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OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**

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**TOGETHER FOR HUMANITY**

**DRAFT DECLARATION**

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# DRAFT DECLARATION

## TOGETHER FOR HUMANITY

Gathered in Geneva for the 30<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent we, members of this Conference, have focused on the humanitarian consequences of four great challenges facing the world today which affect the individual and specifically the most vulnerable:

- environmental degradation and its contributing factors, such as climate change;
- international migration;
- violence, in particular in urban settings;
- emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges, such as access to health care.

The global scale of each of these challenges requires a collective response as it exceeds the coping capacity of individual States or humanitarian organizations. In addressing the humanitarian consequences of those challenges, we need to intensify operational interaction and partnerships among ourselves, and with other institutions – e.g., intergovernmental, supranational, non-governmental, academic – as well as media and the private sector, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and policies of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and in the spirit of the slogan of this Conference, "Together for Humanity".

### **Environmental degradation and its contributing factors such as climate change**

We are deeply concerned that people everywhere, especially the poorest of the poor, face an increased burden due to the rise in natural disasters and the scarcity of resources induced by environmental degradation and other factors such as climate change, contributing to poverty, migration and aggravating the risk of violence and conflict.

We are resolved to work with partners to raise awareness about the serious humanitarian consequences of environmental degradation and its contributing factors such as climate change.

We will capitalize on the community base of National Societies to decrease the vulnerability of communities where environmental hazards and degradation are severe and adaptive capacity is low.

We reaffirm that preparedness for disaster is a key element in the management of response, and will seek to improve individual and collective capacity to respond swiftly to new types of humanitarian challenges induced by environmental degradation and its contributing factors such as climate change.

We are resolved to ensure that adaptation to climate change is included in disaster risk management policies and plans. We will seek to mobilise the necessary human and financial resources to implement them, giving priority to actions for the most vulnerable people.

## **International Migration**

We, while acknowledging the many benefits of international migration as well as its complex and multifaceted nature, recognize that migration generates issues of humanitarian concern in all regions of the world. We are particularly concerned that migrants, irrespective of their status, may live outside conventional health, social and legal systems and for a variety of reasons may not have access to processes which guarantee respect for their fundamental rights.

We acknowledge the role of Governments, within the framework of international law - especially international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law - to address the humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities of persons affected by migration and to take effective measures including through the prevention of human trafficking, exploitation and disappearance, and support for victims of trafficking.

When addressing the humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities of persons affected by migration in source, transit and destination countries, we shall take into account the considerable Red Cross and Red Crescent experience that has already been acquired with respect to:

- (a) humanitarian assistance: e.g., providing food, shelter, clothing, health care, first aid, psycho-social support, etc.
- (b) Protection: e.g., restoring family links, legal and administrative advice, acting against exploitation and deception, providing information on the risks of irregular migration, visiting migrants in detention with a view to helping improve their detention conditions and their treatment when necessary.
- (c) Advocacy: providing the humanitarian perspective to policy decisions, combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination; promoting international norms in that respect.
- (d) Integration and reintegration: e.g., reception services, fostering social participation and solidarity (e.g., as RC volunteers).

We acknowledge the role of National Societies, based on the principles of humanity and impartiality, to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants, irrespective of their legal status.

## **Violence in urban settings**

We recognize that violence is a leading cause of preventable death, injury and human suffering worldwide. Violence in urban areas poses a particular challenge, where problems are often aggravated by rapidly growing populations, poverty and economic inequalities, insufficient public security and services, and the easy availability of drugs and weapons.

We acknowledge that States have primary responsibility for providing safety and ensuring adequate care and support for the victims of violence, and for the creation of policies and legal frameworks which aim at prevention and mitigation of violence.

We are resolved to develop comprehensive violence prevention programmes in order to build safer communities in cities, and facilitate the rehabilitation of youth affected by violence in order to prevent their alienation and radicalisation and reduce their vulnerability to drugs and crime.

We will mobilise community respect for diversity and action against racism, discrimination, xenophobia, marginalization and other forms of exclusion, also empowering volunteers and youth in humanitarian activities to prevent, defuse or mitigate violence, particularly in urban settings, basing ourselves on the considerable experience of National Societies.

### **Emergent and recurrent diseases and other public health challenges**

We recognize that HIV, avian and human influenza, tuberculosis and malaria as well as other public health threats endanger individuals and communities everywhere in the world. The decline in capacity of the public health infrastructure in many countries and its ability to cope, as well as demographic change, water and sanitation shortcomings, food insecurity and poor nutrition and their consequences for increased morbidity and mortality have also exacerbated this disaster, with a particular impact on the poorest of the poor.

We stress the need to develop national health plans with the involvement of National Societies, and to include the empowerment of volunteers and affected groups to ensure that programming and its implementation reaches all affected and vulnerable populations - such as people living with HIV, communities exposed to the threat of emergent and recurrent diseases, victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking, other forms of violence, former prisoners and orphaned children.

We acknowledge the need for these vulnerable people to have access to basic health care, without discrimination, as well as to necessary medicines and vaccines. Access to safe blood through voluntary non remunerated blood donation is and will remain an essential public health objective.

We also stress the importance for medical services to have access to any individual in need, regardless of his/her legal status, and that such services enjoy the necessary protection.

We are resolved to include public health as an integral part of effective disaster management (comprising public health, water and sanitation, epidemic control and public health emergencies).

We recognise that a comprehensive public health approach must address the issue of TB, HIV and other health threats in prisons, including the necessary follow-up of former prisoners.

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In responding to all of these challenges, we will:

- strengthen our operational capacity and resources accordingly;
- optimise the role of the National Society as auxiliary to the public authorities at all levels in the humanitarian field;
- capitalize on the community and volunteer base (particularly the youth) of National Societies to positively influence and act upon vulnerable communities from within, particularly in situations beyond the reach of the public authorities;
- learn from the experiences and best practices worldwide of the various components of the Movement;
- promote knowledge of and respect for the relevant provisions of international law such as international humanitarian law, international human rights law and refugee law;
- build on the unique ability of the components of the Movement, in acting at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, to gain the confidence of all in order to have access to those in need;
- intensify operational interaction and partnerships among ourselves, the members of this Conference, and with other institutions, whenever there is a clear benefit for the victims and most vulnerable.

We agree that our work together needs to be measurable, with transparency accompanying action at the national level and through the sharing of information internationally. The International Federation and the ICRC agree to support National Societies in their work, including through representation of their interests and concerns at the international level, and will provide the necessary knowledge-sharing mechanisms to facilitate these tasks.