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Protecting people from the humanitarian impacts of extreme events: Working together to strengthen anticipatory action

DRAFT ELEMENTS OF RESOLUTION

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DRAFT ELEMENTS OF RESOLUTION

Protecting people from the humanitarian impacts of extreme events: Working together to strengthen anticipatory action

BACKGROUND

The draft elements of the proposed resolution “Protecting people from the humanitarian impacts of extreme events: Working together to strengthen anticipatory action” seek to provide an outline of the possible substance of individual paragraphs, without providing a definitive draft text. Each paragraph is followed by a rationale explaining why it would be useful to include such a paragraph in the resolution.

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

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

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

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

INTRODUCTION

Due to the unfolding climate crisis, many countries are now facing new, different and more intense climate-related impacts than they have ever seen before. The climate crisis is adding a layer of stress to a humanitarian system that is already stretched by the compounding consequences of conflicts, food insecurity, displacement and, more recently, COVID-19. To reverse this trend, both States and the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) have committed to stepping up their efforts to prevent, anticipate, prepare for and respond to the growing humanitarian consequences of climate change, declaring it to be a major priority, as reflected, for example, in the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement and the Movement Ambitions to Address the Climate Crisis.

The technical progress of recent decades makes it possible to predict with increasing accuracy when and where extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, drought or flooding, will occur. This provides time to act before they turn into a disaster, saving lives and livelihoods. Building on decades of experience in disaster risk reduction, the Movement has been at the forefront of using these technical improvements by pioneering anticipatory action.

Anticipatory action seeks to reduce human suffering by enabling relevant actors, especially affected communities, to act ahead of a potentially harmful event to protect their families, lives and livelihoods. It is increasingly recognized as a key solution to minimize the impacts of extreme weather and climate events. Anticipatory action has gained significant momentum in the humanitarian sector. According to the *Anticipatory Action in 2022 – A Global Overview* report ([Anticipation Hub 2023](#)), there were at least 70 anticipatory action frameworks in place in 2022, covering more than 7.6 million people and 15 types of hazard. An additional 97

frameworks are under development. In the Movement alone, more than 50 National Societies are working on anticipatory action frameworks. Despite these encouraging developments, much more can and must be done so that more people are protected ahead of predictable events. For anticipatory action to be implemented truly at scale and for it to be sustainable, governments should adopt the approach of embedding it into national disaster risk management (DRM) systems, where possible.

The Movement has committed to strengthening the approach in the [Council of Delegates Resolution “Strengthening anticipatory action in the Movement” \(CD/22/R2\)](#). At the same time, discussions and consultations among different governments have led to the recognition of the important role of anticipatory action in preventing and reducing the impacts of extreme events and to calls for its scale-up in a number of key policy forums and processes at the global and regional level.

Building on the above-mentioned Council of Delegates Resolution, which suggests that anticipatory action should be considered for inclusion in the agenda of the 34th International Conference (operative paragraph 10), the objective of the proposed resolution is to develop a joint vision for how States Parties and the Movement can work together more closely to ensure anticipatory action is strengthened and expanded so that it benefits more people and provides those most at risk with greater protection from the humanitarian impacts of increasingly frequent extreme events.

In light of the growing challenges posed by the climate crisis, the 2024 International Conference presents a timely opportunity for States Parties and the Movement to declare their joint commitment to scaling up anticipatory action. The proposed resolution seeks to enable States Parties and the Movement to act jointly, decisively, sustainably and at scale in anticipation of extreme events, by strengthening relevant capacities, resources, frameworks and mechanisms in accordance with their respective roles and mandates. It will build on existing commitments, including a joint resolution adopted at the 33rd International Conference ([33IC/19/R7](#)). By adopting a joint resolution on anticipatory action, States Parties and the Movement will be better positioned to anticipate and minimize the risks of extreme events and be able to contribute greatly to reducing the suffering and losses of people in vulnerable situations.

Preambular paragraphs (PP)

PP1: A preambular paragraph could express deep concern about the impacts of extreme climate and weather events and note that the climate crisis will increase these impacts unless action is taken.

Rationale: As highlighted by the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), extreme weather and climate events, such as storms, heat waves, droughts, flooding and wildfires, have become more frequent and intense. The climate crisis increasingly puts lives and livelihoods at risk. Extreme weather and climate events disproportionately affect certain groups and further increase vulnerability to future hazards and longer-term impacts.

