



# United for Humanity

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

3–4 December 2026, Geneva

## Restoring humanity: Our collective efforts to uphold international humanitarian law

DRAFT ZERO RESOLUTION

June 2026

**EN**

CD/26/DRX.X  
Original: English  
Draft

Document prepared by  
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Crescent Societies, Palestine Red Crescent Society, Red Cross Society of Panama, Spanish Red  
Cross and Swiss Red Cross

**DRAFT ZERO RESOLUTION**

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The Council of Delegates,

*recalling* previous resolutions of the Council of Delegates and International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) that set out the commitments of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) to advocate for respect of international humanitarian law (IHL) and better meet the challenges of our times, including Resolutions 5, 7 and 8 of the 2024 Council of Delegates (“Call for respect and support for principled humanitarian action”, “Reaffirming the role of the Movement as a factor of peace” and “War in cities: A solemn appeal from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”), Resolutions 1 of the 2019 and 2024 International Conferences (“Bringing IHL home: A road map for better national implementation of international humanitarian law” and “Building a universal culture of compliance with international humanitarian law”); *recalling* also the International Conference’s 2003 “Protecting human dignity” declaration; *recalling* further Resolution 3 of the 2024 Council of Delegates (“Weapons and international humanitarian law”), which expresses the Movement’s concern about the potential human cost of new technologies, including autonomous weapon systems and other military capabilities that incorporate artificial intelligence; and *reaffirming* Resolution 8 of the 2009 International Conference (“Respecting and protecting health care in armed conflict and other situations of violence”) and Resolution 4 of the 2015 International Conference (“Health Care in Danger: Continuing to protect the delivery of health care together”), which takes note with appreciation of the practical recommendations elaborated by the Movement to make the delivery of health care safer,

*alarmed* that since the last Council of Delegates the humanitarian situation has further deteriorated, with more than 130 armed conflicts now taking place around the world, whose effects are devastating and whose consequences on civilian populations are so profound that it is not possible to mount an adequate humanitarian response,

*outraged* that the suffering that always accompanies war is being compounded by repeated violations of IHL and by the erosion of respect for human dignity and human life,

*condemning* particularly the intolerable attacks against humanitarian personnel, including those performing medical functions, many of whom have been killed with impunity while carrying out their work, and *dismayed* that in 2025 alone, this included 35 staff and volunteers of our Movement,

*concerned* by the frequent, unacceptable delays in the movement of front-line emergency medical services, which can lead to preventable deaths, further endanger medical personnel and humanitarian personnel, and undermine the entitlement of all wounded and sick people to receive medical care with the least possible delay,

*recalling* that humanitarian personnel save lives – providing medical care, water, shelter and other assistance with the sole aim of alleviating the suffering of people affected by armed conflicts,

*deeply concerned* because the Fundamental Principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence that underpin our work are increasingly misrepresented in public and political

discourse, which puts humanitarian workers at higher risk and, in turn, obstructs the provision of impartial aid to civilian populations,

*dismayed* by the lack of political will to confront and reverse these grave trends, including the failure of States to conduct full, prompt, impartial, independent, transparent and effective investigations into incidents affecting humanitarian personnel with a view to holding perpetrators to account, and to use their influence over parties to armed conflicts to prevent violations of IHL and stop patterns of clear and repeated violations,

*alarmed* by the impunity that prevails even for the most serious violations of IHL, and *recalling* the role of impartial bodies, including international courts and tribunals, treaty bodies and other mechanisms, to support accountability efforts at the national and international levels,

