

**STATUTES  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS  
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

*(adopted by the 25th International Conference  
of the Red Cross at Geneva in 1986,  
amended in 1995<sup>1</sup> and 2006<sup>2</sup>)*

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution 7 of the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent at Geneva.

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**RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS  
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

*(adopted by the 25th International Conference  
of the Red Cross at Geneva in 1986,  
amended in 1995<sup>3</sup>)*

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STATUTES  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS  
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

PREAMBLE

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

*Proclaims* that the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies together constitute a worldwide humanitarian movement, whose mission is to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, to protect life and health and ensure respect for the human being, in particular in times of armed conflict and other emergencies, to work for the prevention of disease and for the promotion of health and social welfare, to encourage voluntary service and a constant readiness to give help by the members of the Movement, and a universal sense of solidarity towards all those in need of its protection and assistance.

*Reaffirms* that, in pursuing its mission, the Movement shall be guided by its Fundamental Principles, which are:

- Humanity** *The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.*
- Impartiality** *It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.*
- Neutrality** *In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.*
- Independence** *The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.*
- Voluntary Service** *It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.*

**Unity** *There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.*

**Universality** *The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.*

*Recalls that the mottoes of the Movement, *Inter arma caritas* and *Per humanitatem ad pacem*, together express its ideals.*

*Declares that, by its humanitarian work and the dissemination of its ideals, the Movement promotes a lasting peace, which is not simply the absence of war, but is a dynamic process of cooperation among all States and peoples, cooperation founded on respect for freedom, independence, national sovereignty, equality, human rights, as well as on a fair and equitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of peoples.*

## SECTION I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

### ARTICLE 1

#### **Definition**

1. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter called “the Movement”) is composed of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies recognized in accordance with Article 4<sup>2</sup> (hereinafter called “National Societies”), of the International Committee of the Red Cross (hereinafter called “the International Committee”) and of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (hereinafter called “the Federation”).
2. The components of the Movement, while maintaining their independence within the limits of the present Statutes, act at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and cooperate with each other in carrying out their respective tasks in pursuance of their common mission.
3. The components of the Movement meet at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (hereinafter called “the International Conference”) with the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions of 27 July 1929 or of 12 August 1949.

<sup>1</sup> Also known as the International Red Cross.

<sup>2</sup> Any National Society recognized at the date of entry into force of the present Statutes shall be considered as recognized in terms of Article 4.

## ARTICLE 2

**States Parties to the Geneva Conventions**

1. The States Parties to the Geneva Conventions<sup>3</sup> cooperate with the components of the Movement in accordance with these Conventions, the present Statutes and the resolutions of the International Conference.
2. Each State shall promote the establishment on its territory of a National Society and encourage its development.
3. The States, in particular those which have recognized the National Society constituted on their territory, support, whenever possible, the work of the components of the Movement. The same components, in their turn and in accordance with their respective statutes, support as far as possible the humanitarian activities of the States.
4. The States shall at all times respect the adherence by all the components of the Movement to the Fundamental Principles.
5. The implementation of the present Statutes by the components of the Movement shall not affect the sovereignty of States, with due respect for the provisions of international humanitarian law.

## SECTION II: COMPONENTS OF THE MOVEMENT

## ARTICLE 3

**National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

1. The National Societies form the basic units and constitute a vital force of the Movement. They carry out their humanitarian activities in conformity with their own statutes and national legislation, in pursuance of the mission of the Movement, and in accordance with the Fundamental Principles. The National Societies support the public authorities in their humanitarian tasks, according to the needs of the people of their respective countries.
2. Within their own countries, National Societies are autonomous national organizations providing an indispensable framework for the activities of their voluntary members and their staff. They cooperate with the public authorities in

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<sup>3</sup> In the present Statutes the expression “Geneva Conventions” also covers their Additional Protocols for the States Parties to these Protocols.

the prevention of disease, the promotion of health and the mitigation of human suffering by their own programmes in such fields as education, health and social welfare, for the benefit of the community.

They organize, in liaison with the public authorities, emergency relief operations and other services to assist the victims of armed conflicts as provided in the Geneva Conventions, and the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies for whom help is needed.

They disseminate and assist their governments in disseminating international humanitarian law; they take initiatives in this respect. They disseminate the principles and ideals of the Movement and assist those governments which also disseminate them. They also cooperate with their governments to ensure respect for international humanitarian law and to protect the distinctive emblems recognized by the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

3. Internationally, National Societies, each within the limits of its resources, give assistance for victims of armed conflicts, as provided in the Geneva Conventions, and for victims of natural disasters and other emergencies. Such assistance, in the form of services and personnel, of material, financial and moral support, shall be given through the National Societies concerned, the International Committee or the Federation.

They contribute, as far as they are able, to the development of other National Societies which require such assistance, in order to strengthen the Movement as a whole.

International assistance between the components of the Movement shall be coordinated as provided in Article 5 or Article 6. A National Society which is to receive such assistance may however undertake the coordination within its own country, subject to the concurrence of the International Committee or the Federation, as the case may be.

