

## **Standing Commission Report on the Emblem to the 29th IC**

**Ambassador Philippe Cuvillier**

Special Representative of the Standing Commission on the Emblem

This 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is convened to finalize the last step in a long process. I wish to immediately recall that we are not here to discuss the emblem. That debate was closed in the early hours of 8 December 2005 with the adoption of the third Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. The aim of this conference is to adopt a resolution, hopefully by way of consensus, as befits a Movement inspired by the principle of Unity.

The convocation sent to you on 16 December last year following the diplomatic conference established the expected outcomes as set by the Standing Commission:

- To adopt the amendments to the Statutes of the Movement consequent upon the adoption of the Protocol to integrate the Additional Distinctive Emblem;
- To agree upon the name "red crystal" for the additional emblem, and
- To create a framework for the recognition and admission of the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

I shall not repeat the content of the Standing Commission report which was sent to all members in May. This oral presentation aims only at keeping delegates updated on the last developments relating to the resolution.

Stemming from the debates at the diplomatic conference, although in no way conditional to achieving the expected outcomes, the humanitarian services within the framework of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and policies for the benefit of the victims in the ongoing conflict in Palestine and Israel have become an important element in the preparatory negotiations and consultations.

Working towards improved operational cooperation, the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society concluded their Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements on the eve of the Diplomatic Conference. It is no ex-

aggregation to say that the agreements greatly contributed to the adoption of the draft Protocol. The MoU concluded by two future National Societies in a situation of conflict and occupation can well be described as historical. I believe this would not have been possible had it not been for a spirit of goodwill and a deep understanding of the humanitarian principles of our Movement expressed by these candidate Societies.

It is important to note that such an agreement was concluded, not between governmental authorities, but between two Societies who have expressed the will to provide the best possible humanitarian services to their fellow human beings, particularly those suffering from an ongoing conflict... It seems evident that they have by and large delivered what they had agreed to deliver.

It also appears that certain elements could not be implemented without the endorsement and support of their respective Authorities. And if the result of their undeniable efforts appears incomplete on several aspects, the responsibility rests on the Authorities, not on the Societies.

MDA and PRCS have formally applied to become members of the Movement. It would be most unfair to prevent or delay their admission because of an unfavourable environment for which they cannot be blamed.. Quite on the contrary, their rapid incorporation into the Movement can only give them more influence to defend the cause of peace and the right of victims to be relieved.

Switzerland voluntarily offered to take up the role of monitoring implementation of these Agreements. A role that deserves appreciation and respect as it has not been an easy one. I will not go into what has been achieved; that will be elaborated upon by Ambassador Didier Pfirter in a moment.

In another area, responding to concerns of several delegations, the needs for medical services among the population in occupied Golan were highlighted during the diplomatic conference. ICRC explained its regular examinations of the humanitarian situation in the area and declared, on the basis of its findings, its readiness to develop a medical structure in Golan based on a needs assessment taking into account also the views of the population. ICRC has lived up to its commitment and practical work on the ground is in progress as we speak, to establish an emergency and diagnosis centre in Majdel Shams.

Dr Jakob Kellenberger will in the next few minutes give you an update of that work.

Distinguished delegates,

The 144 States Parties at the diplomatic conference explicitly expressed the wish to see both the Palestine Red Crescent and the MDA join the Movement at the next International Conference as stated in the Final Act of that conference.

This Conference is so expected to request the ICRC and the International Federation to implement this 'expression of will' by both States Parties and the two National Societies.

The reports you will hear under agenda item 3 will demonstrate that we are a Movement united in addressing humanitarian issues, which together with our fundamental principles are the sole base for our action. The importance of consensus at this most important of fora for us,

the International Conference, is obvious: to preserve the unity of the Movement and to ensure that we will be heard and recognized also in the future as a global humanitarian Movement when seeking solutions to important concerns in partnership with governments.

Consensus does not imply that we are living in a perfect world and that everything we have wanted to achieve has been fully accomplished. We have to acknowledge the fact that there are a large number of relevant and justified humanitarian concerns that will occupy the minds of people both here and on the ground, brought about by ongoing conflicts and tensions. Ensuring that the Movement stays united will improve our resolve and capacity to address humanitarian concerns and to credibly forward other concerns to fora, which are better placed to deal with and seek political solutions necessary in today's many and differing conflicts.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

Under this item 3, we shall hear the reports that I have mentioned, then conduct a debate. After this is done, we expect the conference to concentrate on the three objectives, move to item 4 and adopt the presented resolution by consensus.

Thank you.