understanding the strong impact of migration in South Asia, National Societies in the sub-region had been actively engaged in building capacity in responding to the needs of migrants and those affected by migration, networking with other National Societies and collaborating beyond the South Asia sub-region, including in the Asia Pacific Migration Network. The Maldivian Red Crescent and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society had recently organized a Humanitarian Dialogue on Migration with the support of the IFRC and the Italian Red Cross.

In response to the Movement Statement, she underlined that, in addressing the humanitarian consequences of displacement in protracted crises, National Societies were exposed to the risks of having to discontinue activities due to decreasing resources. It was necessary to act together with a common voice and use the power of the network to reach the highest level of decision makers in their respective countries in order to influence support for affected communities. In its work and that of its partners, the Red Cross and Red Crescent needed to take into account the sensitivities of the contexts in which they operated in order to avoid unnecessary pressures and improve the quality of services. Taking the opportunity of the International Conference, National Societies called on States to recognize and respect the position of National Societies in relation to migration, based on the seven Fundamental Principles and with an understanding of the capacities of National Societies to coordinate and cooperate with States to address the humanitarian needs of migrants and those affected by migration.

It was recognized that life-saving approaches should also be combined with strengthening the livelihoods and overall resilience of affected populations, including displaced and host communities. Human trafficking and gender-based violence were underlined as critical risks within any migratory or displacement journey and addressing those risks required better trained volunteers and staff, as well as established mechanisms to coordinate with public authorities and affected communities. There was a growing trend towards disaster-related migration and displacement in the context of climate change and a consequent need for greater advocacy for the adoption and enforcement of legal frameworks and effective measures in preparedness strategies that protected and empowered communities at risk. The National Societies of South Asia supported the target that at least 75 per cent of National Societies should integrate the needs of migrants, refugees and displaced people in their strategic planning processes.

**Ms Van Schaik** (Netherlands Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the National Societies of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Canada, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda, Zambia), recalled that Strategy 2030, adopted at the General Assembly, highlighted migration and displacement as one of the five global challenges facing the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in the next decade. The challenge impacted humanitarian aid and humanitarian diplomacy on behalf of the most vulnerable. A fundamental component of humanitarian diplomacy in the field of migration was to remind States of their obligations under international law in order to prevent the suffering of vulnerable migrants. It was increasingly concerning that there was a hardening in laws, policies and attitudes in many countries that was having grave consequences for the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable migrants, refugees and others in need of international protection. The Movement must stop the race to the bottom in policy and in law and open honest dialogue about migration as a humanitarian issue and about the obligations of States. The management of migration by many States was increasingly interpreted in the containment and security domain and not in the humanitarian domain. The Movement must provide a strong response and keep advocating for guaranteed access of migrants to essential services, irrespective of their legal status. The statement was a bold and universal appeal on behalf of some of the most vulnerable people in the world: "let us work together, reaffirming our common humanity to help all those in need": the work in that area must be an example of strong Movement collaboration. She requested that the ICRC and the IFRC should combine the work of the Movement with National Societies in order to provide human dignity to all.

**Mr Valastro** (Italian Red Cross) said that, while welcoming the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity, the Italian Red Cross advocated for the adoption of a future resolution on meeting migrants' needs as a crucial priority for the Movement. The needs of migrants were a humanitarian imperative at times of crisis and also in everyday life. The Movement could not let people feel alone and unsafe because they could not find protection for their rights or dignity as human beings. Vulnerable migrants and irregular migrants were constantly exposed to danger and it was the role of the Movement to mitigate the danger in every situation, as part of its mandate and in dialogue with Governments.

**Mr Zoungrana** (Burkinabe Red Cross Society) welcomed the commitment of the Movement to humanity and to protecting human dignity in the face of migration, which occurred on a daily basis. He thanked Movement

partners who had provided help for the psychosocial and health needs of migrants in Burkina Faso and indicated the full support of his National Society for the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity.

**Ms Chatoor** (Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society) expressed support for the Movement Statement. The challenges of migration were new to Trinidad and Tobago but, as a member of the Movement, it must show its support to the most vulnerable within the limited capacity of its National Society. Migration posed challenges, but the Red Cross and Red Crescent could not run away from its obligations under international law. Many partners and States supported the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees and the Movement must build on the contents of those two instruments by embracing its Fundamental Principles, with Humanity being the most important when dealing with vulnerable migrants.

**Dr Carvajal De Alvarez** (Colombian Red Cross Society) expressed support for the Movement Statement. The global migration framework and the regional commitments on migration enabled National Societies to respond powerfully to migration. The Colombian Red Cross Society had assisted 1.2 million people over the previous two years, carrying out activities in many cities to support integration in partnership with the Government and other actors. The National Society had provided emergency and health services, but it needed further resources in order to devise a longer-term strategy that comprised social and economic inclusion.

**Dr Nguyen** (Vietnam Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the 11 National Societies of South-East Asia from: Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; Indonesia; Laos; Malaysia; Myanmar; Philippines; Singapore; Thailand; Timor-Leste and Viet Nam), expressed support for the Movement Statement. In South-East Asia, millions of people were on the move for different reasons, including finding work and finding better opportunities. Migrant workers faced humanitarian challenges and other dangers, including those in irregular situations or who were undocumented and who could not access basic services such as health care, education, shelter and housing. The Red Cross and Red Crescent provided such services to both regular and irregular migrants, especially in emergency situations. More must be done to reduce the vulnerability of migrants and to improve their fate.

The National Societies of South-East Asia had taken ever-greater measures to respond to humanitarian concerns relating to labour migration, including working alongside National Societies in Europe and the Middle East. National Societies had different capabilities and needed to strengthen their capacities in order to respond to those in vulnerable situations. The region had taken a number of initiatives to assist migrant workers and their families, including through restoring family links and providing advice for those living with HIV/AIDS. The National Societies of South-East Asia were ready to work with other National Societies to ensure that all migrants could have dignified, safe and healthy lives.

**Mr Condé** (Red Cross Society of Guinea) thanked those involved in drafting the resolution, which addressed the problem of restoring dignity to migrants. Migration was currently causing trans-border crises that had never been seen before. National Societies could incorporate the draft resolution into their own strategic plans and trans-border programmes. Migration did not affect one country or one National Society but required the cooperation of many to assist those involved: in that regard, the Red Cross Society of Guinea thanked the Danish Red Cross and the Italian Red Cross for their support. While endorsing the draft resolution, he proposed to add a new paragraph: “encourages the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration” as that would assist National Societies in having a sustainable and effective impact.

**Dr Tastanova** (Kazakh Red Crescent, speaking also on behalf of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan), expressed full support for the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity, which served as a reminder that the challenge of migration could not be solved by any one State or National Society but would require a joint effort by all stakeholders. Migration was a diverse issue with diverse economic, social and political causes and it required advocacy at a global level in international forums and with respective Governments.