4. In order to carry out these tasks, the National Societies recruit, train and assign such personnel as are necessary for the discharge of their responsibilities.

They encourage everyone, and in particular young people, to participate in the work of the Society.

5. National Societies have a duty to support the Federation in terms of its Constitution. Whenever possible, they give their voluntary support to the International Committee in its humanitarian actions.



## ARTICLE 4

**Conditions for recognition of National Societies**

In order to be recognized in terms of Article 5, paragraph 2 b) as a National Society, the Society shall meet the following conditions:

1. Be constituted on the territory of an independent State where the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field is in force.
2. Be the only National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society of the said State and be directed by a central body which shall alone be competent to represent it in its dealings with other components of the Movement.
3. Be duly recognized by the legal government of its country on the basis of the Geneva Conventions and of the national legislation as a voluntary aid society, auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.
4. Have an autonomous status which allows it to operate in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.
5. Use a name and distinctive emblem in conformity with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.
6. Be so organized as to be able to fulfil the tasks defined in its own statutes, including the preparation in peace time for its statutory tasks in case of armed conflict.
7. Extend its activities to the entire territory of the State.
8. Recruit its voluntary members and its staff without consideration of race, sex, class, religion or political opinions.
9. Adhere to the present Statutes, share in the fellowship which unites the components of the Movement and cooperate with them.
10. Respect the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and be guided in its work by the principles of international humanitarian law.

## ARTICLE 5

**The International Committee of the Red Cross**

1. The International Committee, founded in Geneva in 1863 and formally recognized in the Geneva Conventions and by International Conferences of the Red Cross, is an independent humanitarian organization having a status of its own. It co-opts its members from among Swiss citizens.
2. The role of the International Committee, in accordance with its Statutes, is in particular:

- a) to maintain and disseminate the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, namely humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality;
  - b) to recognize any newly established or reconstituted National Society, which fulfils the conditions for recognition set out in Article 4, and to notify other National Societies of such recognition;
  - c) to undertake the tasks incumbent upon it under the Geneva Conventions, to work for the faithful application of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts and to take cognizance of any complaints based on alleged breaches of that law;
  - d) to endeavour at all times – as a neutral institution whose humanitarian work is carried out particularly in time of international and other armed conflicts or internal strife – to ensure the protection of and assistance to military and civilian victims of such events and of their direct results;
  - e) to ensure the operation of the Central Tracing Agency as provided in the Geneva Conventions;
  - f) to contribute, in anticipation of armed conflicts, to the training of medical personnel and the preparation of medical equipment, in cooperation with the National Societies, the military and civilian medical services and other competent authorities;
  - g) to work for the understanding and dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts and to prepare any development thereof;
  - h) to carry out mandates entrusted to it by the International Conference.
3. The International Committee may take any humanitarian initiative which comes within its role as a specifically neutral and independent institution and intermediary, and may consider any question requiring examination by such an institution.
4. a) It shall maintain close contact with National Societies. In agreement with them, it shall cooperate in matters of common concern, such as their preparation for action in times of armed conflict, respect for and development and ratification of the Geneva Conventions, and the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles and international humanitarian law.
- b) In situations foreseen in paragraph 2 d) of this Article and requiring coordinated assistance from National Societies of other countries, the International Committee, in cooperation with the National Society of the country or countries concerned, shall coordinate such assistance in accordance with the agreements concluded with the Federation.
5. Within the framework of the present Statutes and subject to the provisions of Articles 3, 6 and 7, the International Committee shall maintain close contact with the Federation and cooperate with it in matters of common concern.

6. It shall also maintain relations with governmental authorities and any national or international institution whose assistance it considers useful.

#### ARTICLE 6

### **The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

1. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies comprises the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It acts under its own Constitution with all rights and obligations of a corporate body with a legal personality.
2. The Federation is an independent humanitarian organization which is not governmental, political, racial or sectarian in character.
3. The general object of the Federation is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by the National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering and thereby contributing to the maintenance and the promotion of peace in the world.
4. To achieve the general object as defined in paragraph 3 and in the context of the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, of the resolutions of the International Conference and within the framework of the present Statutes and subject to the provisions of Articles 3, 5 and 7, the functions of the Federation, in accordance with its Constitution, are *inter alia* the following:
  - a) to act as the permanent body of liaison, coordination and study between the National Societies and to give them any assistance they might request;
  - b) to encourage and promote in every country the establishment and development of an independent and duly recognized National Society;
  - c) to bring relief by all available means to all disaster victims;
  - d) to assist the National Societies in their disaster relief preparedness, in the organization of their relief actions and in the relief operations themselves;
  - e) to organize, coordinate and direct international relief actions in accordance with the Principles and Rules adopted by the International Conference;
  - f) to encourage and coordinate the participation of the National Societies in activities for safeguarding public health and the promotion of social welfare in cooperation with their appropriate national authorities;
  - g) to encourage and coordinate between National Societies the exchange of ideas for the education of children and young people in humanitarian ideals and for the development of friendly relations between young people of all countries;
  - h) to assist National Societies to recruit members from the population as a whole and inculcate the principles and ideals of the Movement;
  - i) to bring help to victims of armed conflicts in accordance with the agreements concluded with the International Committee;

- j) to assist the International Committee in the promotion and development of international humanitarian law and collaborate with it in the dissemination of this law and of the Fundamental Principles of the Movement among the National Societies;
  - k) to be the official representative of the member Societies in the international field, *inter alia* for dealing with decisions and recommendations adopted by its Assembly and to be the guardian of their integrity and the protector of their interests;
  - l) to carry out the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conference.
5. In each country the Federation shall act through or in agreement with the National Society and in conformity with the laws of that country.