PP2: A preambular paragraph could highlight that vulnerability to extreme climate and weather events differs substantially among and within regions and is often highest in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

Rationale: According to the IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report, the vulnerability of ecosystems and people to climate change differs substantially among and within regions, and approximately half of the world’s population live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change. Research also shows that extreme events often affect people in armed conflict and fragile contexts the most. The Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Index shows that eight out of the ten countries most vulnerable and least ready to adapt to climate change are affected by conflict. Yet it is these countries that receive the least amount of climate finance, because of the challenges attached to financing and long-term programming in such settings. Too often,

people living in these locations are not reached by early warnings, much less anticipatory action. Anticipatory action for climate impacts in such contexts is crucial to support the most vulnerable people but needs to be adapted to the complexities of the interplay between fragility/conflict and climate hazards.

PP3: A preambular paragraph could recognize that, in most cases, forecast information about extreme climate and weather events is available before they happen and that the accuracy of such information has improved considerably over the years, providing States and components of the Movement with the opportunity to act ahead of the impact of extreme events to reduce humanitarian needs; it could also highlight the need to strengthen forecasting and risk analysis to better predict multi-hazard situations and their cascading, simultaneous and cumulative impacts through impact-based forecasting, among other things.

Rationale: The technical progress of recent decades, including advances in science, remote sensing and data processing, makes it possible to predict, with increasing accuracy, when and where extreme events will occur and what impact they might have often days, weeks and even months in advance.

PP4: A preambular paragraph could clarify that anticipatory action refers to “actions taken to reduce the humanitarian impacts of a forecast hazard before it occurs or before its most acute impacts are felt; the decision to take action is based on a forecast or collective risk analysis of when, where and how an event will unfold” and that anticipatory action can be most effective if triggers, actions, decision-making and funding are pre-agreed in a participatory manner.

Rationale: With more and more actors involved in anticipatory action and using the term, it is important that the terminology is understood in the same way by all. The Anticipation Hub definition provided above is widely used by different implementers. Actions can include taking measures to safeguard livelihoods, such as facilitating the evacuation of assets and livestock ahead of a flood or distributing drought-resistant seeds ahead of a drought, and providing materials and guidance to prevent families’ homes and health from being severely impacted, for example, by distributing kits to secure roofs ahead of a storm or providing water purification tablets to limit the spread of diseases when floods occur. Anticipatory action approaches seek to reduce human suffering, losses and damage by enabling relevant actors, especially affected communities, to act ahead of a potentially harmful event, based on forecasts, to protect their families, lives and livelihoods. They make use of the time window between the forecast of an extreme event and the actual impact of that event by systematically linking forecasts or early warnings to funding and action plans. They are considered to work best when it is agreed well in advance of an event, in consultation with communities, what priority actions will be taken, when and by whom and how these will be funded.

PP5: A preambular paragraph could recognize the role that anticipatory action can play in reducing disaster risk and in limiting the impact of extreme events on people, thereby reducing suffering and losses, and highlight that it is an important part of the DRM continuum.

Rationale: There is growing evidence that anticipatory action can reduce suffering and save livelihoods (Anticipation Hub – Evidence database). It is important to clarify that anticipatory action should be embedded in DRM systems and frameworks as it is highly dependent on the strengthening of preparedness capacities and should be connected to longer-term prevention and mitigation efforts.

PP6: The preambular paragraph could highlight that anticipatory action can contribute to averting or minimizing climate-related losses and damages and should be considered in the relevant frameworks, mechanisms and discussions.

Rationale: By averting or minimizing the increasing impacts of extreme climate and weather events, anticipatory action can contribute to reducing losses and damages caused by the

climate crisis. Anticipatory action should therefore be considered in relevant loss and damage frameworks, mechanisms and discussions.

PP7: A preambular paragraph could welcome the global momentum around anticipatory action and recall and reaffirm the different commitments of the components of the Movement and States to strengthen anticipatory action.

Rationale: There is an increasing number of political commitments to scale up anticipatory action, in particular at the global and regional level (see, for instance, the [Political declaration of the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction \(A/77/L.70\)](#); the African Union's [Institutional and Operational Framework for Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action System for Africa](#); the [ASEAN Framework on Anticipatory Action](#), the [G7 statement on strengthening anticipatory action](#) and the [EU Council Conclusions on addressing the humanitarian funding gap \(9282/23\)](#)). This includes the Movement which adopted the Council of Delegates Resolution "Strengthening anticipatory action in the Movement: Our way forward" (CD/22/R2).