**Mr Bedoya Araúz** (Red Cross Society of Panama) said that the Red Cross Society of Panama was becoming increasingly concerned about the number of families that had been separated as a result of migration. It was important to work with neighbouring countries and other continents where people were taking dangerous migratory routes. Despite the introduction of policies and rules on migration, people who migrated were not necessarily any more secure and more effective measures were necessary to support vulnerable people at the start of the migratory trail. The ability of National Societies to respond within legal frameworks and with action in the field must be improved and undertaken in full compliance with their auxiliary role. The Red Cross Society of Panama fully supported the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity.

**Ms Penz** (German Red Cross) said that migration was one of the biggest challenges faced by the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The Movement had been active and effective in improving its capacity to support migrants and

to reduce vulnerability and trust had been built in the Red Cross and Red Crescent both among the people they served and in the auxiliary role of National Societies. The Red Cross and Red Crescent had responded in emergency situations and with the mobilization of volunteers. New tools have been used and new fields of engagement, such as community sponsorship programmes, were being explored. Cooperation within the Movement in the field of migration was stronger than ever before: she thanked the IFRC and the ICRC for their commitment and National Societies for working together with the German Red Cross to support migrants worldwide. Migration was, by its very nature, a cross-border issue that could only be solved by working together, however, migration was a challenging field in which the need for humanitarian services changed constantly: vulnerabilities and resources changed every year and programmes and services must be adaptable as a consequence.

The experience of the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement made them better able to provide services to migrants than many other actors. Part of the Movement's efforts must include continuing dialogue with States with an understanding of both the Fundamental Principles and the mandate of the Movement as well as the fostering of mutual trust in order to preserve the humanitarian space and access to vulnerable migrants. The Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity was a valuable tool that would enable dialogue to continue in the international sphere. States must be reminded of their existing responsibilities and commitments and the Red Cross and Red Crescent must reaffirm its commitment to support States to ensure that the humanitarian needs were met in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

**Ms Brown** (British Red Cross) said that the British Red Cross supported the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity. Like many previous speakers, the British Red Cross was concerned about the immense suffering experienced by people on the move and believed that the Red Cross and Red Crescent should respond to all vulnerabilities, regardless of status. The British Red Cross was the largest single service provider to refugees and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom. Combining its experience at home with that of colleagues across the Movement gave the National Society the opportunity to understand challenges across full migratory routes and to contribute to a collective response. Large-scale movements of migrants and refugees presented challenges for policy makers, but safe and dignified solutions were possible if the Red Cross and Red Crescent worked collectively with States such as through the two Global Compacts. Work to ensure that the Global Compacts were strong and effective tools that would lead to meaningful change was a priority for the British Red Cross. The National Society also recognized the contributions of refugees and migrants as well as the importance of including them in policy discussions.

**Ms Koursoumba** (Cyprus Red Cross Society) welcomed and fully supported the draft resolution on "Adopting a Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity". Migration was an issue of great importance to the Movement, but its management posed a significant challenge for State authorities and for National Societies in affected countries. Cyprus was strongly affected by the increasing migratory flows in its region and the National Society carried out a number of programmes as an auxiliary to its Government to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of migrants arriving in the country. The Cyprus Red Cross Society was the first responder for newly arrived migrants, providing humanitarian assistance, RFL information and psychological support. The National Society also provided programmes for asylum seekers as well as for migrants awaiting deportation. The Cyprus Red Cross Society was one of seven European Union National Societies that had implemented the ESIRAS EU-funded project for the employability and social integration of refugees and asylum seekers, which had been successfully coordinated by the Spanish Red Cross. Grateful thanks were given to sister National Societies that had supported the Cyprus Red Cross Society. The National Society had carried out its mandate in collaboration with the State authorities in a climate of mutual trust and within a frank and constructive dialogue. She called upon the Movement to support National Societies that were disproportionately affected by migratory flows.

**Dr Chabbou** (Tunisian Red Crescent) said that the draft resolution expressed support for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, with the aim of protecting human dignity. The Tunisian Red Crescent had been protecting migrants and refugees, with the ICRC, since the 1950s. There was an increasing number of associations and actors within States proposing services to migrants that were not complementary to those provided by the National Societies and indeed that interfered with those supplied by the Red Cross and Red Crescent in what could be termed unfair competition. The humanitarian field was not exclusive to the Red Cross and Red Crescent, but components of the Movement should be able to carry out their role fully and they should not be supplanted by actors who did not subscribe to the same Fundamental Principles, and who might not have the best interests of migrants at heart. It was important that migrants should benefit from the full range of services offered by the Red Cross and Red Crescent and that



they should be protected by its humanitarian values. It was the duty of the Movement to draw the attention of States and of the United Nations to activities that fell short of providing appropriate assistance to migrants.

**H.E. Mr Bebars** (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) welcomed the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity. The Egyptian Red Crescent had adopted a migration policy that dealt with the humanitarian considerations of the most vulnerable migrants through different projects, such as access to health and social services; restoring family links; support for migrants' rights and dignity; and promoting integration and social exchange between migrants and host communities. The Egyptian Red Crescent Society was providing health and social services to migrants coming to Egypt from the Middle East and Africa and it was committed to continuing cooperation with its Movement partners.

**Ms Garcia Roca** (Peruvian Red Cross) said that there were unprecedented numbers of migrants in Peru, including one million migrants from Venezuela. Migrants were forced to leave their countries because of situations of hunger and violence and without knowing whether they would be welcomed in host countries. The IFRC and sister National Societies were supporting the Peruvian Red Cross in providing assistance to migrants, but further action was needed in communicating with Governments in order to ensure that laws were in place to protect migrants. Coordination with other humanitarian actors in the field could also prove beneficial. The Peruvian Red Cross also required help to provide for the long-term needs of migrants, to improve their lives and to respond to the xenophobia caused by the significant increase in the numbers of people travelling from other countries.

**The Chair** drew attention to the amendment proposed by the Red Cross Society of Guinea to add an additional paragraph 3: "encourages the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration".

A representative of the **Australian Red Cross**, while approving the amendment, requested that a reference be made to "best practice in the protection of personal information and data protection" as follows: "encourages the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration in line with best practice and international standards in the protection of personal information and data protection as outlined in the resolution on Restoring Family Links".

**The draft resolution, as amended, contained in document CD/19/12DR entitled "Adopting a Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity" was adopted. (Resolution 8, CD/19/R8)**

*Ms Gadiant, Vice Chair of the Council of Delegates, oversaw the following discussion:*

## **Item 7: Movement coordination and cooperation**

### **7.1 Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures**

**The Vice-Chair** outlined that the global humanitarian and development environment was experiencing rapid change and the power of coordination and collaboration among member National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC was needed more than ever. In order for the Movement to maintain a competitive edge, to be the preferred partner to States and to leverage its own networks and capacities, more internal cohesion was required.

The first sub-item concerned the Movement's normative framework: the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures. The Seville Agreement, which governed the coordination of the international activities of the Movement's components, had been adopted in 1997. The Supplementary Measures had been adopted in 2005, to clarify and improve the implementation of the Seville Agreement. This item provided an update on a process that IFRC and ICRC, respectively decided upon in relation to the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures and was for information only.