#### ARTICLE 7

#### **Cooperation**

1. The components of the Movement shall cooperate with each other in accordance with their respective statutes and with Articles 1, 3, 5 and 6 of the present Statutes.
2. In particular the International Committee and the Federation shall maintain frequent regular contact with each other at all appropriate levels so as to coordinate their activities in the best interest of those who require their protection and assistance.
3. Within the framework of the present Statutes and their respective statutes, the International Committee and the Federation shall conclude with each other any agreements required to harmonize the conduct of their respective activities. Should, for any reason, such agreements not exist, Article 5, paragraph 4 *b*) and Article 6, paragraph 4 *i*) shall not apply and the International Committee and the Federation shall refer to the other provisions of the present Statutes to settle matters relative to their respective fields of activities.
4. Cooperation between the components of the Movement on a regional basis shall be undertaken in the spirit of their common mission and the Fundamental Principles, within the limits of their respective statutes.
5. The components of the Movement, while maintaining their independence and identity, cooperate whenever necessary with other organizations which are active in the humanitarian field, provided such organizations are pursuing a purpose similar to that of the Movement and are prepared to respect the adherence by the components to the Fundamental Principles.

## SECTION III: STATUTORY BODIES

The International Conference  
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

## ARTICLE 8

**Definition**

The International Conference is the supreme deliberative body for the Movement. At the International Conference, representatives of the components of the Movement meet with representatives of the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions, the latter in exercise of their responsibilities under those Conventions and in support of the overall work of the Movement in terms of Article 2. Together they examine and decide upon humanitarian matters of common interest and any other related matter.

## ARTICLE 9

**Composition**

1. The members of the International Conference shall be the delegations from the National Societies, from the International Committee, from the Federation and from the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions.
2. Each of these delegations shall have equal rights expressed by a single vote.
3. A delegate shall belong to only one delegation.
4. A delegation shall not be represented by another delegation or by a member of another delegation.

## ARTICLE 10

**Functions**

1. The International Conference contributes to the unity of the Movement and to the achievement of its mission in full respect of the Fundamental Principles.
2. The International Conference contributes to the respect for and development of international humanitarian law and other international conventions of particular interest to the Movement.
3. The International Conference shall have the sole competence:
  - a) to amend the present Statutes and the Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (hereinafter called “Rules of Procedure”);
  - b) to take, at the request of any of its members, the final decision on any difference of opinion as to the interpretation and application of these Statutes and Rules;

- c) to decide on any question, referred to in Article 18, paragraph 2 *b*), which may be submitted to it by the Standing Commission, the International Committee or the Federation.
4. The International Conference shall elect in a personal capacity those members of the Standing Commission mentioned in Article 17, paragraph 1 *a*) of the present Statutes, taking into account personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution.
5. Within the limits of the present Statutes and of the Rules of Procedure, the International Conference shall adopt its decisions, recommendations or declarations in the form of resolutions.
6. The International Conference may assign mandates to the International Committee and to the Federation within the limits of their statutes and of the present Statutes.
7. The International Conference may enact, when necessary and by a two-thirds majority of its members present and voting, regulations relating to matters such as procedure and the award of medals.
8. The International Conference may establish for the duration of the Conference subsidiary bodies in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

#### ARTICLE 11

##### **Procedure**

1. The International Conference shall meet every four years, unless it decides otherwise. It shall be convened by the central body of a National Society, by the International Committee or by the Federation, under the mandate conferred for that purpose either by the previous International Conference or by the Standing Commission as provided in Article 18, paragraph 1 *a*). As a general rule, favourable consideration shall be given to any offer made during an International Conference by a National Society, the International Committee or the Federation to act as host to the next Conference.
2. Should exceptional circumstances so require, the place and date of the International Conference may be changed by the Standing Commission. The Standing Commission may act on its own initiative or on a proposal by the International Committee, the Federation or at least one third of the National Societies.
3. The International Conference shall elect the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Secretary General, Assistant Secretaries General and other officers of the Conference.
4. All participants in the International Conference shall respect the Fundamental Principles and all documents presented shall conform with these Principles. 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 Conference, as defined in the Rules of Procedure, shall apply the same standard to documents before authorizing their circulation.