PP8: A preambular paragraph could highlight the Movement's crucial work to reduce disaster risk, in particular the mandate and role of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) and the support and assistance provided by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in this area, and recognize their leading role in developing and implementing anticipatory action.

Rationale: National Societies and the IFRC Secretariat have a long-standing and crucial role in reducing disaster risk, from prevention, mitigation and resilience strengthening programmes to measures to increase preparedness and mainstream risk reduction in response and recovery. In all these areas, particularly in response and recovery, National Societies provide important support as auxiliaries to their government. The resolution should refer to this long-standing collaboration to encourage similar collaborative efforts in the field of anticipatory action.

Building on this experience and making use of advances in forecasting, the National Societies and the IFRC Secretariat have developed Forecast-based Financing, an anticipatory action approach through which funding is automatically allocated when critical forecast thresholds are reached so that pre-agreed actions can be taken before the event materializes. This approach is now being developed by National Societies in more than 50 countries, addressing hazards such as heat waves, cold waves, storms, floods, droughts and volcanic ash flows. In 2018, the IFRC launched the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC's Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), a financing mechanism that provides funding for National Societies once they have Early Action Protocols (anticipatory action frameworks) in place. These protocols are developed in collaboration with government institutions and activated once certain thresholds are met. Based on these experiences, Movement components can provide valuable support when plans for integrating anticipatory action into national systems are being designed and implemented.

PP9: A preambular paragraph could highlight that anticipatory action has been implemented successfully but needs to be scaled up so that more people can be protected, which requires anticipatory action to be integrated into national and local systems, where possible.

Rationale: Despite encouraging developments, much more can and must be done so that more people are protected ahead of predictable events. In many cases, anticipatory action has not yet been adopted by government or systematically embedded into national DRM systems.

Operative paragraphs (OP)

OP1: An operative paragraph could encourage States to fully integrate anticipatory action into their DRM frameworks and systems and, where appropriate, into their climate adaptation frameworks and call on Movement components to support this

process, notably by providing technical advice, supporting the development of triggers, undertaking data collection and analysis, identifying the best possible early actions and setting up procedures and teams for early action implementation.

Rationale: In order to truly reach scale and ensure more people are protected, it is indispensable for governments to integrate anticipatory action into their own DRM systems. Pre-agreed funds, roles, responsibilities and processes, supported by adequate capacities, are essential for the effective implementation of anticipatory action. This requires governments to clarify the role of anticipatory action in the wider government-led DRM system and to assess relevant laws, acts, policies, tools and capabilities. It also means building on and leveraging existing frameworks and actors to deliver anticipatory action. Integrating anticipatory action into DRM frameworks is an extension of the commitments that States have made in various regional frameworks and helps them reach Target G of the Sendai Framework.

National Societies and the IFRC Secretariat can support States in this process. National Societies, as auxiliaries to their government, are well positioned to work in close partnership with the authorities to ensure laws and policies consider local needs and provide an enabling environment for anticipatory action. The IFRC Secretariat has worked with National Societies and governments under its Disaster Law Programme to improve disaster risk governance, including via capacity strengthening, advocacy, research and promoting opportunities for peer learning on disaster law. National Societies have been at the forefront of developing anticipatory action and have worked closely with multiple stakeholders, including at-risk people, in a participatory way to ensure that anticipatory actions are grounded in local needs and feasibility.

OP2: An operative paragraph could encourage States to strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems, including disaster risk knowledge and forecasting capacities, in line with their commitments under the Sendai Framework, to ensure information needed to enable anticipatory action is available, accurate and easily accessible at the local level and call on Movement components to support these efforts.

Rationale: Anticipatory action requires adequate disaster risk knowledge and forecasting, monitoring and preparedness capacities to ensure action can be taken in the critical time window between the forecast of an event and its actual impact. For example, forecasts need to be robust, timely, understandable and actionable, and they need to reach everyone. In order to ensure this, local actors and communities at risk must be involved in all relevant processes. The UN Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All initiative presents an opportunity to strengthen all elements of early warning systems. While investment in technical forecasting capacity is vital for an effective early warning system, it is just one part of the process. In addition, these systems require data and information to quantify hazards and exposure to risk, institutional capacities and the skills of local responders, including those from National Societies, which can be used to strengthen and complement local government capacity for "last-mile" warnings that enable anticipatory action. The IFRC Secretariat and National Societies have significant experience, expertise and tools that they can make available to support the improvement of early warning systems.