**Mr Rocca** (IFRC) said that the latest discussion of the IFRC Governing Board on the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures had resulted in a unanimous Board decision to undertake a review. The Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures represented a regulatory framework on how the Movement was to work together in major international operations. Since the adoption of the Seville Agreement some 22 years previously, the humanitarian landscape had changed significantly. The Agreement primarily regulated the role of the ICRC and the IFRC and did not concentrate on the role of National Societies. It could be argued that the role of National Societies was governed by the Supplementary Measures however, since they were supplementary, they were not part of the general framework. At the World Humanitarian Summit, the ICRC and the IFRC had jointly and strongly advocated for the localization agenda, which was primarily driven by National Societies.

In 1997, the localization agenda had not been part of the discussions or part of the wider humanitarian landscape. On that basis alone, a revision of the Seville Agreement would be justified without questioning the statutory mandates of each of the Movement's components. The external environment continued to increase in complexity and, more frequently, Red Cross and Red Crescent activities took place in countries where there were conflict and non-conflict areas, crises were more protracted and many more actors were involved in the humanitarian response, including the private sector, the military, faith-based organizations and the media. Most importantly, National Societies had become stronger and were ready to take a more central role in responding to disasters and crises. Through their volunteers, National Societies were the local actors *par excellence*. In many complex crises, they were the only ones able to gain access to - and the trust of - their local communities. Other changes included increasingly complex interactions among all Movement components, external demands for effective coordination, calls for transparency and accountability, and the need to avoid duplication and competition to ensure that the Movement remained a key player in an increasingly competitive environment.

How could discussions take place in the Statutory Meetings on the theme of trust without considering how the Movement components could work better together from a strategic perspective in order to optimize delivery at the forefront? How could the Movement speak with one collective voice instead of with fragmented voices? For the people they served, for the public, for the media and for donors, there was only one Red Cross and Red Crescent. Some years previously, the Movement had begun discussions on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) which had resulted in a resolution adopted at the 2015 Council of Delegates, which tasked the Movement with increasing coordination and collaboration in large-scale disasters, collecting feedback on the implementation of the regulatory framework, while at the same time taking a pragmatic approach to implementation that was specific to the country context. There had been considerable progress in the SMCC process and it would continue to improve. However, serious and underlying challenges remained and the issue of roles and responsibilities was not addressed in the SMCC: it was a strategic issue that sat within the Seville Agreement.

There needed to be an honest discussion and clarifications made in several areas of the Seville Agreement, such as the use of outdated language, confusing roles and responsibilities, access issues, resource mobilization, communication and representation. The concepts of Lead Role and Lead Agency also needed to be reviewed to reflect evolving country contexts and the increasing capacities of National Societies. The National Societies needed to be at the core of any agreement: in too many situations in the past, millions of Swiss francs had been invested in a country but the National Society had been left weaker at the end of the operation than before it had begun. In international appeals, both the IFRC and the ICRC should work hand-in-hand with National Societies. The ICRC and the IFRC must listen to the ideas of National Societies and to their analyses on needs. There was a shared responsibility to strengthen National Societies before and during operations. IFRC Governing Board members had unanimously decided to appoint an advisory group to review the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures. The advisory group would submit its findings to the Governing Board at the end of 2020 for a decision on whether to request the Council of Delegates to undertake a review of the instruments. Following the results of the review, the IFRC would request the Standing Commission to offer its good services to facilitate dialogue between the IFRC and the ICRC. The opportunity to revise the Seville Agreement could lead to a modern, future-ready road map that would enable the components of the Movement to work together more effectively.

**Mr Carbonnier** (ICRC) said that all were acutely aware of the many structural and external challenges faced by the Movement. Many of the challenges were recognized in the IFRC Strategy 2030 as well as in the current institutional strategy for the ICRC. Overcoming the challenges required the best possible cooperation, coordination and complementarity between all components of the Movement, based on trust. Achieving that aim required looking at what held the Movement back both operationally and in terms of its policy framework. It would also require deep cultural change and a mindset shift as many in the Movement had already expressed. The ICRC took note of the IFRC Governing Board's decision to appoint an internal advisory group to review the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures in 2020. The ICRC trusted that the initiative would build on the field-based and operational evidence as well as problem analysis. Given its broader Movement dimension, the ICRC would be very happy to contribute to the analysis as and when appropriate, and to join eventual discussions on possible next steps. At the same time, the ICRC was willing to engage with National Societies and the IFRC in a collaborative process that was open to all with the aim of giving new impetus to pragmatic, constructive and inclusive discussions – a process that built on and learned from good operational practices and actual challenges. The process would aim to compliment and not to duplicate the IFRC's review. It would give an idea of the issues that were



holding back the Movement and include a discussion on the Movement's normative framework in light of its implementation - but not limited to that. It was hoped that, out of the discussions, practical solutions and innovative ideas would emerge on how to move ahead. It would help to build a Movement that was fit for facing the challenges of the future in a very fast changing world. Much hard work had already been done in the past on strengthening Movement coordination and cooperation and the SMCC process had given rise to constructive dialogue and pragmatic approaches to operational efficiency and impact, with National Societies at the centre. Valuable lessons could be learned from the practical experiences that had already taken place as well as from the renewed dialogue between the governing bodies of the IFRC and the ICRC. The two bodies would be able to compare notes and take stock of complementary processes, as soon as relevant and appropriate. Key findings could then be discussed at the Standing Commission later in 2020 and the matter could be brought to the Council of Delegates in 2021, as suggested by the President of the IFRC.

**Dr Al-Hadid** (Jordan National Red Crescent Society) supported the statement by the President of the IFRC. The Seville Agreement had been respected by the Jordan National Red Crescent Society since it had been signed in 1997, but circumstances had changed, operating methods were changing and the Movement was facing new challenges. As he had remarked at the Council of Delegates in 2005, the Seville Agreement was perceived by National Societies as an agreement between the two Geneva-based institutions and it did not recognize the prominent role and sovereignty of National Societies. He hoped that the advisory group would not propose a second set of Supplementary Measures, but rather that it would re-open the Seville Agreement and try to readjust it. It was important to face problems in the Movement and, where there was disagreement, there was a need to listen to and discuss the views of National Societies.

**Mr Rafalowski** (Magen David Adom in Israel) said that Magen David Adom in Israel had been involved in an SMCC project as part of contingency planning for a major earthquake and it had been grateful for the support it had received from the ICRC, the IFRC and Partner National Societies. Preparing for a major earthquake and meeting the huge humanitarian needs in the prevailing political and security environment was more complicated than had originally been anticipated. The exercise had shown that the organizational structures in the Movement did not facilitate humanitarian assistance in some cases: it was not easy for the ICRC and the IFRC to work with one response as they were individual organizations and further alignment of procedures, such as logistics procedures, or the templates and tools used, would be necessary. Although they had different mandates, it would be easier for the National Society concerned if both organizations could operate with the same template on the ground.