5. In addition to the members entitled to take part in the International Conference, observers, referred to in Article 18, paragraph 1 *d*), may attend the meetings of the Conference, unless the Conference decides otherwise.
6. The International Conference shall not modify either the Statutes of the International Committee or the Constitution of the Federation nor take decisions contrary to such statutes. The International Committee and the Federation shall take no decision contrary to the present Statutes or to the resolutions of the International Conference.
7. The International Conference shall endeavour to adopt its resolutions by consensus as provided in the Rules of Procedure. If no consensus is reached, a vote shall be taken in accordance with these Rules.
8. Subject to the provisions of the present Statutes, the International Conference shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure.

## The Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

### ARTICLE 12

#### **Definition**

The Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (hereinafter called “the Council”) is the body where the representatives of all the components of the Movement meet to discuss matters which concern the Movement as a whole.

### ARTICLE 13

#### **Composition**

1. The members of the Council shall be the delegations from the National Societies, from the International Committee and from the Federation.
2. Each of these delegations shall have equal rights expressed by a single vote.

## ARTICLE 14

**Functions**

1. Within the limits of the present Statutes, the Council shall give an opinion and where necessary take decisions on all matters concerning the Movement which may be referred to it by the International Conference, the Standing Commission, the National Societies, the International Committee or the Federation.
2. When meeting prior to the opening of the International Conference, the Council shall:
  - a) propose to the Conference the persons to fill the posts mentioned in Article 11, paragraph 3;
  - b) adopt the provisional agenda of the Conference.
3. Within the limits of the present Statutes, the Council shall adopt its decisions, recommendations or declarations in the form of resolutions.
4. Notwithstanding the general provision contained in Article 10, paragraph 7, the Council may amend, by a two-thirds majority of its members present and voting, the regulations for the Henry Dunant Medal.
5. The Council may refer any matter to the International Conference.
6. The Council may refer a matter to any of the components of the Movement for consideration.
7. The Council may establish by a two-thirds majority of its members present and voting such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary, specifying their mandate, duration and membership.
8. The Council shall take no final decision on any matter which, according to the present Statutes, is within the sole competence of the International Conference, nor any decision contrary to the resolutions of the latter, or concerning any matter already settled by the Conference or reserved by it for the agenda of a forthcoming Conference.

## ARTICLE 15

**Procedure**

1. The Council shall meet on the occasion of each International Conference, prior to the opening of the Conference, and whenever one third of the National Societies, the International Committee, the Federation or the Standing Commission so request. In principle, it shall meet on the occasion of each session of the General Assembly of the Federation. The Council may also meet on its own initiative.
2. The Council shall elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Council and the General Assembly of the Federation, as well as the International Conference when it is convened, shall be chaired by different persons.



3. All participants in the Council shall respect the Fundamental Principles and all documents presented shall conform with these Principles. In order that the debates of the Council 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.
4. In addition to the members entitled to take part in the Council, observers, referred to in Article 18, paragraph 4 *c*), from those “National Societies in the process of recognition” which appear likely to be recognized in the foreseeable future may attend the meetings of the Council, unless the Council decides otherwise.
5. The Council shall endeavour to adopt its resolutions by consensus as provided in the Rules of Procedure. If no consensus is reached, a vote shall be taken in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.
6. The Council shall be subject to the Rules of Procedure. It may supplement them when necessary by a two-thirds majority of its members present and voting, unless the International Conference decides otherwise.

## The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

### ARTICLE 16

#### **Definition**

The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (called “the Standing Commission” in the present Statutes) is the trustee of the International Conference between two Conferences, carrying out the functions laid down in Article 18.

### ARTICLE 17

#### **Composition**

1. The Standing Commission shall comprise nine members, namely:
  - a) five who are members of different National Societies, each elected in a personal capacity by the International Conference according to Article 10, paragraph 4 and holding office until the close of the following International Conference or until the next Standing Commission has been formally constituted, whichever is the later;
  - b) two who are representatives of the International Committee, one of whom shall be the President;
  - c) two who are representatives of the Federation, one of whom shall be the President.

2. Should any member referred to in paragraph 1 *b)* or *c)* be unable to attend a meeting of the Standing Commission, he may appoint a substitute for that meeting, provided that the substitute is not a member of the Commission. Should any vacancy occur among the members referred to in paragraph 1 *a)*, the Standing Commission itself shall appoint as a member the candidate who, at the previous election, obtained the greatest number of votes without being elected, provided that the person concerned is not a member of the same National Society as an existing elected member. In case of a tie, the principle of fair geographical distribution shall be the deciding factor.
3. The Standing Commission shall invite to its meetings, in an advisory capacity and at least one year before the International Conference is to meet, a representative of the host organization of the next International Conference.

