INFORMATION NOTE
FOR THE MEMBERS, OBSERVERS AND GUESTS
OF THE 30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT
(26-30 November 2007)

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1. Welcome and registration

**Dates and venue**
The 30th International Conference will take place **26-30 November 2007** in Geneva, following the General Assembly of the International Federation (20-22 November 2007), and the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (23-24 November 2007). All meetings will take place at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG), Rue de Varembé, 15 – 1211 Geneva 20 (Switzerland).

**Registration, access to the CICG and badge delivery**
- Participants are reminded to register online as soon as possible at the following address:
  
  [http://event.ifrc.org](http://event.ifrc.org)

  For more details, please refer to the registration note sent with the Convocation dated 21 May 2007.
- For security reasons only registered participants with badges of the 30th International Conference will be permitted to enter the Conference Centre.
- To prevent delays in receiving badges during the opening day of the Conference, it is highly recommended to register early at the following registration points:
  - at the International Conference Center on Monday 19 November, from 14:00 to 18:00 and daily from 20 to 30 November (9:00 to 18:00). Please note that the Conference Center will be closed on Sunday 25 November;
  - at the International Federation Secretariat (Chemin des Crêts 17, 1209 Petit Saconnex) on 15 and 16 November, from 10:00 to 18:00;
  - at the following hotels on Monday 19 November, from 10:00 to 18:00: Ramada Park (Avenue Louis Casai, 75/77, 1216 Geneva-Cointrin), Ramada Encore (Route des Jeunes, 12, 1227 Carouge), Intercontinental (Chemin du Petit-Saconnex, 12) and Nash Airport (Chemin de la Violette, 1216 Geneva-Cointrin).
- As ID-pictures will be taken and badges printed on the spot at each registration desk, delegates must present themselves in person and provide identification.

**Opening of the Conference and Reception**
The opening of the Conference will take place at 15:00 on Monday 26 November 2007. It will be followed at 18:45 by a reception offered by the Swiss Federal Council and the authorities of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and of the City of Geneva.

2. Fundamental Principles

- The Fundamental Principles – Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary service, Unity and Universality – are defined in the Preamble of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- States shall at all times respect the adherence by all the components of the Movement to the Fundamental Principles¹.

¹ Statutes, art. 2, par. 4
The International Conference contributes to the unity of the Movement and to the achievement of its mission in full respect of the Fundamental Principles.

All participants in the International Conference shall respect the Fundamental Principles and all documents presented shall conform with these Principles.

3. Composition of the International Conference

Members

The members of the International Conference are the delegations from the 186 recognized National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and from the 194 States Parties to the Geneva Conventions.

A delegation shall not be represented by another delegation or by a member of another delegation.

Observers and guests

In addition to the members entitled to take part in the International Conference, observers may attend the meetings of the Conference. The Standing Commission has established the list of observers.

The host organizations may issue invitations to guests to the opening and closing ceremonies and to such other occasions as the Standing Commission or the Bureau of the Conference may decide.

4. Provisional Agenda of the Conference

The Standing Commission has prepared the provisional agenda of the Conference that has been issued to participants.

The Council of Delegates (meeting on 23-24 November 2007) adopts the agenda of the Conference.

5. Debates, languages and documents

Political controversies

In order that the debates of the International Conference shall command the confidence of all, the Chairman and any elected officer responsible for the conduct of business shall ensure that none of the speakers at any time engages in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature. The Bureau of the International

2 Statutes, art. 10, par. 1
3 Statutes, art. 11, par. 4
4 Statutes, art. 9, par. 1
5 Statutes, rule 9, par. 4
6 Statutes, art. 11, par. 5
7 Statutes, art. 18, par. 1 d)
8 Rules of Procedure, rule 10
9 Statutes, art. 18, par. 1 c)
10 Statutes, art. 14, par. 2 b)
Conference, as defined in the Rules of Procedure, shall apply the same standard to documents before authorizing their circulation\(^{11}\).

**Working languages and official languages**

- The working languages of the Conference are Arabic, English, French and Spanish\(^ {12}\). Any delegate using a language which is not a working language shall provide for its interpretation into one of the working languages\(^ {13}\).
- The official languages of the Conference are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The official languages may be used in debates without prior permission of the Chairperson. Any delegate wishing to speak in a language other than an official language shall first obtain the permission of the Chairperson\(^ {14}\).
- Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in the four working languages of the Conference - English, French, Spanish and Arabic for plenary meetings, meetings of the Commissions and in the Drafting Committee. The provision of Russian and Chinese interpretation can be considered if funding is secured before the Conference.