**Mr Mader** (Swiss Red Cross) said that the Seville Agreement had worked well in the past and it still gave the lines for broader cooperation within the Movement. Rules and regulations were needed on the one hand, while on the other hand, there was a need to build trust and to work closely together, discussing each case and intervention within the Movement and with all of the actors. Contrary to the views of some, the Swiss Red Cross believed that the best-placed actor was usually the National Society, in keeping with the localization agenda to which previous speakers had referred. The Swiss Red Cross did not believe that there was a need to review the Seville Agreement: in case the review went ahead, it should be on the basis of a common and collaborative process between the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies.

**Mr Al Enizi** (Kuwait Red Crescent Society) expressed full agreement with the remarks made on behalf of the Jordan Red Crescent. The Kuwait Red Crescent Society believed that the National Society should take the lead on the ground, in situations of armed conflict and in natural disasters. The views of National Societies should be taken into account when the Seville Agreement was reviewed.

**Mr Mirzayev** (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that some progress had been made in recent years in strengthening Movement cooperation and coordination, nevertheless more emphasis should be placed on the domestic setting when assembling efforts and resources in a national context, whether during armed conflict or natural disasters. National resources were often limited and while tribute should be paid to the work of volunteers, they often needed more active support and more investment in their capacity in order to improve outcomes. Regional and country offices played a valuable role in supporting National Societies, but their work could be improved through enhanced cooperation. Any review of the Seville Agreement should take place in a joint effort and with the proper engagement of all of the components of the Movement. The Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan was ready to contribute to the further development of any mechanisms that focused on strengthening coordination and cooperation within the Movement.

**Mr Yao** (Red Cross Society of China) said that, in order to cope with ever-changing vulnerabilities and in order to meet ever-increasing humanitarian needs, all components of the Movement would need to act

in a unified, coordinated manner. Since the adoption of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures in 1997 and 2005, and the adoption of the resolution on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation in 2017, the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies had continued to make progress in coordination and cooperation. Adopting a resolution on Movement coordination and cooperation was necessary, but it was only one side of the coin: any theory or policy needed to be tested through a large amount of bottom up practices. Each country had its own conditions and the components of the Movement needed to continuously cooperate and complement each other when responding to a particular situation. The IFRC and the ICRC representative offices in China supported each other in order to develop their respective strengths and cooperate smoothly; they had also established a tripartite regular consultation mechanism with the Red Cross Society of China at leadership, management and working levels, through which they had continuously deepened mutual understanding, integrated resources and drawn upon each other's strengths in order to achieve positive results. All of the work carried out through cooperation in China had been welcomed and recognized by the beneficiaries and the relevant sectors. The IFRC and the ICRC had made positive progress in strengthening coordination at the headquarters level, which was a top-down approach. As a National Society, the Red Cross Society of China would continue to maintain close cooperation with the representative offices of the ICRC and the IFRC in China and explore and practice through a bottom up approach and make efforts for the Movement to achieve coordination and more influential humanitarian contributions.

**Mr Kettaneh** (Lebanese Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society), agreed that it was appropriate to review the Seville Agreement, which had been approved 22 years previously. The review should be constructive in supporting and strengthening the Movement and it should examine the role of the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies so that they fulfilled their roles in a coordinated and cooperative way. National Societies should be accepted in the field and cooperation should be strengthened in order to enable them to play their role. The Lebanese Red Cross worked continuously with the IFRC, the ICRC and the 21 National Societies present in Lebanon. Capacities must be strengthened, and the components of the Movement must learn from their experiences in order to build a constructive and shared vision and to act in a complementary rather than a competitive way.

**Mr Villarroel** (Venezuelan Red Cross) said that the Seville Agreement was a document that set standards to improve relations between the components of the Movement and, in particular, between the IFRC and the ICRC. The Agreement was intended to improve the quality of the humanitarian framework and the preamble highlighted the importance of the spirit of cooperation based on mutual trust. However, National Societies had not uniformly benefited from the Agreement and they had sometimes found that their place in humanitarian operations was not acknowledged either by the ICRC or by the IFRC. National Societies had become stronger since the adoption of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures, but the ICRC and the IFRC had gradually abandoned the implementation of a cooperation policy which had been so important for all of the Movement. It was saddening to respond to humanitarian crises while at the same time finding that there was an institutional crisis in which there had been a failure to respect the role of the National Society and in which there had been competition against the National Society, which in some cases had compromised the physical integrity of the National Society's volunteers. No effective measures had been taken to address specific situations. In some situations in Venezuela, the principles of Impartiality and Humanity had been violated and almost all of the rules and standards of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures had been ignored. The Venezuelan Red Cross was committed to promoting space for dialogue and cooperation within the terms of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures in order to improve implementation, follow up and monitoring. The Movement had the capacity to resolve problems through dialogue and it had the capacity to evaluate the state of play and the way that the Agreement was implemented. It would be possible to learn from the forthcoming review. He requested that all National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC should treat the review as an opportunity for improvement.

**Mr González** (Red Cross Society of Panama) expressed commitment to dealing with the differences that existed between the components of the Movement with regard to humanitarian tasks. The Movement must combine its strengths to work in a united way. It was heartening to see the warmth expressed between the Presidents of the ICRC and the IFRC at the outset of the Council of Delegates since it indicated that the work of all of the components of the Movement would be strengthened in order to assist the most vulnerable. The IFRC had a regional office in Panama and the ICRC also had a presence in the country. Based on mutual respect and on the roles to be played in specific areas, the relationship nurtured through joint meetings and with a clear road map would strengthen the development of the Red Cross Society of

Panama and its ability to carry out its auxiliary role. The Red Cross Society of Panama had advocated for a review of the Agreement so that the Movement could work collectively in a coherent manner, as set out in the draft resolution.

**Ms Wahlström** (Swedish Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Danish Red Cross), welcomed the inclusion of the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures on the agenda as the issue was critical to the Movement. The degree of unity in all of the discussions that had taken place thus far was impressive and it was hoped that the review of the Seville Agreement would be conducted in the same spirit. Many important decisions had already been adopted at the IFRC General Assembly that were significant for the future of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and that were the foundation stones for an effective, trusted, localized, united, independent and neutral humanitarian actor. However, how the Movement would make better use of its combined capacity and build it was one of the most important building blocks and it would provide a new vision. If the Movement did not tackle the matter, it would continue to underperform in spite of its great capacity. The Seville Agreement was a child of its time but there had been changes in the environments in which they operated, both in terms of the nature of crises and, above all, in the nature of the National Societies. National Societies were different and many of them were much stronger and had different relationships with their Governments than in the past. A review should examine what the Seville Agreement should look like in the 21st century when components of the Movement had confidence in each other and were able to make binding commitments to important humanitarian outcomes. Progress had already been made in the SMCC process in which wisdom and practical efforts had shown that operational models could be developed. All should be encouraged to undertake the challenge of a joint review process and not two parallel processes. The components of the Movement should demonstrate that they had trust in each other and find simple solutions to how they operated, make full use of their strengths and minimize weaknesses. It was hoped that the Presidents of the Standing Commission, the ICRC and the IFRC would lead the process together, making full use of the insights and experience of National Societies in a review that was rational, transparent, impartial and efficient.