#### ARTICLE 18

##### **Functions**

1. The Standing Commission shall make arrangements for the next International Conference by:
  - a)* selecting the place and fixing the date thereof, should this not have been decided by the previous Conference, or should exceptional circumstances so require in terms of Article 11, paragraph 2;
  - b)* establishing the programme for the Conference;
  - c)* preparing the provisional agenda of the Conference for submission to the Council;
  - d)* establishing by consensus the list of the observers referred to in Article 11, paragraph 5;
  - e)* promoting the Conference and securing optimum attendance.
2. The Standing Commission shall settle, in the interval between International Conferences, and subject to any final decision by the Conference:
  - a)* any difference of opinion which may arise as to the interpretation and application of the present Statutes and of the Rules of Procedure;
  - b)* any question which may be submitted to it by the International Committee or the Federation in connection with any difference which may arise between them.
3. The Standing Commission shall:
  - a)* promote harmony in the work of the Movement and, in this connection, coordination among its components;
  - b)* encourage and further the implementation of resolutions of the International Conference;
  - c)* examine, with these objects in view, matters which concern the Movement as a whole.

4. The Standing Commission shall make arrangements for the next Council by:
  - a) selecting the place and fixing the date thereof;
  - b) preparing the provisional agenda of the Council;
  - c) establishing by consensus the list of the observers referred to in Article 15, paragraph 4.
5. The Standing Commission shall administer the award of the Henry Dunant Medal.
6. The Standing Commission may refer to the Council any question concerning the Movement.
7. The Standing Commission may establish by consensus such *ad hoc* bodies as necessary and nominate the members of these bodies.
8. In carrying out its functions and subject to any final decision by the International Conference, the Standing Commission shall take any measures which circumstances demand, provided always that the independence and initiative of each of the components of the Movement, as defined in the present Statutes, are strictly safeguarded.

#### ARTICLE 19

##### **Procedure**

1. The Standing Commission shall hold an ordinary meeting at least twice yearly. It shall hold an extraordinary meeting when convened by its Chairman, either acting on his own initiative or at the request of three of its members.
2. The Standing Commission shall have its headquarters in Geneva. It may meet in another place selected by its Chairman and approved by the majority of its members.
3. The Standing Commission shall also meet at the same place and at the same time as the International Conference.
4. All decisions shall be taken by a majority vote of the members present, unless otherwise specified in the present Statutes or in the Rules of Procedure.
5. The Standing Commission shall elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman from among its members.
6. Within the limits of the present Statutes and of the Rules of Procedure, the Standing Commission shall establish its own rules of procedure.

SECTION IV:  
FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 20

**Amendments**

Any proposal to amend the present Statutes and the Rules of Procedure must be placed on the agenda of the International Conference and its text sent to all members of the Conference at least six months in advance. To be adopted, any amendment shall require a two-thirds majority of those members of the International Conference present and voting, after the views of the International Committee and the Federation have been presented to the Conference.

ARTICLE 21

**Entry into force**

1. The present Statutes shall replace the Statutes adopted in 1952 by the Eighteenth International Conference. Any earlier provisions which conflict with the present Statutes are repealed.
2. The present amended Statutes shall enter into force on 22 June 2006.

RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS  
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

SECTION I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

RULE 1

**General object of these Rules**

The general object of these Rules of Procedure (hereinafter called “these Rules”) is to ensure the implementation of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (hereinafter called “the Statutes”) and to regulate the work of its statutory bodies.

RULE 2

**Other rules**

- 1 The statutory bodies of the Movement may enact other rules of procedure as provided in the Statutes. *Statutory bodies*
2. Any subsidiary body established by the statutory bodies, other than the plenary commissions of the International Conference, may draw up by consensus its own rules of procedure. In the absence of any such rules and to the plenary commissions of the International Conference, these Rules shall be applied *mutatis mutandis*. *Subsidiary bodies*

RULE 3

**Conflicting provisions**

The Statutes shall prevail over any other provisions and these Rules over any other rules or regulations drawn up by the statutory bodies or by any subsidiary bodies established by them.

## SECTION II: THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

## RULE 4

**Place and date**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Decision</i>                          | 1. The place and date of the International Conference (hereinafter called “the Conference”) shall be fixed by the Standing Commission if the previous Conference has not already decided on this matter.   |
| <i>Assurance<br/>from<br/>government</i> | 2. A decision on the place of the next Conference shall only be taken after the Conference or the Standing Commission has received an assurance in writing from the government of the country in which the next Conference is proposed to be held that all participants as defined in Rule 9 will be allowed to take part.                                     |
| <i>Change<br/>of date</i>                | 3. Any change of the date of the Conference according to Article 11, paragraph 2 of the Statutes shall be notified by the Standing Commission to the host of the Conference as soon as possible but at the latest in time to enable the host organization to despatch the notice of convocation ninety days before the revised opening date of the Conference. |

## RULE 5

**Convocation**

A National Society, the International Committee or the Federation, when mandated to act as host to the Conference, shall despatch to the members and observers of the Conference the notice of convocation by registered airmail at least six months before the date fixed for the opening of the Conference. The notice of convocation shall indicate the place, opening date and the anticipated duration of the Conference.

