



ICRC | Red Cross Red Crescent leaders and States take decisive steps to advance principled humanitarian action

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Geneva – The 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has closed with a call for greater collaboration between States, humanitarian organizations and other stakeholders to address escalating humanitarian needs.

The conference, which takes place every four years, brought together representatives from 169 Governments, 185 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and more than 100 observers in an effort to find a common vision for future humanitarian action.

“This meeting is a milestone for us in setting a joint course ahead. We must now focus on putting into action the decisions made here,” said Fatima Gailani, President of the Afghan Red Crescent Society and Chair of the Conference.

“If the next four years are anything like the last, the measures decided here will need to stand up to challenges that we can’t even comprehend yet. Who, four years ago, could have predicted that the Syrian conflict would have become so entrenched, foreseen the huge influx of migrants into Europe, or the Ebola outbreak?” said Gailani.

Elhadj As Sy, the Secretary General of the IFRC said: “This conference has adopted a series of resolutions that will directly benefit vulnerable communities, and the people serving them. The resolution on the safety and security of volunteers, for example, calls on States to ensure that humanitarian volunteers are protected, including by providing insurance and other safety nets.”

The Conference also emphasized the importance of proactively addressing increasing risks and vulnerabilities. “We need to do more to accompany communities as they deal with the challenges they face, before they become disasters by supporting them to become more resilient. Our [One Billion Coalition for Resilience](#) captures this ambition on the kind of scale that is needed to make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable.”

To this end, the conference adopted a resolution that will improve the facilitation and regulation of international disaster response, strengthen coordination and laws for disaster risk reduction, and promote enabling laws for first aid.

“As a cohesive Movement, we can marshal a response that is both local and global engaging with States, the private sector, communities and individuals. This is what people on the front lines in Yemen and Afghanistan, or migrants and refugees battling the winter cold in Lebanon or in Serbia need today,” said International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Director General Yves Daccord. “We’re not here to talk but to act.”

Mr Daccord added, “Together with States, we’ve resolved to do more to fight and prevent two of the biggest humanitarian scourges in current times: attacks on health care personnel and facilities, and sexual and gender-based violence in crises. From South Sudan to Syria, ensuring access to health care in war zones is a top priority. Hundreds of thousands of lives are at stake.”

Other resolutions including measures to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law and protection for people detained in connection with non-international armed conflicts.

On this final day of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, all participants - representing Governments, the Movement, as well as partner organizations – agreed on the need to redouble efforts to address the most pressing humanitarian issues of today and to ensure that those in need may continue to receive assistance.

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