**Hon. Croufer** (Belgian Red Cross) said that his National Society always welcomed proposals to improve the collective effectiveness of the Movement. It would be essential for the two review processes undertaken by the IFRC and the ICRC to be coordinated. The reviews must be more inclusive since National Societies were key to them and must be closely consulted. There was one sole aim for the processes and that was to improve operational coordination within the Movement. And the sole aim of coordination was to save lives: an aim that required the use of all available capacities and the most relevant expertise wherever it was to be found in the Movement. National Societies must inform their national authorities as to the progress of the review process since their humanitarian mandate was received from their States and they had a duty to keep States informed as to their working methods.

**Ms Bilous** (Ukrainian Red Cross Society) said that, for many years, the Movement had recognized that it needed greater coordination and cooperation in order to succeed in improving service delivery while reducing costs. Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation was essentially about strengthening the spirit of the relationship within one family. Only better relationships between the components of the Movement would generate better performance from local to national level. The power of the Movement and its effectiveness lay in the way it would inspire, persuade and earn the confidence of stakeholders by showing a unified Movement approach. The Ukrainian Red Crescent supported the resolution and the proposal to improve communication and collaboration. The Movement collaborated well in Ukraine. All must be focused on how to improve dialogue within the Movement, consolidating Movement influence within the humanitarian sphere and effectively coordinating work through communication that was frequent, timely, accurate and problem-solving, supported by relationships of shared goals, shared knowledge and mutual respect.

**Mr Senghore** (Gambia Red Cross Society) welcomed the review process, which was aimed at ensuring effectiveness and efficiency in the work of the Movement. The Gambia Red Cross Society looked forward to an outcome that would further emphasize the complementarity rules in delivering humanitarian services. Above all, it was important to strengthen National Societies and to empower them. There were situations in which National Societies had become weaker as a result of Red Cross and Red Crescent operations. He sought clarification concerning the wording in paragraph 1f. of the draft resolution set out in document CD/19/7.2DR which read: "better integration of National Societies at both the strategic and operational level is vital, as is securing stronger investment from all Movement components" since he believed that National Societies formed part of the Movement components.

**The Vice-Chair** said that the question concerning the draft resolution set out in document CD/19/7.2DR would be dealt with under agenda item 7.2 since it concerned SMCC.

**Ms Folgar Bonilla** (Guatemalan Red Cross) said that she understood that the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures gave a lead role to National Societies with the ICRC and the IFRC having separate mandates. She was unsure that certain activities carried out by the ICRC in Venezuela fell within its mandate; she did not want similar activities to occur in Guatemala. For the time being, all should respect the terms of the Seville Agreement and respect the National Societies until the review had taken place.

**Mr Gouaye** (Central African Red Cross Society) said that the question of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures would determine the future of the Movement and the solution could be found in two remarks made by the President of the IFRC and the Vice-President of the ICRC. The President of the IFRC had underlined the central role of National Societies and all of the National Society representatives that had spoken had agreed with that view. The Vice-President of the ICRC had spoken of the need for a mind shift. It was indeed necessary for a change in mindset and National Societies must be placed at the centre of all action by the Movement. He had no complaint to make with respect to the Central African Red Cross Society since there was good cooperation between the ICRC, the IFRC and the National Society in Central African Republic. The Central African Red Cross Society had made clear to the ICRC and the IFRC that it was the National Society that took the central role in carrying out activities to support the most vulnerable with strategic assistance from the IFRC and the ICRC.

**Mr Apeland** (Norwegian Red Cross) lent his National Society's voice to those who had advocated for one inclusive statutory review process, the outcomes of which would be presented at the Council of Delegates in 2021. For the process to be truly inclusive it must not be solely for the Geneva-based institutions but it must include the voices, the concerns and the insights of National Societies. There must be consideration not only of the normative framework but also an honest discussion on how to establish a truly collaborative culture within the Movement. No individual component had responsibility for the complexity of the structure of the Movement but everyone had responsibility for making the most of the imperfect structure that the Movement had inherited. He encouraged the IFRC and the ICRC to establish one inclusive process in preparation for the statutory meetings of 2021.

**Ms Slatyer** (Australian Red Cross) said that the present discussions went to the heart of how the Red Cross and Red Crescent delivered greater humanitarian impact. The Australian Red Cross respected that both the ICRC and the IFRC needed time to reflect on the discussions but requested that President Rocca and President Maurer should lead the Red Cross and Red Crescent in one inclusive review process. The process could perhaps be facilitated by the incoming Secretary General of the IFRC and the new Director-General of the ICRC, working with a genuinely representative group of National Society Secretaries-General and accountable to the governance of both the IFRC and the ICRC. The process would need to be legitimate, representative, amplify the voice and experience of National Societies, and, most of all, it would need to be constructive. The Movement was stronger together: she requested that all should move forward in order to best serve those in need and to find courageous solutions.

**Mr Löövi** (Finnish Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Icelandic Red Cross), said that the discussions on the SMCC and the Seville Agreement were moving in the right direction. The role of the Movement was to support people and its success thus far had been due to good, well-structured coordination, which could guarantee that aid to people was efficient and well-targeted. In the same spirit as the Swedish Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross and Icelandic Red Cross were supportive of inclusive discussion on how to develop working mechanisms so that the Movement was even more effective in its support to people. Emphasis should be on the National Society role as a national coordinator and interlocutor between the public authorities in a given country and the role and responsibility of the IFRC and the ICRC in the provision of international coordination and support.

**Mr Kende** (Nigerian Red Cross Society) believed that the review of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures was intended to strengthen collaboration and cooperation within the Movement, to avoid internal competition and duplication of resources and energy, and to enhance the trust and confidence of beneficiaries and benefactors. The Nigerian Red Cross Society supported the views expressed by the National Societies of China, Norway and Sweden.

**Dr Mondlhane** (Mozambique Red Cross Society) said that the Mozambique Red Cross Society received ongoing support from the National Societies of Belgium, Germany and Spain. Following Cyclone Idai, some 30 National Societies had arrived in Mozambique, but the experience had been positive since clear guidelines

had been set for coordination of the operation. New technology had been used, including data collected by drones in flooded areas that were inaccessible. The National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC had engaged in teamwork and information was provided to the Government as the key player and the sole entity authorised to broadcast the data. As a result of the cyclone, a country delegation had been established by the IFRC. The ICRC had carried out activities in Mozambique since 2017, but following Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, the ICRC had operated as a Movement partner and he appealed to the ICRC to maintain its presence, as the country was still volatile. The National Society had benefited from the support it had received and it becomes more visible.