## RULE 6

**Provisional agenda**

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <i>Despatch</i>   | 1. The programme and the provisional agenda of the Conference drawn up by the Standing Commission shall accompany the notice of convocation. The provisional agenda is subject to approval by the Council.                      |
| <i>Amendments</i> | 2. Observations, amendments or additions to the provisional agenda must be received by the Standing Commission at least sixty days before the opening of the Conference, unless the Standing Commission agrees to a later date. |

RULE 7

**Submission and despatch of official documents**

Any document submitted by a member of the Conference for inclusion as an official working document and for classification as such must be received by the Standing Commission at the latest ninety days before the opening of the Conference. The documents shall be despatched, with the approval of the Standing Commission, by the International Committee and the Federation to the members and observers of the Conference at least forty-five days before the opening of the Conference.

RULE 8

**Submission and distribution of National Society reports on their work**

Reports submitted to the Conference by National Societies on their work since the previous Conference should be sent direct to the host organization, so as to arrive at least thirty days before the opening of the Conference, for distribution, subject to the approval of the Bureau of the Conference.

RULE 9

**Participants**

1. Participants in the Conference shall be the delegates of the members defined in Article 9 of the Statutes and the observers in terms of Article 11, paragraph 5 of the Statutes. *Definition*
2. The name of the delegates of each delegation, one of them designated as head of delegation, shall be communicated by the members to the host organization before the first meeting of the Council. During the Conference the Chairman shall be informed of any addition, change or deletion regarding the composition of delegations. No delegate shall be nominated for any official position unless his name has reached the host organization within the prescribed time. *Delegates*
3. Observers at the Conference are either invited persons or representatives of invited organizations; organizations shall communicate the names of their representatives to the host organization before the opening of the Conference. Observers have the right to speak only on the invitation of the Chairman and to the extent that the Conference has no objections; they shall have access to the documents of the Conference. *Observers*

## RULE 10

**Guests**

The host organization 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.

## RULE 11

**Information media**

The Bureau of the Conference shall be responsible for all matters relating to official information on the Conference. It shall arrange for appropriate coverage of the Conference proceedings by the information media, unless the Conference decides otherwise.

## RULE 12

**Languages**

*Official  
languages*

1. The official languages of the Conference shall be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The official languages may be used in debates without the prior permission of the Chairman. Any delegate wishing to speak in a language other than an official language shall first obtain the permission of the Chairman.

*Working  
languages*

2. The working languages of the Conference shall be English, French and Spanish. The working languages are those in which simultaneous interpretation is provided and are the only languages in which documents relating to items on the agenda will be prepared. Any delegate using a language which is not a working language shall provide for its interpretation into one of the working languages.

*Language  
of the host  
country*

3. The Standing Commission, in agreement with the host organization, may decide that for a particular Conference the language of the host country will also be authorized for simultaneous interpretation.

## RULE 13

**Alphabetical order**

The alphabetical order of the members of the Conference shall be the alphabetical order of the French names of their respective countries. The name of the National Society and of the State which vote first shall be decided by the drawing of lots.



RULE 14

**Quorum**

To be valid, the deliberations of the Conference shall require a quorum of one third of the total of the components of the Movement as defined in Article 1 of the Statutes and of the States as defined in Article 2 of the Statutes.

RULE 15

**Chairmanship**

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. The opening ceremony of the Conference shall be chaired by a representative of the host organization.  | <i>Opening ceremony</i>            |
| 2. The first plenary meeting of the Conference shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Standing Commission until the Chairman of the Conference has been elected.   | <i>First plenary meeting</i>       |
| 3. At its first plenary meeting the Conference shall elect the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Secretary General and two Assistant Secretaries General on the proposal of the Council.   | <i>Elections</i>                   |
| 4. In addition to the powers conferred upon him elsewhere in these Rules and subject to paragraphs 1 and 2, the Chairman shall declare the opening and closing of each plenary meeting of the Conference, ensure observance of these Rules, conduct all debates, put questions to the vote and announce the results. He may charge one of the Vice-Chairmen to replace him during any meeting or part of a meeting. | <i>Powers of the Chairman</i>      |
| 5. Any Vice-Chairman charged by the Chairman to represent him shall have the powers and duties of the Chairman.   | <i>Powers of the Vice-Chairman</i> |

RULE 16

**Bureau and commissions**

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. There shall be a Bureau which shall organize the work of the Conference. The Bureau shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Conference and its membership shall include the Chairman of the Standing Commission, the heads of the delegations from the International Committee and from the Federation, the Chairmen of the plenary commissions and the Secretary General of the Conference. | <i>Bureau</i>              |
| 2. Plenary commissions are subsidiary bodies open to all participants in the Conference. The Conference may establish such commissions for the duration of the Conference as proposed   | <i>Plenary commissions</i> |

by the Standing Commission. The Conference shall adopt the agenda of the commissions so established. Each commission shall elect its Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteurs on the proposal of the Council.

*Other  
subsidiary  
bodies*

3. The Conference may at any time establish other subsidiary bodies, including their agendas, for the duration of the Conference.

