INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE LAWS, RULES, AND PRINCIPLES (IDRL)

30TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

IDRL IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

UN Secretary General highlights the International Federation’s work in IDRL

In his 2007 report on *International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development*, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon remarks upon the Federation’s extensive consultations with States and humanitarian organizations in the development of the IDRL Guidelines.


ASEAN makes use of the Draft IDRL Guidelines

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, in a Disaster Exercise in Singapore, integrated the Draft IDRL Guidelines as a basis for its Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in October.

NEW PROGRAMME PUBLICATION

Law and legal issues in international disaster response: a desk study, the IDRL Programme’s new study, was launched at a media event on 5th November at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Mr. Ibrahim Osman, Deputy Secretary General of the International Federation and Mr. David Fisher, Senior Legal Research Officer, IDRL, highlighted the study’s findings that well-functioning legal and policy frameworks are key to ensuring that disaster-affected persons receive the right aid, at the right time and in the right manner. Lack of legal preparedness exacerbates barriers and delays for international assistance, while at the same time rendering authorities’ tasks in coordination and regulation more difficult.


Latest official Conference documents (version of 26 October)

- **IDRL background document**: a review of the progress achieved in follow-up to the IDRL mandate conferred by the 28th International Conference in 2003.
- **Draft Resolution on IDRL**
- **IDRL Guidelines**: a non-binding document, submitted as an annex to the draft Resolution on IDRL
  - [http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/conf30](http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/conf30)
- **Unofficial Annotations** to the Guidelines are also available at [http://www.ifrc.org/idrl](http://www.ifrc.org/idrl)

Commission C will be the main forum for discussion on IDRL, in addition to the plenary session and the drafting committee, on Wednesday 28th November at 14:00. The theme of Commission C is “Strengthening legal preparedness for disasters at the national, regional and international levels”. All Conference participants are welcome to join. Find the guiding questions for Commission C and more info on page 3.

IDRL pledges welcome! Some model elements as potential sources of inspiration are available for those interested. Find the model elements at: [http://www.ifrc.org/idrl](http://www.ifrc.org/idrl)

Visit the IDRL stand in the exhibition area Level - 1 for documents and questions.
COMMISSION C

Wednesday 28th November, 14:00-18:00

STRENGTHENING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO DISASTERS

Commission C offers Conference members the opportunity to discuss ideas for improving legal preparedness for disasters. The discussions will be introduced by a 3 member panel:

Dr. Salvano Briceño, Director, UNISDR (keynote)
Hon. R. Gordon, Chairman, Philippine National Red Cross Society
AVM Rtd Mohammed Maigari Auudi-Bida, Director General of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Nigeria (to be confirmed)

Conference members might consider the following guiding questions:

- How can the Guidelines be useful in your national context?
- What additional steps can be taken to promote legal preparedness for disasters?
- How can National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies best support their governments in improving legal preparedness?
- How might issues raised by the IDRL Guidelines be addressed at the regional or sub-regional levels?
- How can efforts to increase legal preparedness for disaster response be linked to other global initiatives, such as follow up to the Hyogo Framework for Action?

For more information on Commission C, please contact the idrl team at idrl@ifrc.org or call + 41 22 730 43 83

Pledge reports on IDRL

In each International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, participants have the opportunity to make pledges on topics discussed during the Conference. These may range from general pledges of support to specific plans of action.

In preparation for the 30th International Conference, Governments and National Societies have reported on the actions taken on pledges made during the 28th International Conference in 2003, including on IDRL, according to Final Goal 3.2: “Enhance international disaster response through support for the compilation and application of the laws, rules and principles applicable to international disaster response”.

As such, Governments have highlighted their commitment to and involvement in IDRL as follows:

- Participation in the consultation process on and development of the IDRL Guidelines
- Expression of support of the IDRL Guidelines
- Research, review and compilation of national legislation
- Development of national legislation
- Participation in Forums on IDRL
- Organisation of workshops on IDRL and legal preparedness

National Societies’ contributions, as reported, included:

- Provision of assistance to governments in legislative review and development of legislation
- Organisation of IDRL roundtables with government and humanitarian organisation representatives
- Advocacy with their national government on legal preparedness
- Contribution to case studies on IDRL
- Training of staff on legal preparedness including IDRL
- Participation in the consultation process on and development of the IDRL Guidelines
- Expression of support for the IDRL Guidelines
- Participation in IDRL Forums and conferences