**Mr Combe** (French Red Cross) said that it was heartening to see that all shared the same analysis of the problem and the same willingness to progress. The French Red Cross agreed with previous speakers that the Movement should and could improve cooperation and make greater efforts to establish cooperation that was more agile, more inclusive and that did not leave anyone out. The sole purpose of any reflection must be to improve effectiveness on the ground and to seek the views of the staff and volunteers working in the field who understood the needs of the most vulnerable. It was the needs of the most vulnerable that should, in the first place, guide the action of the Movement rather than the mandates of each institution. Only when that reflection had taken place, could the Movement begin to evaluate its cooperation more generally. Although the French Red Cross did not favour the review of the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures, it would nevertheless participate in the review in order to make known its experience, vision and proposals in an approach that was inclusive and well ordered. However, the review would only have a successful outcome if the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies worked together and not in parallel processes, which would only lead to opposition and frustration. Differences should be set aside; they should be cultivated and used to enrich the Movement. The Red Cross and Red Crescent must show the international community the true nature of its spirit and origins and keep in mind the beneficiaries to whom it must provide exemplary and efficient help.

**The Vice-Chair** said that there was no proposed resolution on the agenda item. She thanked the President of the IFRC and the Vice-President of the ICRC for their statements and National Societies for their commitment to the common cause of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. All of the input from delegates would be considered in the process and brought forward to the Council of Delegates in 2021.

*Mr. Maurer, Chair of the Council of Delegates oversaw the following discussion:*

## **7.2 Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0)** (documents CD/19/7.2 and CD/19/7.2DR)

**The Chair** said that the Council of Delegates had worked on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation since 2013. The issue had been followed intently by those within the Movement, by donors and the wider international community.

**Mr Chapagain**, (IFRC) commenced the introduction on the draft resolution on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation and explained that it had been prepared after extensive consultation with National Societies. He recalled a quote he had read: “if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together”. The SMCC had been a process that aimed to go far; in the past, there had sometimes been pressure to go fast and to go alone, thereby putting pressure on coordination and on the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. There had been progress since 2013 and, in the previous two years, a focus on changing the mindset of colleagues by strengthening cooperation tools; investing heavily in interoperability of the system, such as in logistics and security; in short deployments. Sincere attempts had been made to coordinate resource mobilization, with some mixed results, which had been shared in the independent evaluation. There had been interesting experiences and collaboration in Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Bahamas, South Sudan, Pakistan, Bolivia and Chile. There had been successful operations with coordination with the components of the Movement working well together. There had been challenges since the systems were very different and there was still some work to be done on mind set issues. A lot of emphasis had been placed on the two components of the Movement: the ICRC and the IFRC; but the membership as a whole needed to work more closely together.

**Mr Staehelin** (ICRC) continued the introductory remarks and explained that while listening to contributions during the debate on the Seville Agreement, it had not always been clear whether delegates were raising questions about the *implementation* of the normative framework or whether they were questioning the framework itself. It would be necessary to get to the bottom of that issue before moving forward. The process of SMCC had been viewed from the operational level, looking at what was holding back operations on the ground, since what was needed was actions and deeds. He agreed with Mr Chapagain that changings

mindsets was an issue: experience in Ukraine had shown that teams could come together and find pragmatic solutions rather than being paralysed by the Movement politics. He hoped that the Movement could move forward in that spirit. The issue of scale would be examined in the next part of the journey; including the ability to do more and to push each other to do more while looking at the challenges. The next speaker, Ms Harfield, would speak on behalf of a joint team of National Societies, IFRC and ICRC colleagues, which illustrated the value of joint effort and how the Movement could move forward together.

**Ms Harfield** (IFRC), illustrating her remarks with slides, said that the Movement worked better together when it coordinated its work in an inclusive and predictable way: that approach had been called SMCC 2.0, as set out in the draft resolution. Aiming for efficient and complimentary service provision to maximize the potential of the Movement and to optimize collective response capabilities, the draft resolution presented several priority areas which had been grouped in concentric circles. In the outer circle the priority reflected the need to change mindsets and build capacities to respond to emergencies. There were several discrete work streams under the heading, including SMCC training: tools to foster greater awareness of SMCC and its benefits and to build a mindset among staff and volunteers that was open and responsive to Movement coordination. The approach included the deployment of trained Movement Coordination Officers in the first days after an emergency occurred. It was also important to better understand and utilize the capacities of different Movement components to contribute to a response. It was proposed to have a work stream that promoted complimentary domestic and international responses that reinforced the capacity of the National Society in the affected country and strengthened its operational impact and long-term sustainability. The second foundational element involved reinforcing the positioning of the Movement in the humanitarian environment: one proposed work stream tackled complementarity by considering how to optimize the usage of the Movement's respective functions and the responsibilities conferred by States or by the Movement itself. It also encompassed proposed work to increase funding for the Movement's operations through smart collection of data, building coherent communications and presenting well-coordinated appeals.

The middle circle, on alignment of systems, concerned work on the interoperability of systems and procedures in the areas of logistics, security and surge systems and transferring those benefits to build contacts for greater humanitarian impact. Areas where greater systems alignment would be beneficial would also be considered. The Movement must also enhance its collective ability to be first domestic and international responders to emergencies and to timely and adequately scale the Movement's response, thereby reinforcing the ambition of the Movement as a key global responder.

**Mr Adamson** (British Red Cross) said that the present agenda item related to the previous item on the Seville Agreement and the context in which all components of the Movement worked better together. The British Red Cross welcomed SMCC 2.0 and celebrated the practical progress that had been made. Movement collaboration was one of the greatest opportunities, one of the greatest challenges and one of the greatest obligations. It was a challenge because collaboration came at a cost that the Movement was not always willing to pay in terms of profile, time, levels of autonomy and levels of financial control. Different components of the Movement did not always enter the collaboration space on an equal footing. The priorities of institutional donors placed some components of the Movement in a powerful position compared to others. Economic strength placed some National Societies in powerful positions relative to others. Collaboration would require that those holding the power, and the associated diplomatic and operational space, had the courage and the humility to share it when it was for a greater good. It would also require those without the power to earn the trust to hold the resources raised by others. Humanitarian crises were bigger than any one component of the Movement but, as the largest humanitarian network in the world, if all worked toward a truly collaborative approach. It was the responsibility of all to ensure that processes such as SMCC were more than just words, but also practical action. Like earlier speakers, he believed that the consultation processes announced by the IFRC and the ICRC concerning the Seville Agreement should, at the very least, be connected and learnt from during 2020 so that the two processes had become connected by the end of 2020. The British Red Cross hoped that, during 2020, SMCC 2.0 would provide a platform for Movement-wide collaborative efforts to respond to the greatest humanitarian threats of the time. The British Red Cross committed itself to that imperative.

**Ms Khorrambagheri** (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed and fully supported the SMCC process. However, despite efforts made by the whole Movement, more dialogue and further measures would be required, especially on the ground, in order to achieve more success. Therefore, as set out in the resolution, it was vital that the Steering Group should monitor the process. It would also be important for the Steering Group to share their best practice with all components of the Movement in order to facilitate and encourage the components to follow the SMCC in line with their duties and responsibilities.