## RULE 17

### **Notification of proposals**

*Additions to  
the agenda*

1. The Bureau may propose to the Conference that new items be added to the agenda, provided that the proposals are submitted to the Chairman the day before and signed by at least five delegations to the Conference each belonging to a different country. The Bureau shall determine the agenda for each meeting, following as far as possible the order of the subjects proposed by the Standing Commission and approved by the Council.

*Proposals  
and  
amendments*

2. Subject to the provisions of Article 11, paragraph 4 of the Statutes, proposals and amendments other than points of order shall be communicated in writing in advance to the Chairman and circulated by him to the delegates before being discussed, unless he decides otherwise. A similar procedure shall apply to other documents.

*Seconding*

3. The Chairman may decide that any proposal, or amendment, including motions of closure, shall be seconded by another delegation before it can be discussed or voted upon.

## RULE 18

### **Debates**

*Debating  
procedure*

1. No delegate may take the floor without first having obtained permission from the Chairman. Speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they have signified to the Chairman their desire to speak. Priority shall be given to the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Commission concerned or to the delegate responsible for the respective report, proposal or amendment under discussion.

*Duration of  
speeches*

2. The duration of speeches shall be limited to ten minutes but may be extended or shortened at the Chairman's discretion, unless the Conference decides otherwise.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>3. If during a discussion, a delegate raises a point of order, the discussion shall be suspended and the point of order decided immediately by the Chairman according to these Rules or, at the Chairman's discretion, by the Conference. A delegate raising a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.</p>   | <p><i>Points of order</i></p>                   |
| <p>4. The following motions shall have precedence in the order set out below over all other proposals or motions:</p> <p>a) to suspend the meeting;</p> <p>b) to adjourn the meeting;</p> <p>c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;</p> <p>d) to close the debate on the item under discussion.</p> <p>Such motions must be seconded by at least four other delegations.</p>  | <p><i>Priority of motions</i></p>               |
| <p>5. Unless the Chairman decides otherwise, only one delegate may speak for and one against points of order and the motions mentioned in paragraph 4.</p>  | <p><i>Motions</i></p>                           |
| <p>6. Discussion upon each question shall be closed when there is no further speaker or when a motion of closure has been adopted by the Conference. During the course of a debate, the Chairman may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Conference, declare the list closed. He may accord the right of reply to any member concerned by a previous intervention.</p> | <p><i>Closure of debates</i></p>                |
| <p>7. A delegation may appeal against the ruling of the Chairman. The appeal shall immediately be put to the vote, and the Chairman's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members of the Conference present and voting.</p>  | <p><i>Appeal against ruling of Chairman</i></p> |

RULE 19

**Adoption of resolutions**

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <p>1. Consensus shall be 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. After the adoption by consensus of a resolution, any delegation may state the standpoint it would have adopted had the matter been put to vote.</p> | <p><i>By consensus</i></p> |
| <p>2. If no consensus is reached, resolutions shall be taken by a majority of those members present and voting.</p>   | <p><i>By voting</i></p>    |

## RULE 20

**Voting procedure**

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Voting order</i>           | 1. Amendments to a proposal or motion shall be put to the vote before the proposal or motion. In the event of there being several amendments, the Chairman shall first put to the vote the amendment furthest removed from the original proposal.  |
| <i>Right to vote</i>          | 2. The vote of each delegation shall be expressed by its head or by the delegate he has designated to replace him. The Chairman shall have no vote apart from that allocated to his delegation.  |
| <i>Majority</i>               | 3. The majority shall be half the total number of votes cast for or against the proposal, plus one. The number of those members present and voting who express a vote of abstention shall be recorded but not taken into account in determining the majority. In the event of a tie, the proposal shall be rejected. The result of the votes shall be announced by the Chairman and included in the proceedings of the Conference. |
| <i>Show of hands</i>          | 4. In the absence of a consensus, the vote shall, as a general rule, be taken by a show of hands.  |
| <i>Roll call</i>              | 5. The vote shall be taken by roll call if ten delegations so request. In this case all the delegations from the National Societies shall vote first, then all the delegations from the States, then the delegations from the International Committee and from the Federation. The delegations from the National Societies and from the States shall be called in alphabetical order.  |
| <i>Secret ballot</i>          | 6. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot if ten delegations so request. In this case the Chairman shall appoint from among the delegates of the members of the Conference three tellers who, after all the ballot papers have been collected, shall proceed to a count of the votes. A valid request for a vote by secret ballot shall take precedence over a valid request for a vote by roll call.                            |
| <i>Interruption of voting</i> | 7. After the Chairman has announced the beginning of voting, no delegate shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual voting procedure.   |

## RULE 21

**Election of members of the Standing Commission**

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Nominations</i> | 1. Nominations for the Standing Commission shall be delivered in closed envelopes, with the curriculum vitae of each candidate, to the Chairman of the Bureau, forty-eight hours before the opening |
|--------------------|---|

of the meeting in which the election will take place. The Bureau shall circulate the curriculum vitae of each candidate at least twenty-four hours before that meeting. When nominating candidates, personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution should be taken into account.