OP3: An operative paragraph could call on States to strengthen the capacities of local actors, including National Societies and communities, in order for warnings, anticipatory action and financing to reach people at risk in time and to ensure inclusive, people-centred processes so that no one is left behind.

Rationale: The capacities of local actors, including both local government agencies and non-state partners, are at the centre of successful anticipatory action. It is these local actors who ensure that those who are most vulnerable are reached in time when the system is activated. They should partner with people at risk to design and plan anticipatory action frameworks. Local actors may need resources and technical support for their work in these areas and to deliver assistance effectively, often in a very short space of time between the hazard forecast and its impact. For anticipatory action to be sustainable, it must "leave no one behind". It must

be inclusive, accessible and non-discriminatory, paying special attention to people disproportionately affected by disasters. With greater awareness and knowledge of the issues and barriers that vulnerable and marginalized people face, it will be possible to engage them in the development of anticipatory action initiatives, tailor action plans to their specific requirements and enhance their capacity to protect themselves ahead of disasters.

OP4: An operative paragraph could call on States to create, increase or facilitate access to financial mechanisms enabling anticipatory action at the national and local level by establishing pre-agreed financing arrangements and/or adapting existing mechanisms to enable funds for response to be used in anticipation of extreme events.

Rationale: In some countries, government authorities face challenges in accessing forecast-based financing, as mandates are not always clearly established. Governments should take steps to ensure accessibility and the availability of pre-agreed financing. Such financing can take different forms, depending on the context. Many governments have well-established financing mechanisms for disaster response that could be adapted in a way that enables their use in anticipation of an extreme event, including through shock-responsive social protection. National governments can benefit from the increasing recognition of and support for anticipatory action by international organizations, funds and initiatives, including in the climate and development sectors, to adapt their current disaster risk financing mechanisms and build in anticipatory action.

OP5: An operative paragraph could encourage States to work jointly with their respective National Societies on anticipatory action, make use of their experience and technical expertise in this field and give them an auxiliary role in its implementation as they do for response.

Rationale: National Societies have proven their worth as partners to their governments when it comes to implementing and planning for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response and have garnered significant experience and expertise in anticipatory action. In many States, National Societies are already the partner of choice for developing anticipatory action frameworks, and in many contexts government stakeholders have been closely involved in the development and implementation of National Societies' anticipatory action plans. These experiences should be the basis of a strong partnership for the development of government-led anticipatory action frameworks.

OP6: An operative paragraph could invite States to strengthen anticipatory action to address extreme weather events in fragile and conflict-affected settings, including through improved early warning systems for weather/climate impacts, with support from the components of the Movement.

Rationale: Protracted conflicts and chronic violence considerably limit the ability and capacity to cope with the impacts of extreme weather and climate events in an effective and coordinated manner, and people in such situations are disproportionately impacted. In such environments, early warning and anticipatory action tend to be particularly weak. Improving early warning systems, ensuring that they are being used and guaranteeing timely action and access to financing in such situations can be critical to reducing humanitarian needs.

OP7: An operative paragraph could encourage States to support the components of the Movement in their work on anticipatory action, by investing in capacities and preparedness, sharing expertise and technical inputs and contributing to relevant international financial mechanisms, among other measures.

Rationale: The availability of and access to financing is a major bottleneck to scaling up anticipatory action, despite the existence of financial instruments such as the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC's DREF. The scaling up of anticipatory action needs to be backed by sufficient resources and requires joint efforts to expand it and reach a larger number of people at risk. Technical support and investment in system building at the local level will be needed so that actions and support can reach the areas where they are most needed in the critical time

window between the forecast and the impact, focusing on those who are most vulnerable. In addition to the funds required for activations, more funding is also needed to build the necessary capacities at the local level, complementing existing efforts to increase preparedness.

OP8: An operative paragraph could invite States to use the Anticipation Hub as a central platform for developing and sharing their knowledge.

Rationale: To scale up anticipatory action, it is helpful to have a cross-sector forum to reflect on the effectiveness of different types of anticipatory action, exchange lessons learned and explore tools, innovations and good practices. The Anticipation Hub is a knowledge and exchange platform that brings together science, policy and practice with partners from across the Movement, research institutions, NGOs, UN agencies, governments, donors and networks.

OP 9: An operative paragraph could request a progress report to be submitted to the 2028 International Conference.