**Speakers allowed to speak**

- No delegate may take the floor without permission from the Chairperson. Speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they have signified to the Chairperson their desire to speak\(^ {15}\).
- Delegates representing members of the Conference have the right to take part in all discussions in plenary meetings and Commissions.
- Observers have the right to speak only on the invitation of the Chairperson (of the Conference or of a Commission) and to the extent that the Conference has no objection\(^ {16}\).

**Working documents**

- The official working documents are dispatched, with the approval of the Standing Commission, by the ICRC and the International Federation to the members and observers (...) at least forty-five days before the opening of the Conference\(^ {17}\).
- All working documents, including draft resolutions will be posted on the Web Pages of the 30th International Conference by 31 October 2007 (www.icrc.org, www.ifrc.org, www.rcstandcom.info). Participants are invited to refer to these in preparing for the International Conference.

**Consensus and votes**

- The International Conference endeavours to adopt its resolutions by consensus as provided in the Rules of Procedure. If no consensus is reached, a vote is taken in accordance with these Rules\(^ {18}\).
- Consensus is understood to mean the absence of any objection expressed by a delegation and submitted by it as constituting an obstacle to the adoption of the resolution in question\(^ {19}\) (...).

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\(^{11}\) Statutes art. 11, par. 4  
\(^{12}\) Decision of the Standing Commission of 13 September 2006 following the confirmation by the ICRC and the International Federation of their agreement to bring the practice of the statutory meetings of the Movement in line with that of the International Federation.  
\(^{13}\) Rules of Procedure, rule 12, par. 2  
\(^{14}\) Rules of Procedure, rule 12, par. 1  
\(^{15}\) Rules of Procedure, rule 16, par. 1  
\(^{16}\) Rules of Procedure, rule 9, par. 3  
\(^{17}\) Rules of Procedure, rule 7, 2nd sentence  
\(^{18}\) Statutes, art. 11, par. 7  
\(^{19}\) Rules of Procedure, rule 19, par. 1
If no consensus is reached, resolutions are taken by a majority of those members present and voting.

As a general rule, the vote is taken by a show of hands. If ten delegations so request, the vote is taken by roll call. If ten delegations so request, the vote shall be taken by secret ballot.

The vote of each delegation shall be expressed by its head or by the delegate he/she has designated to replace him/her (...).

6. Plenary sessions

Timeslots for plenary sessions

In the light of the provisional agenda of the 30th International Conference, plenary meetings will take place as follows:

- Day 1 (Monday 26 November): 15:00 -18:45;
- Day 2 (Tuesday 27 November): all day general debate;
- Day 4 (Thursday 29 November): 14:30 -18:00;
- Day 5 (Friday 30 November): final plenary meeting, 10:00-12:00.

Duration of speeches and time management

The General debate on Day 2 (27 November) can accommodate a limited number of speakers. Therefore, interventions will be limited to three minutes per delegation;

Interventions in writing may also be handed to the Conference secretariat to be published in the proceedings of the Conference.

List of Speakers

A formal list of speakers will be established only for the general debate on Day 2 (27 November); the IC Chairperson is expected to close the list of speakers on 27 November at 11:00. A registration desk for speakers will be open at the Conference venue from Monday 26 November at 15:00 until Tuesday 27 November at 11:00. When finalised, the list of speakers will be displayed on CICG boards;

Prior to the Conference, participants may pre-register on a provisional list of speakers, by contacting the office of the Commissioner;

When registering, participants are invited to notify their intention to make statements on behalf of a grouping of members or at a ministerial/Head of State level.

7. Commissions

Timeslots for discussion

Discussions in Commissions will take place on Day 3 (28 November) as follows:

- Commission A: all day session (9:30-13:00 / 14:30-18:00);
- Commission B: morning session (9:30 to 13:00);

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20 Rules of Procedure, rule 19, par. 2
21 Rules of Procedure, rule 20, par. 4, 5, 6
22 Rules of Procedure, rule 20, par. 2
Commission C: afternoon session (14:30-18:00).

Guiding questions for Commissions will be posted on the Web Pages of the 30th International Conference by 31 October 2007 (www.icrc.org, www.ifrc.org, www.rcstandcom.info). Participants are invited to refer to these in preparing for the Conference.

In Commissions, there will be no formal list of speakers. The Chairpersons of the Commissions are responsible for the organisation of the work, the good conduct, the order and the efficient procedure of the debates. The list and order of speakers will be managed from the podium.

8. Drafting Committee

The Drafting Committee is open to all members and observers of the Conference. Only members of the Conference can participate in the discussions.

