

Annotations to the Workshops at the 2009 CoD

Workshops

Workshops will be held in the course of the second day of the Council of Delegates and will aim to allow for an open discussion on selected issues of substance proposed for consideration at the Council, that require further debate and consultation within the Movement.

There will be a consolidated report from each Workshop, which will be presented to the Plenary Session on the third day. The outcomes of the Workshops will not be adopted by the Council in the form of a Resolution or formal decision.

Six (6) Workshops are planned and will each be held a maximum of three times in different language combinations, thus allowing smaller Delegations to the Council to attend a greater part of the discussions.

1. Promotion of respect for diversity and non-discrimination

Respect for diversity and the fight against discrimination and intolerance are a permanent and shared concern of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as a whole. While recalling past Movement commitments in this field, this Workshop will aim to illustrate and take stock of the work of the components of the Movement in mainstreaming the values of tolerance, respect for diversity and non-discrimination both within their internal structures and in the conduct of their humanitarian activities, strategies and programs. Concrete experiences will be presented and best practices identified. This will also represent the opportunity for a more in depth discussion of the difficulties encountered and of the challenges faced by National Societies in their commitment to act in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement in this field, as reaffirmed in relevant Resolutions adopted by the 2003 and 2005 Council of Delegates.

2. Relations with actors outside of the Movement

In a rapidly changing policy environment and an increasingly competitive humanitarian sector, the principles and modalities of operation underlying the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are increasingly called into question. In this context, the importance of preserving and reaffirming the Movement's unique identity represents a central aim and concern. This Workshop will aim to reflect upon the concept of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement Pillar and on the dilemmas, and potential challenges, faced by the Movement in its relations with external actors, with particular attention to the United-Nations system, international, regional and non-governmental organisations.

3. 30th International Conference Declaration: The Humanitarian Consequences of Climate change

The focus of this Workshop will be on:

- a) integration of Climate Change preparedness and adaptation into Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction and major RC/RC programmes (e.g. health/care etc) and
- b) implementation of the 30th IC declaration, Integrated Implementation Plan to handle the humanitarian consequences and
- c) RC/RC engagement with the outcomes of the United Nations Climate Change Conference Copenhagen 2009 (COP15).

4. International Humanitarian Law and Humanitarian Access

One of the main challenges that humanitarian workers face in contemporary armed conflict is obtaining safe and unimpeded access to populations in need of assistance and protection. Lack of humanitarian access may result from different factors, such as security concerns, political blockage or logistical problems. This phenomenon has certainly increased over the past years, as today's armed conflicts have become more fragmented and complex, involving multiple actors, including semi-organised armed groups and purely criminal groups. Due to lack of access, humanitarian organisations are not able to conduct proper assessments of the needs of affected populations, to implement and monitor relief operations or to ensure appropriate follow-up. Concern for humanitarian access has been expressed in past Resolutions of the Council of Delegates, notably in 1993 and 1997. This workshop aims to focus on the rules of international humanitarian law applicable to humanitarian access, as well as on the roles of the respective components of the Movement in strengthening their implementation and respect.

5. Collective responsibility within the Movement

Enhancing the ability of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its components to work effectively and in partnership to achieve their common humanitarian purpose is a constant endeavour. A range of initiatives have been taken in recent years in order to reflect upon and strengthen the ability of components of the Movement to work together in the fulfilment of their common objectives and in recognition of each others specific mandates and capacities. Based on existing and developing policies within the Movement, this workshop will aim to reflect on the emerging and multifaceted notion of a collective responsibility within the Movement and its underlying implications in relation to accountability, peer relations and partnerships between National Societies.

6. Africa

The African continent continues to be beset by natural and man-made disasters. In their quest for economic and social development the African countries have taken various initiatives and made substantial progress over recent years. Nevertheless, these efforts have been hampered by political instability, natural disasters and armed

conflicts in many regions. Alleviating the suffering of vulnerable people and providing the much needed lifeline in these countries remains a constant concern and commitment of National Societies within the region and beyond, the ICRC and the International Federation. Building upon the recommendations of the 7th session of the Pan African Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies (Johannesburg, 19-22 October 2008), this Workshop will aim to reflect upon the means for a more efficient Movement response to humanitarian needs in Africa and for more effective Movement partnerships built around institutional capacity development for NS's on the Continent.