

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

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## ICRC Statutes brought into line with the revised Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

*The Twenty-fifth International Conference of the Red Cross, held in Geneva in October 1986, revised the 1952 Statutes of the International Red Cross, most of whose provisions dated back to 1928. The Conference thus adopted two drafts which had been submitted for its consideration, respectively entitled "Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement" and "Rules of Procedure" of the Movement.*

*Article 5 of the Statutes of the Movement is devoted to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This Article is not identical to the corresponding articles either in the former Statutes of 1952 or in the ICRC Statutes of 21 June 1973. The ICRC representatives in the joint ICRC/ League working group on the revision of the Statutes of the International Red Cross, in agreement with the other members of the group, were of the opinion that the revision of the Statutes of the International Red Cross provided an ideal opportunity to improve some of the wording of the Statutes and to eliminate a few obvious flaws in the English and Spanish versions of the ICRC Statutes.*

*The ICRC had given an assurance that it would bring its own Statutes into line with the new Statutes of the Movement, once the latter were adopted. The ICRC Assembly proceeded accordingly at its meeting of 20 January 1988 and decided on the modifications to be made, which affect only Articles 1 to 6 of the ICRC Statutes. **The previous wording is given on the left-hand page and the new text is printed on the right-hand page.** The passages underlined indicate where changes have been made. It should be noted, however, that the introduction of a new Article 6 entitled "Relations outside the Movement", corresponding to a provision in the Statutes of the Movement but which previously had no counterpart in the ICRC Statutes, means that all subsequent articles have had to be renumbered. Thus Articles 7 to 15 are identical to former Articles 6 to 14.*

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## STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

(Adopted on 21 June 1973, revised on 6 December 1973, 1 May 1974,  
14 September 1977 and 29 April 1982)

### ARTICLE 1

#### **International Committee of the Red Cross**

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), founded in Geneva in 1863 and formally recognized in the Geneva Conventions and by International Conferences of the Red Cross, shall be an independent organization having its own Statutes.

2. It shall be a constituent part of the International Red Cross <sup>1</sup>.

### ARTICLE 2

#### **Legal Status**

As an association governed by Article 60 and following of the Swiss Civil Code, the ICRC shall have legal personality.

### ARTICLE 3

#### **Headquarters and Emblem**

The Headquarters of the ICRC shall be in Geneva.

Its emblem shall be a red cross on a white ground. Its motto shall be *Inter arma caritas*.

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<sup>1</sup> The International Red Cross comprises the National Red Cross Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. The term "National Red Cross Societies" includes the Red Crescent Societies.

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(Adopted on 21 June 1973, revised on 6 December 1973, 1 May 1974,  
14 September 1977, 29 April 1982 and 20 January 1988)

## ARTICLE 1

### **International Committee of the Red Cross**

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), founded in Geneva in 1863 and formally recognized in the Geneva Conventions and by International Conferences of the Red Cross, shall be an independent humanitarian organization having a status of its own.

2. It shall be a constituent part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement<sup>1</sup>.

## ARTICLE 2

### **Legal Status**

As an association governed by Article 60 and following of the Swiss Civil Code, the ICRC shall have legal personality.

## ARTICLE 3

### **Headquarters, emblem and motto**

1. The Headquarters of the ICRC shall be in Geneva.

2. Its emblem shall be a red cross on a white ground. Its motto shall be *Inter arma caritas*. It shall likewise acknowledge the motto "Per humanitatem ad pacem".

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<sup>1</sup> The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) is also known as the International Red Cross. It comprises the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the National Societies), the International Committee of the Red Cross (the International Committee or the ICRC) and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the League).

## ARTICLE 4

### Role

1. The special role of the ICRC shall be:
  - a) to maintain the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross as proclaimed by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross;
  - b) to recognize any newly established or reconstituted National Red Cross Society which fulfils the conditions for recognition in force, and to notify other National Societies of such recognition;
  - c) to undertake the tasks incumbent on it under the Geneva Conventions, to work for the faithful application of these Conventions and to take cognizance of any complaints regarding alleged breaches of the humanitarian Conventions;
  - d) to take action in its capacity as a neutral institution, especially in case of war, civil war or internal strife; to endeavour to ensure at all times that the military and civilian victims of such conflicts and of their direct results receive protection and assistance, and to serve, in humanitarian matters, as an intermediary between the parties;
  - e) to ensure the operation of the Central Information Agencies provided for in the Geneva Conventions;
  - f) to contribute, in view of such conflicts, to the preparation and development of medical personnel and medical equipment, in co-operation with other Red Cross organizations, the medical services of the armed forces and other competent authorities;
  - g) to work for the continual improvement of humanitarian international law and for the better understanding and dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and to prepare for their possible extension;
  - h) to accept the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conferences of the Red Cross.
2. The ICRC may also take any humanitarian initiative which comes within its role as a specifically neutral and independent institution and consider any question requiring examination by such an institution.

