



# Power of humanity

34th International Conference  
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

28–31 October 2024, Geneva

## 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

Geneva, April 2024

**EN**

CD/24/DRXX  
34IC/24/XX  
Original: English

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

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# Draft provisional agenda and programme for the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

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## 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

28–31 October 2024  
International Conference Centre of Geneva

Draft provisional agenda  
and programme

**Monday 28 October**

### OPENING PLENARY OF THE CONFERENCE (5pm)

#### Opening ceremony

1. **Welcome addresses**
  - Chair of the Standing Commission
  - President of Switzerland
2. **Reading of the Fundamental Principles**
3. **Election of the conference officers and establishment of the conference subsidiary bodies** (commissions and drafting committee)
4. **Keynote addresses**
  - President of the International Committee of the Red Cross
  - President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
5. **Organization of work**
  - Drafting committee, commissions, plenaries, pledges
  - Procedure for electing the members of the Standing Commission
6. **Outcomes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Council of Delegates**

Report on relevant discussions and decisions of the Council of Delegates on issues such as the Movement's call for respect for principled humanitarian action, weapons and international humanitarian law, a solemn appeal by the Movement on war in cities, the reaffirmation of the role of the Movement as a factor of peace and resilience, the adoption of a Movement Migration Strategy 2024–2030, the extension to 2030 of the Movement Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025, resource mobilization and, finally, improving the Movement's collective impact in protecting people.

***The opening ceremony will contain artistic performances throughout.***

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**Cocktail reception**  
*hosted by the Swiss authorities*

**Tuesday 29 October**

**PLENARY:**

**7. Navigate uncertainty, strengthen humanity**

Introduces the International Conference and sets the scene for three days of exploring, learning about and deciding on humanitarian action in light of current and future challenges.

**COMMISSION I: Building a Global Culture of Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

The 34th International Conference is being held at a critical time when the unacceptable cost of armed conflict demands a renewed commitment to our common humanity. It also marks the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Currently, there are over 100 ongoing armed conflicts, many of which are neglected by the international community and the media, and many of which are protracted, with consequences that last for generations. When IHL is respected and its humanitarian spirit upheld, lives are saved, and a level of dignity is preserved. Yet, respect for IHL remains insufficient in many armed conflicts, causing devastating suffering. More must be done to improve implementation and compliance with IHL.

Commission I aims to mobilize States, working with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), to redouble their efforts to implement IHL obligations in good faith.

The opening plenary of the commission will focus on prevention work and set the stage for thematic discussions that will take place throughout the day. With its focus on prevention work, Commission I underpins the IHL resolution being tabled at the conference.

**Four spotlight sessions are planned**, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, running in parallel. They will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates on key thematic topics in contemporary armed conflicts. Each spotlight session aims to raise awareness, provide space for discussion and debate, and encourage members of the conference to adopt pledges for concrete and meaningful action to improve respect for IHL. The sessions concern:

- War in cities
- Promoting disability-inclusive interpretations and implementation of IHL in complementarity with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Protection of the natural environment in armed conflicts
- Autonomous weapon systems.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

## **NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS**

Participants will have the opportunity to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events<sup>1</sup> that will take place during lunchtime and in the evening, outside of the formal agenda.

## **FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE**

Members and observers who register in advance will be able to share formal statements on the Conference's themes for the official record. This segment will run continuously throughout the Conference, in parallel to other sessions, commencing on the morning of 29 October and concluding on the afternoon of 30 October.

## **DRAFTING COMMITTEE**

The drafting committee will work in parallel to the other sessions of the Conference on the morning of 29 October and concluding on lunchtime on 31 October.

Five resolutions are proposed for adoption:

- Toward a universal culture of compliance with international humanitarian law
- Protecting civilians and other protected persons and objects against cyber and information operations during armed conflict
- Strengthening disaster risk governance through comprehensive disaster laws, policies and plans
- Empowering local leadership, capacity and delivery in principled humanitarian action and strengthening resilience
- Protecting people from the humanitarian impacts of extreme climate and weather events: Working together to strengthen anticipatory action.

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### **Meet the candidates for election to the Standing Commission** *(not part of the formal agenda of the conference)*

## **Wednesday 30 October**

### **COMMISSION II: Standing by our Fundamental Principles in responding to humanitarian needs and risks**

Across the world, we see increasing challenges to principled humanitarian action. These include political and societal polarization, politicization of humanitarian assistance, and misinformation and disinformation that threatens the safety and access of humanitarian workers to the communities they serve.