**Mr Lobor** (South Sudan Red Cross) said that South Sudan was one of the countries in which the process of SMCC had been tried and it had been found to be enriching. For the SMCC process to succeed, the leaders of the institutions that were on the ground (the Host National Society, the IFRC and the ICRC) must have a positive mindset to provide the necessary leadership to move forward. There must also be willingness among all the parties involved to cooperate and collaborate for a common purpose in the interests of the beneficiaries. The Host National Society must ensure that all of its branches, units, volunteers and governance were brought on board to support the SMCC process. SMCC must also enable the actors on the ground to maximize the limited available resources for the communities that they served.

The purpose of SMCC was for the Movement to be able to speak with one voice, particularly in fragile environments. It would also help the Movement to increase its footprint, enriching as many beneficiaries as possible. SMCC benefited not only the Host National Society but of the entire Movement. Based on its own experience, the South Sudan Red Cross urged National Societies to adopt the draft resolution.

**Mr Senghore** (Gambia Red Cross Society), responding to a question from the Chair on whether he would take the floor on a query he had expressed earlier regarding the resolution, said that he would only need a clarification and that he could follow up with the drafting team after the meeting.

**The draft resolution contained in document CD/19/7.2DR entitled “Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0)” was adopted. (Resolution 9, CD/19/R9)**

## Other topics for decision

### **Item 13: 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**

*(document CD/19/13DR)*

**Mr Tickner** (Independent Monitor of the MoU between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society), introduced his report (document CD/19/13), which he believed was a balanced and reflective document. He held the passionate conviction that despite the very challenging political and external environment, the MoU could be fully implemented by the parties in the coming years. That outcome would be a great achievement for the National Societies and would allow them both to move forward in maximizing the engagement of each of them in the Movement. There was much collaborative humanitarian work to undertake in the region and failure to resolve the geographic scope issues was, as the report made clear, impeding the Movement’s capacity to collaborate in adequately preparing for a potential earthquake which was one of the major natural disaster threats to the region. The resolution on the outstanding MoU was fundamentally about honouring the principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the terms of the MoU, which had been freely entered into by the National Societies in order to lay the ground for their joint admission to the Movement, and witnessed by the relevant Government representatives.

As was his responsibility, he had factually reported that in relation to the geographic scope provisions, there had as yet been no concrete action to implement the MoU. Sadly, the region had witnessed countless similar moments of disappointment. However, he truly believed that the humanitarian objective could prevail and that the Fundamental Principles of the Movement could be respected. At the 32nd International Conference in 2015, the State of Israel had been called upon to continue to support the MDA to ensure the full implementation of its commitments under the MoU. In furtherance of that call, made by components of the Movement and States Parties, he had engaged in ongoing dialogue with the Israeli Government representatives and urged them to give the support to MDA which had been sought by the International Conference.

To its credit, following an intensive internal Government process, authorities in Israel had written an important letter of commitment in September 2017. The Movement was entitled to place the great reliance on the letter by the Government of Israel to the effect that Israeli ambulances operating on the West Bank and in territory considered to be within the geographic scope of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, would no longer bear the logo of the MDA. A time frame had been given for implementation of that commitment. The MDA had sought a clear commitment from its Government to progress with the necessary steps to implement the geographical scope provisions. The MDA had given him their word that, if the direction was issued by their authorities, then they would fully implement the necessary changes in line with past commitments. The request by the MDA for a Government direction had been strongly supported by the IFRC and the ICRC and by himself as the Independent Monitor. He had reminded the parties in his report of the full set of requirements (as set out at the bottom

of page 5 and top of page 6 of the English version) of the requirements if the geographical scope provisions were to be fully implemented. He wished to highlight the need of the parties to fulfil their commitments towards meeting together to address the current operational and future humanitarian challenges. His views were articulated clearly in the report. He appealed to the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies to fully and intensively engage with both National Societies in order to maximize the opportunities for participation of both within the International Movement and for their support for the MoU at a critical time. He urged all not to give up on what had been a difficult and, at times, intractable issue.

**Prof. Kamel** (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) said that, as Secretary General of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, she had had the honour to chair a working group of National Society representatives to review the report by the Independent Monitor and the draft resolution before the Council. Representatives had been appointed to the working group from: the American Red Cross; Argentine Red Cross; British Red Cross; Canadian Red Cross Society; Finnish Red Cross; German Red Cross; Indonesian Red Cross Society; Iraqi Red Crescent Society; Kenya Red Cross Society; Kuwait Red Crescent Society; Philippine Red Cross; Swedish Red Cross; Turkish Red Crescent Society; and the Uruguayan Red Cross. The Secretary General of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization had also joined the group. She thanked Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society for having demonstrated the necessary degree of compromise to reach a consensus. The working group had invited MDA and the Palestine Red Crescent Society to present their perspective and the group had also heard from Mr Tickner, the Independent Monitor, as well as from the Swiss Ambassador and Commissioner of the 33rd International Conference, and from the recent envoy of the Standing Commission representatives to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Ramallah. The purpose had been to hear the views of all. She extended sincere thanks to the National Society representatives of the working group for their contribution and wisdom and the sub-groups that had drafted the final texts of the draft resolution. She had attended most of the drafting over a period of two days and she could confirm the impartiality and the objectivity with which the work had been conducted. Members of the working group had accompanied her in the dialogue held with the two National Societies for which she had been grateful. She signalled her appreciation for the support that had been provided by the ICRC and the IFRC. The draft resolution proposed that there should be continued support for the monitoring process and that ways should be found to achieve constructive results.

**The draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements, dated 28 November 2005, between the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society” was adopted. (Resolution 10, CD/19/R10)**

**The Chair** thanked all those involved in the drafting of the resolution and inquired whether any delegates wished to speak after its adoption.

**Dr Al Khatib** (Palestine Red Crescent Society) thanked the Independent Monitor, the ICRC and the IFRC as well as the drafting committee headed by Prof. Kamel. It was a fact of daily life, living under occupation, that both the population and the National Society were not free: working under such conditions, the National Society was not free to act.

The resolution contained a strong message that would protect the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. The Fundamental Principles had no limitations of time or place and they were not conditional on the acceptance or refusal of States: on the contrary, all States and National Societies should respect them. He was glad that the resolution involved the Movement as a whole: efforts should be exerted to ensure that it was implemented rather than looking for excuses for non-implementation.

He wished to address his colleagues in Magen David Adom in Israel and to point out that, through the resolution, the Movement was placing a lot of trust in them. The resolution also placed responsibility on their shoulders. The Memorandum of Understanding was only one and-a-half pages long, yet each resolution was some three and-a-half pages. And once the resolution was implemented, there would be one sentence: “the Memorandum of Understanding is implemented”. The final paragraph of the resolution expressed “strong desire to see full implementation achieved and validated well in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates as an important symbol of hope and success”. To the end of that sentence, he would add “tolerance”. He wished the Movement to work hard, after 14 years of promises, to make the sentiment expressed in the resolution come true.

