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COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

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Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Resolution

Document prepared by
the Standing Commission, with contributions by the International Committee of the
Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,
and in consultation with National Societies

Resolution

Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Council of Delegates,

noting with appreciation the work undertaken by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to produce, as an alternative to a Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement), a concise document taking stock of the current realities and an inspirational Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,

welcoming the aspiration for a collective strategic direction for all the components of the Movement in response to changing contexts and new challenges,

1. *adopts* the Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;
2. *calls upon* all components of the Movement to take the Vision into account in their own strategic planning processes;
3. *requests* the Standing Commission to report on the impact of the Vision to the 2017 Council of Delegates.

ANNEX

Guided unequivocally by the common goal of better serving people in need, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its components have taken stock of their collective strengths and weaknesses in the light of the challenges and constraints of the global humanitarian environment. The following vision serves to build on these strengths and rectify weaknesses, setting out an aspirational view of the Movement as a unique humanitarian network, unparalleled in the relevance and effectiveness of its action. The hope is that this vision serves as a guide to inspire future strategic reflections for the Movement and each of its components. It is the basis for the development of appealing communications tools, a condensed guide to lead us in a common direction in the spirit of Henry Dunant.

Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

In a complex, turbulent and politicized humanitarian landscape, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) is a unique global humanitarian network that serves to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. It is a torchbearer for a relevant, effective humanitarian response to the multifaceted needs of people suffering the effects of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other crises. With humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence as the bedrock of its unity and universality, the Movement consistently demonstrates the application of its Fundamental Principles on the ground. Harnessing the strength of its relations with States and of its vast community-based volunteer networks embodying the principle of voluntary service, the Movement works optimally across its local, national, regional and international levels.

MISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

“... to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, to protect life and health and ensure respect for the human being, in particular in times of armed conflict and other emergencies, to work for the prevention of disease and for the promotion of health and social welfare, to encourage voluntary service and a constant readiness to give help by the members of the Movement, and a universal sense of solidarity toward all those in need of its protection and assistance.”

Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

A complex, fragmented and unpredictable world

The Movement – encompassing 190 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – is working in an environment that is increasingly diverse, fragmented and unpredictable: where unexpected emergencies unfold alongside drawn-out and complex armed conflicts; where violence and instability are both causes and consequences of recurring conflict and suffering; and where natural disasters, environmental problems and socioeconomic crises further exacerbate situations of chronic vulnerability and hardship. In parallel, there is a widening gap between diverse, multi-layered humanitarian needs and the overall ability to deliver an effective response, marked by a striking absence of international convergence to resolve armed

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conflicts, the flagrant politicization of aid and the decreasing proximity of many international humanitarian actors to the people they aim to help.

Responding to growing needs

In such a fragmented and divided environment, the Movement as a whole steps up its operations to respond to growing needs that would otherwise remain unmet, working to reduce the underlying causes of vulnerability, and to prevent and alleviate suffering. It strikes the appropriate balance between its solid tradition and innovative approaches, while adhering absolutely to its Fundamental Principles. Historically bound by these Principles and by its protective emblems, rooted in international humanitarian law, the Movement builds on and cements its particular strengths, which are greater than simply the sum of its parts. They lie not just in numbers and outreach but in quality and diversity – of its workers and volunteers, their knowledge, skills, experience and motivation, and the synergy of the complementary roles, responsibilities and capacities of its components.

Health-care and social services

Responding to the health-care and social service needs of vulnerable people and communities affected by conflict, disasters and socio-economic crises, in all their many dimensions, is one of the defining features of the Movement's operational identity – a key strength and a major common focus. The Movement and its components are perceived as a globally relevant and effective provider of health care and social services that has unparalleled access and proximity to people in need, offering services such as first aid in emergencies, surgical care for the war-wounded, psychosocial support for conflict- and disaster-affected people, primary community health care, and social-inclusion and livelihood support for vulnerable people. Closely linked to this, promoting food and nutrition security and increasing access to safe water and sanitation are, for many, common programmatic priorities.

Harnessing the diversity and strength of the Movement

The distinct roles and particular strengths of each of the components of the Movement are properly used to achieve the most effective response possible to multi-layered humanitarian needs in a broad spectrum of crisis-affected contexts, reinforcing the Fundamental Principles of unity and universality.

With a mission focused on meeting humanitarian needs, complementary areas of competence of the Movement's components – such as capacity building and resilience strengthening, disaster risk reduction and preparedness, conflict prevention and preparedness, protection and assistance, and early recovery and development – are contextualized and effectively coordinated to best respond to a range of needs. The components of the Movement thereby also reinforce preparedness and their ability to deploy rapidly and effectively and, more broadly, to tackle issues of common interest. At the same time, the Movement in its different dimensions strengthens relations and key partnerships with a diverse range of external stakeholders – engaging in humanitarian diplomacy, consolidating its acceptance and trust, and ultimately enhancing its impact. It makes full use of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent as a key opportunity to better humanitarian outcomes.

Relevance of National Societies in their countries

Relevance is demonstrated first and foremost at a local level: the localization ensured by National Societies is central to the depth and breadth of the Movement's reach. Each National Society ensures relevance primarily in its own country – supported by the international components of the Movement – capitalizing on its community roots and strong volunteer

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networks as well as its privileged relationship as an auxiliary to its government in the humanitarian field, while demonstrating its professionalism, accountability and adherence to the Fundamental Principles. Working in a multiplicity of contexts that go well beyond armed conflicts and emergencies, a key strength is providing a wide range of quality services to persons in vulnerable situations and people and communities facing social exclusion, regardless of their background or status, and regardless of how "developed" the particular country might be. These might include migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers; trafficked women and children; families of the missing; the chronically unemployed; the hungry; as well as any other groups facing severe deprivation, in both rich and poor countries. Not only National Societies but ultimately the Movement as a whole proves its relevance in the light of this test.

Embracing new ways of working

The Movement in general continues to improve the ways in which it interacts with and involves the people it seeks to help, and meets their growing expectations, as they become increasingly empowered through better access to information and communication technologies. The Movement welcomes the increased influence and positive participation of its beneficiaries, and enjoys public support more broadly. To this end, the Movement increasingly embraces the enormous opportunities – and manages the risks – posed by new technologies; it places emphasis on innovation and seeks new ways to better communicate with and involve beneficiaries in the most appropriate and well-adapted response to their diverse needs. Winning trust, acceptance and legitimacy through physical proximity to the beneficiaries remains indispensable.

Beyond strengthening beneficiary engagement, innovation and new technologies are optimally used to enhance service delivery – be it in the domain of communication or mapping technologies, innovative health-care and social services, shelter solutions, water or sanitation management, disaster risk reduction and the impact of climate change, among various others – and to improve internal management and coordination.

Appealing to youth

The spirit of the Movement urges people everywhere and from every walk of life to be humane, inspiring them to mobilise and offer voluntary services to bring relief to the suffering of others. It appeals especially to the youth in society, motivating them to volunteer in large numbers and dedicate themselves to responding to crises and developing local capacities across the globe.

A champion of humanity through the power of its deeds

By promoting humanitarian values and demonstrating a relevant, effective and coherent humanitarian response in these vital areas, the Movement is seen as a champion of humanity, a universal beacon of hope in a divided world, united in the strength of its principles and visionary in its approach. It consistently proves its worth – not least through its transparency, accountability and efficiency – to all relevant stakeholders, including States, donors, the public and, most importantly, the people it tries to help. By delivering timely and effective results with and for people in need, it earns its reputation as a unique, truly global humanitarian network.