The work of the Drafting Commission is foreseen to take place on Days 3 and 4 (28 - 29 November).

Time is managed by the Chairperson. Delegations may take the floor more than once at the Chairperson's discretion and time allowing.

The Chairperson of the Drafting Committee is responsible for the organisation of the work, the good conduct, the order and the efficient procedure of the debates.

9. Workshops and Side Events

The workshops will supplement the official proceedings of the Conference by providing informal discussions of humanitarian topics related to the Conference themes and objectives. They are an integral part of the Conference but not of its formal agenda. There is no requirement for decisions or consensus in workshops. Workshops are scheduled on 28 and 29 November 2007. Please refer to the Provisional Agenda of the Conference and the List of workshops for further information.

Side events and exhibitions will highlight experiences and “best practices” relating to the implementation of the 2003 Declaration and Agenda for Humanitarian Action or to the objectives of the 30th International Conference.


10. Pledges

In addition to the resolutions submitted to the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for adoption, the participants will be invited to undertake voluntarily, acting independently or jointly, specific humanitarian commitments for the period 2008-2011 in the form of pledges.

In addition to the pledges initiated by participants, a number of model pledges will be submitted for consideration prior to and during the Conference. Model pledges received will be available on Web Pages of the 30th International Conference before the Conference (www.icrc.org, www.ifrc.org, www.rcstandcom.info).
During the Conference, a pledge stand will be open at the Conference venue from Monday 26 November (4.00 p.m.) to Thursday 29 November (4.00 p.m.) throughout the working hours of the Conference. For National Societies, the stand will also be open during the Council of Delegates, 23-24 November. All pledges received (including those sent before the Conference) may be amended and finalized by the sponsor(s) at the pledge stand until 4.00 p.m. on Thursday 29 November.

For further information please refer to the Guidelines for pledging.

11. Election of Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

The Standing Commission (SC) is the “trustee of the International Conference between two Conferences, carrying out the functions laid down in Article 18” of the Statutes of the Movement.23.

Composition

The Standing Commission comprises nine members, namely:

a) five representatives of different National Societies, each elected in his or her personal capacity by the international Conference;

b) two representatives of the ICRC;

c) two representatives of the International Federation24.

Nominations of candidates

A profile for candidates, recommendations and guiding principles for the election of the Standing Commission are available on the Standing Commission’s website (www.rcstandcom.info). Nomination forms can be requested from the Commission’s Secretariat (contact@rcstandcom.info). All nominations submitted (preferably before the end of September) will be published in all working languages on the website.

During the Conference, all nominations for the Standing Commission have to be delivered in closed envelopes, with the curriculum vitae of each candidate, to the Chairman of the Bureau, at the latest forty-eight hours before the opening of the meeting in which the election will take place i.e., at the latest, at 15:00 on Tuesday 27 November 2007. This requirement is also applied to nominations submitted in advance for the website. The Bureau will circulate the curriculum vitae of each candidate at least twenty-four hours before that meeting.25

On Tuesday 27 November, an informal meeting will take place at the Conference Center with the candidates for the Standing Commission.

Election process

The International Conference shall elect in a personal capacity those members of the Standing Commission mentioned in Article 17, paragraph 1 a) of the Statutes, taking into account personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution26.

The vote will take place on Thursday 29 November 2007 from 15:00 onwards. The election process for the Standing Commission shall start immediately after the opening of the meeting27.

23 Statutes, art. 16
24 Statutes, art. 17, par. 1
25 Rules of Procedure, rule 21, par. 1
26 Statutes, art. 10, par. 4
27 Rules of Procedure, rule 21, par. 2
The members of the Standing Commission are elected by secret ballot by the members of the Conference. For the purpose of determining the absolute majority required in terms of paragraph 4, a roll call of members is taken before voting begins28.

In the first ballot, the candidates obtaining an absolute majority are declared elected. If more than five candidates obtain an absolute majority, the five candidates obtaining the largest number of votes are declared elected. If less than five candidates obtain an absolute majority in the first ballot, a second ballot can be held in which the candidate(s) obtaining the largest number of votes shall be declared elected29.

In the case of a tie, subsequent ballots shall be held until the remaining candidate(s) has received a relative majority. After four ballots the total number of votes cast for each candidate in all four ballots shall be taken into consideration. If a tie still results, a decision shall be made by drawing lots30.

Geneva, 8 October 2007

28 Rules of Procedure, rule 21, par. 3
29 Rules of Procedure, rule 21, par. 4
30 Rules of Procedure, rule 21, par. 5