It is prudent and timely to focus on the continued importance of the Fundamental Principles to the Movement's humanitarian activities. This commission will allow us to explore with States and National Societies the practical implications and dangers of non-respect of the Fundamental Principles in different contexts and includes a call to States that will be made during the opening plenary session. It will reinforce the role of States to work with the Movement components in ensuring respect for the Fundamental Principles, and in taking

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<sup>1</sup> Side events are organized at the initiative of conference participants and are not part of the formal conference agenda. Their schedule will be published with the mailing of the official working documents of the conference.

action to curtail activities that are contrary to the Fundamental Principles and put humanitarian actors, and the communities they serve, at risk.

The commission will also address humanitarian needs and action, and consider current and emerging risks in relation to climate, migration and the digitalized world. These will be explored through the lens of principled humanitarian action and the Fundamental Principles, discussing challenges and proposing solutions.

The following **spotlight sessions** will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates:

- Respect for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action
- Working together to reduce the impacts of climate change on communities
- Navigating pressing challenges in the context of migration: The importance of a principled humanitarian approach
- Raising awareness about emerging challenges: Humanitarian protection risks in an increasingly digitalized world.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

## **NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS**

The participants will have opportunities to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events that will take place during lunchtime and in the evening, outside of the formal agenda.

## **FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE**

Runs throughout the day. This conference segment will be concluded at the end of day.

## **DRAFTING COMMITTEE**

Runs throughout the day.

## **PLENARY:**

- 8. Election of the Members of the Standing Commission**
  - Explanation of election proceedings
  - Roll call and electronic voting
  - Announcement of results or continuation of election

## **Thursday 31 October**

### **COMMISSION III: Enabling sustainable, locally-led action**

Commission III will bring together Movement components, States and conference observers to enhance locally led action and local leadership in humanitarian action and development to meet the needs of communities in areas such as disaster, conflict, climate change adaptation, health and well-being. It will examine ways to strengthen and increase investment in the capacities and sustainability of local actors including, but not limited to, National Societies, and highlight the impact of their work at the community level. It will explore different aspects of locally led action – the auxiliary role of National Societies, the role of volunteers, diversity of local actors, partnerships, financing, risk sharing and coordination.

The commission will explore ways in which States and other international actors can invest in local and national capacities and reinforce the auxiliary role of their respective National Society in the humanitarian field in complementarity with each other. The commission will identify the remaining key barriers to enabling sustainable locally led action and propose solutions and actions for the future.

A **plenary session** will set the scene for the subsequent four spotlight sessions.

The following **spotlight sessions** will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates:

- The vital role of volunteers and community-based actors in social safety nets for community resilience
- Working together with States and local authorities to manage and strengthen the auxiliary role across all levels
- Locally led community health action and frontline preparedness: Learning from the past to shape the future
- Overcoming barriers to financing and risk management to foster locally-led action.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

## **NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS**

The participants will have opportunities to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events that will take place in the morning and during lunchtime, outside of the formal agenda.

## **DRAFTING COMMITTEE**

Runs until lunchtime.

## **PLENARY: REPORTS AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS**

### **9. Reports**

- Resolution 2 of the 33rd International Conference, “Addressing mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies”
- Resolution 3 of the 33rd International Conference, “Time to act: Tackling epidemics and pandemics together”
- Resolution 4 of the 33rd International Conference, “Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection”
- Resolution 5 of the 33rd International Conference, “Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”
- Resolution 2 of the 2019 Council of Delegates and the 2022 Council of Delegates progress report, both on the Movement’s statement on integrity of the Movement

### **10. Report on the work of the 34th International Conference in commissions and spotlight sessions (and overview of pledges)**

### **11. Report of the drafting committee**

## **12. Adoption of the resolutions of the 34th International Conference**

- Toward a universal culture of compliance with international humanitarian law
- Protecting civilians and other protected persons and objects against cyber and information operations during armed conflict
- Strengthening disaster risk governance through comprehensive disaster laws, policies and plans
- Empowering local leadership, capacity and delivery in principled humanitarian action and strengthening resilience
- Protecting people from the humanitarian impacts of extreme climate and weather events: Working together to strengthen anticipatory action

An additional omnibus resolution may be submitted to the 34th International Conference to acknowledge the outcomes of its commissions, the relevant outcomes of the Movement's Council of Delegates and other reports.

## **13. Closing of the 34th International Conference**