1. *adopts* the annexed “**Preserving humanity – A grave warning and solemn appeal**” and *commits* to promoting it widely as a matter of urgency, as the Movement must speak out against the unacceptable trends it is witnessing and stand in solidarity behind all its components facing the worst of the impacts of these trends;
2. *calls on* all Movement components to redouble their efforts, in line with their respective mandates, to strengthen respect for IHL worldwide by leveraging further the moral force of the Movement to urge States and all parties to armed conflict to respect and ensure respect for IHL in all circumstances, thereby creating a system of shared, preventive and global responsibility;
3. *calls on* Movement components to remind, in accordance with their Fundamental Principles and respective mandates, States of their obligation to investigate and prosecute all serious violations of IHL;
4. *recognizes* the role of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as auxiliary to their respective public authorities in the humanitarian field and their strong commitment to collectively fight against dehumanization and erosion of respect for IHL and humanitarian principles; to foster dialogue, non-violence, and a spirit of peace; and to disseminate and promote IHL in a whole-of-society approach;
5. *reaffirms* the Movement’s dedication to use all tools at its disposal to demand respect for and protection of humanitarian personnel and respect for the distinctive emblems which facilitate the identification of medical personnel, facilities and transports, and of staff and volunteers belonging to the Movement;
6. *encourages* the components of the Movement, according to their mandates, to prioritize advocacy and influencing efforts in a collaborative and complementary manner, to promote compliance with IHL, including through statutory meetings such as the International Conference;
7. *affirms* that Movement components will spare no effort in this work.

## **Annex**

### **Preserving humanity – A grave warning and solemn appeal**

We, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement), comprising the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), make this appeal to avoid irreversible harm:

We are shocked by the magnitude of human suffering we see across the world and by the erosion of respect for the very principles and norms underlying international humanitarian law (IHL).

As a Movement, we have a deep, first-hand understanding of the human cost, primarily for civilians, of the lack of respect for IHL. Moreover, the lack of respect for IHL prevents us from being able to carry out our mandates. Respect for IHL – including respect for the distinctive emblems – is an obligation of parties to conflict and is essential to provide us with the necessary humanitarian space to work.

Impunity for serious IHL violations, including for attacks on humanitarian staff and volunteers, sends the dangerous message that such conduct is acceptable, leading to further erosion of respect for IHL.

The unacceptable attacks against humanitarian personnel operating in line with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, as well as the lack of respect for the red cross and red crescent emblems, are symptoms of a world in which the fundamental recognition of our shared humanity is being denied, to dangerous effect.

In 2025 alone, 387 humanitarian staff and volunteers were killed, including 35 staff and volunteers of our Movement. It was one of the deadliest years on record, in a series of increasingly deadly years. Not only is this an unacceptable and tragic loss of life, it has led to populations being left without access to the essential services and assistance provided or supported by humanitarian actors.

We are dismayed by the lack of political will to confront these grave trends, including the lack of accountability for violations of IHL. Repeated violations with impunity have encouraged the spread of a narrative questioning the relevance of IHL; yet this body of law gives expression to the protection of our shared humanity in the darkest times and must never be abandoned.

States have made countless resolutions, statements and pledges in recent years in various forums; they must take meaningful action to demonstrate that these are not empty words.

The Movement urges all States to abide by their obligations to respect and ensure respect for IHL. Without tangible, meaningful effort to uphold IHL, we fear the destruction of the human values which it is the mission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to defend, putting the very future of civilization at risk.

As the world's largest humanitarian movement, representing a truly global commitment to the service of humanity, we refuse to accept the dangerous trajectory we are on as inevitable. We call in the strongest terms for an end to the senseless and avoidable human suffering inflicted on those affected by armed conflict and violence each day.

In particular:

- we demand that all parties to conflict comply with their IHL obligations, including to respect and protect humanitarian personnel, including those who carry out medical functions, and the distinctive emblems;
- we insist that all States urgently take all possible measures to respect and ensure respect for IHL in all circumstances as part of their obligations under customary IHL and treaty law, particularly common Article 1 to the Geneva Conventions;
- we call on all States to uphold their obligations to ensure accountability for serious violations of IHL;
- we appeal to States and parties to conflict to promote and take up avenues for dialogue and confidence-building to ensure the preservation of human dignity and prospects of reconciliation, laying a stronger foundation for sustainable peace;
- we stand ready as a Movement to do our part for the sake of our shared humanity and our mission to protect and assist vulnerable populations around the world.