We thank in particular the Governments and National Societies below for their descriptions about their activities related to IDRL in their pledge reports:

Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Congo, Croatia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mali, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom. For pledge reports on IDRL: http://www.icrc.org/Applic/p128e.nsf/va_navPage/PBGO!OpenDocument&Start=1&Count=300&Expand=3.2

Mexican floods, November 2007

More than 10,000 Red Cross and civil defence volunteers are working around the clock to rescue and care for residents who are still stranded. Photo: Mexican Red Cross/International Federation
IDRL Guidelines – the consultation process in brief

2003

November
- 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent asks International Federation and National Societies to "lead collaborative efforts in research and advocacy on IDRL and develop models, tools and guidelines."

May
- European Forum on IDRL, Antalya, Turkey

November
- Vllth Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- XVth Balkan Conference of National Societies, Marmaris, Turkey
- North-African Legal Base Workshop, Hammamet, Tunisia

December
- Asia-Pacific Forum on IDRL, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2006

2007

January
- SCHR, Principals' Meeting, Rome

February
- 35th Session of the GA, Arab Secretariat, Doha
- Webster University, 12th Annual Humanitarian Conference, Geneva

March
- IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Commission), Endorsement, Geneva
- Xth Mediterranean Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies, Athens, South East Asia Heads of Delegation Meeting, Bangkok, March
- ASIL (American Society of International Law), Washington D.C., March

April
- Americas Forum on IDRL, Panama
- ICVA, Official Briefing, Geneva
- Interaction, Official Briefing, Washington D.C.

May
- Pan-African Forum on IDRL, Nairobi, Kenya
- 7th European Regional Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference, Istanbul, May

June
- Middle East Forum on IDRL, Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
- Société française de Droit International, Nanterre, Paris

July
- A.U., Official Briefing, Geneva

August
- International Disaster Reduction Conference, Harbin, China, August

September
- Asia-Pacific States, Official Briefing hosted by the Permanent Mission of Australia, Geneva
- ASEAN Regional Forum, Darwin, Australia
- SOPAC, Official Briefing, Marshall Islands, September
- EU Civil Protection Mechanism Training, Sneeksteren, Denmark
- Annual Meeting of the Legal Advisors of National Societies, Geneva

October
- IDRL Open Meeting on the Guidelines text for Permanent Missions and National Societies, Palais des Nations, Geneva
- OIC (Organisation of the Islamic Conference), Official Briefing, Palais des Nations, Geneva
- IPU (Inter-Parliamentarian Union), Eurasian caucus, Official Briefing, Geneva
- Pacific States, Official Briefing, N.Y., co-convoked with the Permanent Mission of Australia
- Russian Speaking National Societies, Official Briefing, Geneva

* Distributed to all National Societies and Permanent Missions for comments

OBJECTIVE 4
Strengthening the legal frameworks for international response to disasters
IDRL IN TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS
(since 5th October)

- Asia Pacific Conference on the Use of Military Assets in Disaster, Malaysia, Oct.
- IFRC/National Society Regional Disaster Response Team Training, Bali, Nov.
- ADB "First Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Public Health Forum on Regional Cooperation in Communicable Diseases Control (CDC) and Health System Development", Laos, Nov.
- PACOM/MPAT SOP Workshop, Manila, Nov.

SPECIAL THANKS

- Dr. S.P. Agarwal, Indian Red Cross, for his presentation on IDRL to the Southeast Asia Secretaries General Meeting
- Mr. Walter Cotte, Colombian Red Cross Society for his work promoting advocating IDRL in the Americas
- Permanent Mission of Australia, for convening the IDRL briefings for Asia-Pacific States in Geneva and N.Y.
- Permanent Mission of Pakistan for organising the IDRL briefing to the OIC
- Dr. Georg Potyka, Austrian Red Cross, for his work updating the IDRL study on the EU Legal framework
- IFRC N.Y. colleagues for their advocacy support
- Translation team of the International Federation for their hard work in translating IDRL documents in preparation of the International Conference

IDRL contributors 2006-2007

About the IFRC IDRL Programme

The IDRL Programme, conducted by the International Federation Secretariat and Red Cross / Red Crescent National Societies, seeks to reduce the vulnerability and suffering of people affected by disasters by raising awareness on the importance of legal preparedness for disasters, and offering services, such as advocacy, technical assistance, training and research.

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