



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

Rapporteur's Report

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, colleagues and distinguished guests, it is an honour and a pleasure to present the official report of the conference.

More than 2,424 people have come together over the past three days – 160 states, 177 National Societies and 148 observers – demonstrating truly global engagement, to discuss some of the most complex humanitarian challenges facing our world today.

A total of 188 statements were given during the Voices from the Conference session, and 27 side events and 12 spotlight sessions took place. Additionally, more than 115 pledges have been submitted, and 5 resolutions were deliberated and negotiated by the Drafting Committee, under the tireless chairmanship of Ambassador Guillermet of Costa Rica.

Each day, a commission focused on one of the conference themes. On Tuesday, Commission I looked at “**Building a global culture of respect for international humanitarian law (IHL)**”, recognizing that while IHL is under strain in the current political environment, it is a pragmatic body of law designed to apply in the worst of times.

The Commission highlighted the severe humanitarian impacts of war in cities and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's initiatives to prevent and address them and to foster stronger commitments from States to reduce civilian suffering.

Disability inclusion was explored, with a focus on the specific barriers and risks faced by persons with disabilities and the need to promote disability-inclusive interpretations and implementation of IHL.

Concrete measures that can be taken to improve environmental protection in conflict areas were put forward.

The panel on autonomous weapon systems discussed the human cost, ethical concerns and the challenges of ensuring compliance with IHL. Discussions highlighted the lack of progress in negotiating a legally binding instrument to prohibit or restrict certain types of autonomous weapon systems.

On Wednesday, Commission II explored the topic “**Standing by our Fundamental Principles in responding to humanitarian needs and risks**”. At the opening plenary, the Presidents of the ICRC and the IFRC jointly delivered the Appeal to States, with a clear message: “**We all benefit if the Fundamental Principles are respected, and we all lose if they're not.**”

The issues raised included the need to build trust with governments, communities and other stakeholders before conflicts and emergencies. The importance of working together to reduce the impacts of climate change on communities and the role of National Societies in integrating nature-based solutions into disaster risk reduction was further highlighted.

In the third session, participants discussed navigating challenges in the context of migration and the key role and added value of the Movement's principled humanitarian action in this field.

The fourth session looked at raising awareness about the emerging challenges of protection risks in a digitalized world. We were reminded that harmful information is easy to spread and difficult to control.

Last night, delegates elected representatives from the Spanish, Lebanese, Chinese, Norwegian and Australian National Red Cross Societies to serve as members of the Standing Commission. Congratulations to the elected chair and members.

Today, in Commission III, the sessions explored locally led action and its power to directly address community needs. The first spotlight session focused on volunteers and community-based actors and highlighted that volunteering and social safety nets serve as complementary humanitarian systems within communities.

The second session looked at working with States on the auxiliary role and stressed that a successful relationship between National Societies and public authorities depends on a robust legal foundation, mutual trust and clear communication.

Community health action and frontline preparedness were the focus of the third spotlight session, which highlighted that investment and the strengthening of local services and community health workers is key to ensuring health resilience and security.

The final session on overcoming barriers to financing and risk sharing underlined the importance of giving local actors the space and the trust to jointly explore how to support each other in risk sharing and invest in institutional capacity strengthening for local actors.

During the three days the International Conference lasted, millions of people continued to suffer in conflicts and disasters across the world, millions of civilians, most of them women and children. They count on us, the delegates of the International Conference, States and Movement components, to deliver immediate and actionable results to protect their dignity and their lives and reduce and end suffering.

Here, we are united in our joint purpose. Let this propel us towards ensuring the resolutions, pledges and conversations of the 34th International Conference are translated into protection and action for people on the ground.

As a mother of three, a committed woman National Society leader and the General Rapporteur of the International Conference, I trust that, together, we can make this positive change to improve millions of lives.

And now is the time to do it. Thank you.