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31st International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent
Geneva, 28 November–1 December – For humanity



Migration: Ensuring access, dignity, respect for diversity and social inclusion

(Commission A)
Concept note

Objectives

1. To bring current humanitarian concerns of migrants to the International Conference and identify effective approaches to reducing the suffering of vulnerable migrants, irrespective of their legal status.
2. To draw on the Movements extensive experience across the global migration trails and the ongoing experience of implementing the 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration.
3. To exchange views on the 4 action points outlined the Draft 1 Resolution on Migration.

Rationale

The 31st International Conference provides an opportunity for discussion about ways to fulfil commitments made at the 30th International Conference with regard to the humanitarian aspects of migration. This builds on agreements that came out of the previous 30th International Conference in its declaration *‘Together for Humanity’* (2007) where States and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement expressed concern that migrants, irrespective of their status, may live outside conventional health, social and legal systems and may not have access to processes which guarantee respect for their fundamental rights.

The Declaration *“Together for Humanity,”* called for “international cooperation at all levels to address the humanitarian concerns generated by international migration.” Participants also resolved to intensify efforts to “mobilise community respect for diversity and action against racism, discrimination, xenophobia, marginalisation and other forms of exclusion.”

The Commission presents an opportunity for States and components of the Movement to debate the main issues, threats and vulnerabilities currently affecting migrants all over the world.

Recalling the commitment made by States in 2007 in **acknowledging the role of National Societies in providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants**, members of the 31st Conference will be invited to adopt a resolution which encourages States to **strengthen domestic legislation in order to provide the necessary legal framework** to allow National Societies to undertake this role.

In particular, States will be requested to take all remaining legal and procedural steps necessary to **ensure that National Societies have the access to provide this assistance, including protection, to migrants in their respective countries, regardless of their legal status.**

Members of the Conference will be requested to affirm States' commitment to uphold, with support from their National Societies, the fundamental rights of migrants and to **ensure that border procedures include adequate guarantees to safeguard their safety, well-being and dignity and if necessary their protection**, as well as, **developing partnerships which strengthen the humanitarian services and protection** for vulnerable migrants and incorporate in such partnerships relevant national and international organisations.

We invite members of the Conference to explore opportunities to **address xenophobia and stigmatisation of migrants** and to alleviate and prevent human suffering of migrants.

Guiding questions

In order to facilitate the debate, participants are kindly invited to address the following questions:

1. What is the current situation within your country/ region regarding provision of humanitarian services to vulnerable migrants irrespective of their legal status?

What actions have been undertaken over the past four years to improve effective and safe access of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to all migrants, irrespective of their legal status?

How does your experience, either at the local, national, regional or global level help ensure that National Societies have effective and safe access to migrants to provide humanitarian assistance on a needs and vulnerability basis?

What are the current challenges or impediments? Which best practices can be shared?

2. What is the current situation within your country/ region regarding provision of humanitarian services to vulnerable migrants irrespective of their legal status at the border?

What constitutes border and entry procedures that provide adequate safeguards to ensure the safety, access to international protection, well-being and dignity of migrants?

What are the current challenges or impediments? Which best practices can be shared?

3. What actions have been undertaken over the past four years to promote respect for diversity and social inclusion of migrants, irrespective of their legal status, and between migrants and host communities in order to reduce the social tension, xenophobia and stigmatization that increase their vulnerability throughout the migration process?

In what way does the promotion of volunteering and the incorporation of humanitarian values and skills based education in both formal and non-formal education improve the perception that host communities and migrants? Does it contribute to reduce social tension, xenophobia and stigmatization of migrants?

What are the current challenges or impediments? Which best practices can be shared?

What role does the Red Cross and Red Crescent National societies, through their auxiliary role and principle of *unity*, play in contributing to building an intercultural society and peaceful coexistence of migrants, irrespective of their legal status, and between migrants and host communities?

4. What actions have been undertaken within your country/ region regarding partnerships with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, States and other international actors?

In what way do Partnerships between States, National Societies, International Organisations (including IOM, UNOHCHR and UNHCR), NGOs and the private sector improve humanitarian assistance to and protection of vulnerable migrants?

How can these partnerships best be strengthened? In your opinions and experience, what are the advantages of strengthening partnerships with the RCRC Movement in the area of Migration?

Practical details

The thematic commission will be held twice on Tuesday 29 November (from 09.00-11.30 and 13.30-16.00).

The Chair will open the Commission by providing a short overview of the theme, the guiding questions and introducing the presenters. An introductory speaker will then take the floor and do a short presentation, followed by 3 the presentation. An open discussion will then follow, with responses from the presenters. The Chair will then summarise the discussion and close the Commission.

The Chair for both Commissions is Dr. Jalloh, from the Sierra Leone Red Cross. The presenters for both Commissions will be as follows:

	Session 1 <i>09:00 to 11:30</i>	Session 2 <i>13:30 to 16:00</i>
Introductory speaker	Susan Martin <i>Georgetown University</i>	Eduard Gnesa <i>Switzerland's Special Ambassador for International Cooperation on Migration</i>
Presenter 1	Gwendolyn Pang <i>Secretary General of the Philippines Red Cross</i>	Greg Vickery <i>President of the Australian Red Cross</i>
Presenter 2	Dr. Rafael Schiffino <i>Dominican Republic's Vice Minister for Public Health</i>	Mohammed Assouali <i>Coordinateur National des Programmes et Projets du Croissant Rouge Marocain, Administrateur de cliniques du CRM</i>
Presenter 3	Raisa Lukutsova <i>President of Russian Red Cross</i>	Theresa Mabel Rammekwa <i>Secretary General of the Botswana Red Cross</i>

Delegates are invited to limit their statement to three minutes and to respond to the 3 guiding questions presented above. Delegates speaking on behalf of a group of participants may extend their statement to five minutes. At the end of each Commission Session, the Chair will make some concluding remarks.

Reference to official working documents

Draft resolution and background document on Migration: Ensuring access, dignity, respect for diversity and social inclusion (31IC/11/5.2.1).

http://www.rcrcconference.org/docs_upl/en/IC31_5_2_1_Migrant_Background_document_12_Oct_EN.pdf