**Mr Mehra** (Canadian Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the National Societies of Canada, Spain, Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, Maldives, Finland, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, Germany, Argentina, Kenya, Belgium, Turkey and France), commended the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and Magen David Adom in Israel (MDA) for reaching an acceptable and fair agreement. The National Societies on behalf of which he spoke also thanked the working group that had supported those



efforts: reaching an agreement within the current political and humanitarian landscape was a challenge. They wished to pay their respect to the staff and volunteers of the PRCS and MDA for the life-saving work they continued to provide on a daily basis with great risks: they truly embodied humanity at its best. The respective teams of the two National Societies had worked side-by-side to save lives. There was a recognition that much needed to be done, including by the diplomatic community and States, and not only by National Societies. There was a need for the expertise and wisdom of both the PRCS and MDA both in relation to the MoU and many other issues faced by the Movement. The National Societies on behalf of which he spoke offered their support in helping to ensure the strong and meaningful engagement of both National Societies.

### 3.5.3 FOLLOW-UP AND PROGRESS REPORTS

The Chair said that the Council of Delegates was requested to note a number of follow-up reports.

#### **Item 16: Report on Resolution 2 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization”** (*document CD/19/16*)

Mr Apeland (Norwegian Red Cross), providing an update on the Virtual Fundraising Hub initiative, said that, in 2017, the Council of Delegates had adopted the Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization because the Red Crescent and Red Crescent was lagging behind other humanitarian actors in fundraising. The resolution had been adopted after extensive consultations between National Society leaders, the IFRC and the ICRC and it included some key deliverables: to develop a virtual fundraising hub; to coordinate fundraising initiatives, sharing best practices and supporting staff within the Movement; to create a fund to provide seed financing to support growth and development in fundraising in National Societies; and to improve the Movement’s access to and analysis of strong fundraising data.

It had been his privilege to chair the Steering Committee of the Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization since 2017 with the support of two vice-chairs from the ICRC and IFRC as well as a dynamic group of steering committee members. Significant progress had been made by the steering committee: the Virtual Fundraising Hub had been established and the Hub’s Programme Manager had been hired in June 2019; the first contribution to the fundraising investment fund had been made, pilot projects were already under way and the fund was expected to be fully operational in 2020. The number of National Societies participating in the data collection exercise had more than doubled, allowing a better understanding of the Movement’s global position and its position in national markets where some of its opportunities lay. A digital fundraising platform was being procured that would enable National Societies to seek online donations and facilitate global online campaigns.

The review of the Federation-Wide Resource Mobilisation Strategy, which had taken place at the IFRC General Assembly, was a different process. The future of the success of the Virtual Fundraising Hub would be achieved when all components of the Movement acted together: all were needed to contribute data, resources, expertise and fundraising.

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/16.

#### **Item 19: Report on Resolution 4 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Working Towards the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons: 2018–2021 action plan”** (*document CD/19/19*)

Ms Adachi (Japanese Red Cross Society) recalled her first visit to Hiroshima as part of a Youth Action Forum on nuclear weapons. Having seen the results of the tragedy in Hiroshima, the sense that it should never be allowed to happen again had become profound. She had heard that the rivers around the atomic dome had been filled with dead bodies. The river was much bigger than she had imagined and that had filled her with horror. She encouraged all to go to Hiroshima to see the evidence of suffering and destruction caused by nuclear weapons. She had been impressed by the work done by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on nuclear weapons: all must stand together to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons and nuclear testing.

She wished to present an appeal for humanity and requested that it should be supported by the Movement:

“Nuclear weapons – An appeal for humanity: Seventy-four years after the world witnessed the suffering caused by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thousands of nuclear weapons, which have more power to destroy everything compared to the previous bombs, are still in existence, many ready to be launched within minutes. We, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, are deeply concerned at the threat nuclear weapons pose to humanity.

In 1945, our Movement witnessed the destruction caused by nuclear weapons. We saw these weapons burn down two cities, instantly killing tens of thousands of people. We have listened to the horrific testimony of the survivors, the *hibakusha*.

Since then, we have learned that even a limited future nuclear war would have catastrophic and long-lasting consequences. We know that any use of nuclear weapons would cause massive challenges for humanitarian assistance, and that sufficient assistance capacities do not exist.

Nuclear weapons are not compatible with the very fabric of humanity. They would make our efforts to prevent and reduce suffering impossible. The clear evidence of the indiscriminate and catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons makes it extremely doubtful that their use could ever comply with international humanitarian law.

The Geneva Conventions were adopted 70 years ago to protect people from the impact of war. Yet the continued existence of nuclear weapons makes the ongoing conflicts more dangerous and increases the risk of a global catastrophe from which there would be no protection. Weapons that risk catastrophic consequences cannot, in the long run, be presented as instruments of security.

We call on all States and national leaders to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used and, without delay to:

1. sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
2. join and fully implement the NPT, and other treaties with similar objectives
3. take immediate action to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons' use
4. use the 2020 NPT Review Conference as a critical opportunity to make progress towards all of these goals.

The NPT's entry into force 50 years ago put States under a legal obligation to move towards a world without nuclear weapons. It is high time to fulfil this vital promise to youth and future generations and bring the era of nuclear weapons to an end.

**The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/19.**

**Item 15: Report on Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Reinforcing Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities in the Leadership and Work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”**

*(document CD/19/15)*

**The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/15.**

**Item 17: Report on Resolution 6 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Education: Related Humanitarian Needs”**

*(document CD/19/17)*

**The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/17.**

**Item 18: Report on “Strengthening Civil-Military Relations (CMR) in Disaster Management following up to Resolution 7 of the 2005 Council of Delegates”**

*(document CD/19/18)*

**The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/18.**

**Item 20: Report on Resolution 7 of the 2013 Council of Delegates “Weapons and**

### **International Humanitarian Law”**

*(document CD/19/20)*

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/20.

### **Item 21: Report on Resolution 4 of the 2015 Council of Delegates “Strategic Framework on Disability Inclusion by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”**

*(document CD/19/21)*

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/21.

### **Item 22: Report on the Empress Shôken Fund by the Joint ICRC/IFRC Commission**

*(document CD/19/22)*

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/22.

### **Item 23: Report on the work of the Standing Commission (including reporting on the Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement)**

*(document CD/19/23)*

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/23.

## **3.5.3 ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION *(resumed)***

### **Other topics for decision**

#### **Item 14: 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent**

##### **Adoption of the agenda of the 33rd International Conference**

*(document CD/19/14.a)*

The Chair drew attention to the role of the Council of Delegates in adopting the agenda of the International Conference and nominating the officers of the Conference. The proposed agenda for the International Conference was contained in CD/19/14.a.

The Council of Delegates adopted the document prepared by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for adoption by the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Resolution 11, CD/19/R11).

##### **Proposal of officers for the 33rd International Conference *(document CD/19/14.b)***

The Council of Delegates approved the proposal to fill the posts of officers at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. (Resolution 12, CD/19/R12)

## **3.5.4 CLOSING OF THE COUNCIL**

The Chair said that there had been an unprecedented number of interventions at the Council of Delegates, which had led to substantive debate and substantive decisions. He thanked all participants for their contributions and declared the Council of Delegates closed.

*The meeting closed at 7:55 pm*