## ARTICLE 4

### Role

1. The role of the ICRC shall be 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 the Statutes of the Movement, and to notify other National Societies of such recognition;
  - c) to undertake the tasks incumbent upon it under the Geneva Conventions <sup>2</sup>, 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 co-operation 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 of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (the International Conference).
2. The ICRC 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.

<sup>2</sup> In the present Statutes the expression “Geneva Conventions” also covers their Additional Protocols for the States Parties to these Protocols.

## ARTICLE 5

### **Relations with other Red Cross Institutions**

1. The ICRC shall maintain close relations with the National Red Cross Societies and such representatives as they may accredit to it, and also with the League of Red Cross Societies. It shall co-operate with the latter in matters which concern the activities of both organizations.

2. Contact between the ICRC and the League shall be ensured by a meeting at least once a month of representatives of the two organizations. Such contact may furthermore be ensured by a representative of the ICRC accredited to the League and a representative of the League accredited to the ICRC.

**There are no provisions concerning relations with institutions outside the International Red Cross.**

## ARTICLE 6

### **Membership of the ICRC**

1. The ICRC shall co-opt its members from among Swiss citizens. It shall comprise fifteen to twenty-five members.

2. The rights and duties of members of the ICRC shall be laid down in internal regulations.

3. Members of the ICRC shall be subject to re-election every four years. After three terms of four years they must obtain a three-fourths majority of the full membership of the ICRC.

4. The ICRC may elect honorary members.

## ARTICLE 5

### **Relations with other components of the Movement**

1. The ICRC shall maintain close contact with National Societies. In agreement with them, it shall co-operate 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.

2. In situations foreseen in Article 4, paragraph 1 d) and requiring co-ordinated assistance from National Societies of other countries, the ICRC in co-operation with the National Society of the country or countries concerned, shall co-ordinate such assistance in accordance with the agreements concluded with the League.

3. The ICRC shall maintain close contact with the League. It shall co-operate with it in matters of common concern in accordance with the Statutes of the Movement and the agreements concluded between the ICRC and the League.

## ARTICLE 6

### **Relations outside the Movement**

The ICRC shall maintain relations with governmental authorities and any national or international institution whose assistance it considers useful.

## ARTICLE 7

### **Membership of the ICRC**

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4. The ICRC may elect honorary members.

## ARTICLE 7

### **Assembly**

1. The supreme policy-making body of the ICRC shall be the Assembly, which shall be of a collegial character. It shall lay down principles and general policy and supervise all ICRC activities.

2. The Assembly shall be composed of members of the ICRC. Its President and its two Vice-Presidents shall be President and Vice-Presidents of the ICRC.

## ARTICLE 8

### **Executive Board**

1. The Executive Board, a collegial body, shall be responsible for the general conduct of affairs. It shall exercise direct supervision over the administration of the ICRC.

2. The Executive Board shall comprise not more than seven members, chosen among the members of the ICRC.

3. The Assembly shall elect the members of the Executive Board.

4. The President of the ICRC shall preside over the Executive Board.

## ARTICLE 9

### **Directorate**

1. The Directorate, a collegiate body, shall be responsible for management in accordance with the decisions of the Assembly, the Executive Board and the President.

2. The functions and composition of the Directorate shall be laid down in regulations.

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## ARTICLE 10

### **Financial commitments**

All documents involving financial commitments on the part of the ICRC towards third parties must bear the signature of two persons duly authorized for the purpose by the Committee. Nevertheless, as an exceptional measure, it may give one of its members or delegates power to involve the ICRC in a financial commitment by his signature alone.

## ARTICLE 11

### **Assets and financial verification**

1. The principal assets of the ICRC shall be the contributions of National Red Cross Societies and of Governments, such gifts and bequests as it may receive and its income from securities.

2. These assets, and such capital funds as it may have at its disposal, shall alone, to the exclusion of any personal or collective liability of its members, guarantee commitments entered into by the ICRC. The utilization of the assets and funds shall be subject to independent financial verification.

3. Even in case of dissolution, members shall have no personal claim to the assets of the ICRC, which shall be used solely for humanitarian purposes.

## ARTICLE 12

### **Rules of Procedure**

The Assembly shall provide for the implementation of the present Statutes, *inter alia*, by establishing internal regulations.

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The Assembly shall provide for the implementation of the present Statutes, *inter alia*, by establishing internal regulations.

### ARTICLE 13

#### **Revision**

1. The Assembly may revise the present Statutes at any time. Revision shall be the subject of discussion at two different meetings, on the agendas of which it shall be an item.

2. The Statutes may be amended only if so decided by a final two-thirds majority vote of the members present and constituting at least half of the full membership of the ICRC.

### ARTICLE 14

#### **Coming into force**

The present Statutes shall replace the Statutes of the International Committee of the Red Cross of 25 September 1952 and shall take effect as from 1 July 1973.

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