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 2. | The election process for the Standing Commission shall start immediately after the opening of the meeting at which the vote will take place.  | <i>Beginning of the election process</i>         |
| 3. | The members of the Standing Commission referred to in Article 10, paragraph 4 of the Statutes shall be 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 shall be taken before voting begins.  | <i>Ballot</i>                                    |
| 4. | In the first ballot, the candidates obtaining an absolute majority shall be declared elected. If more than five candidates obtain an absolute majority, the five candidates obtaining the largest number of votes shall be declared elected. If less than five candidates obtain an absolute majority in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be held in which the candidate(s) obtaining the largest number of votes shall be declared elected. | <i>Elected candidates</i>                        |
| 5. | 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 lots.   | <i>Ties</i>                                      |
| 6. | If two or more candidates from the same National Society are in a position to be declared elected, the candidate obtaining the largest number of votes shall be considered as elected.  | <i>Candidates from the same National Society</i> |

RULE 22

**Proceedings of the Conference**

- |    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Unless the Conference decides otherwise, the organization responsible for convening the Conference shall make the necessary arrangements for the recording of the plenary meetings and of the meetings of the plenary commissions of the Conference. | <i>Recording of the plenary meetings and of the plenary commissions</i> |
| 2. | The following at least shall constitute the proceedings of the Conference and be collected in one volume:<br>— the lists of participants (members and observers);  | <i>Content of the proceedings</i>                                       |

- the list of documents;
- the verbatim record of the plenary meetings of the Conference;
- the reports of the plenary commissions;
- the resolutions of the Conference.

*Publication* 3. The volume mentioned in paragraph 2 shall be published under the authority of the Standing Commission by the host organization and issued to the members of the Conference and to the observers invited to it, if possible not later than one year after it closes.

*Daily reports* 4. As far as possible summary reports of the plenary meetings of the Conference and of its commissions shall be prepared by the host organization and issued to the members of the Conference the day following such meetings.

### SECTION III: THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

#### RULE 23

##### **Place and date**

The place, date and duration of the Council shall be fixed by the Standing Commission in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 1 of the Statutes.

#### RULE 24

##### **Convocation**

When the Council meets on the occasion of a Conference, the organization responsible for convening the Conference shall also convene the Council. In all other cases the Standing Commission shall be responsible for the convocation.

#### RULE 25

##### **Provisional agenda**

The provisional agenda of the Council shall be prepared by the Standing Commission.

RULE 26

**Opening meeting**

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|---|---|
| 1. The opening meeting of the Council, when it meets on the occasion of a Conference, shall be held before the opening of the Conference, at a time which takes into account the planned duration of the Council. | <i>Date</i>   |
| 2. The Chairman of the Standing Commission shall chair the opening meeting until the Chairman of the Council has been elected.  | <i>Chairmanship</i>                                     |
| 3. In addition to the election of its Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its members, the Council shall elect secretaries.   | <i>Election of<br/>chairmanship<br/>and secretaries</i> |

RULE 27

**Work of the Council**

Unless otherwise specified in the Statutes or in these Rules, the provisions of these Rules concerning the Conference shall be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the meetings of the Council.

RULE 28

**Proceedings of the Council**

When the Council meets on the occasion of a Conference, the proceedings of the Council shall also be collected in the volume mentioned in Rule 22, paragraph 2.

SECTION IV: THE STANDING COMMISSION

RULE 29

**Convocation**

Immediately after the election of the members of the Standing Commission the Chairman of the Conference shall convoke the members of the new Commission who are present. These members shall decide by majority who shall be responsible for convening the first meeting of the Commission. If practicable, the first meeting, at which the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman shall be elected, should be held forthwith.

## RULE 30

**Quorum**

To be valid, the deliberations of the Standing Commission shall require a quorum of five members.

## RULE 31

**Proceedings of the Standing Commission**

When the Standing Commission meets on the occasion of a Conference in accordance with Rule 29, its proceedings shall be included in the volume mentioned in Rule 22, paragraph 2.

## SECTION V: FINAL PROVISIONS

## RULE 32

**Amendments to the Statutes and to these Rules**

*Communi-  
cation  
of proposals*

1. In pursuance of Article 20 of the Statutes, the text of proposed amendments to the Statutes or to these Rules shall be communicated to the Chairman of the Standing Commission in such time as will permit him to transmit copies thereof together with the comments of the International Committee and the Federation to the members of the Conference no later than six months before the opening session of the Conference.

*Comments  
of the  
International  
Committee and  
the Federation*

2. The International Committee and the Federation shall present their comments to the proposed amendments in time to enable the Standing Commission to fulfil its obligation arising from the preceding paragraph.

*Entry into  
force of the  
amendments*

3. The Conference shall decide on which date any adopted amendment shall enter into force.

## RULE 33

**Entry into force of these Rules**

*Abrogation*

1. These Rules shall replace the Rules of Procedure of the International Conference of the Red Cross adopted in 1952 by the Eighteenth Conference. Any earlier provision which conflicts with these Rules is repealed.

*Date*

2. These Rules shall enter into force on 8 November 1986.