

**MODEL STATUTES FOR THE USE
OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES**

Model Statutes for the use of National Societies were first approved by the League's Board of Governors at its XXIIInd Session in Toronto in 1952. The aim of the model statutes was not to propose a single set of rules for all National Societies, but to embody those principles of the Geneva Conventions and of the Red Cross which are of universal application. In the light of the many changes which have taken place since that time, the text has been revised by the League Secretariat in co-operation with the ICRC.

The new Model Statutes, presented jointly by the two international Red Cross bodies, were approved by the Board of Governors at its XXXIst Session in Mexico City in 1971. We reproduce below some of the thirty-eight articles of the Model Statutes, and would point out that for the Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, the expressions "Red Cross Societies" or "Red Cross" must be replaced by their corresponding titles.

ARTICLE 1

Constitution

The Red Cross was founded on (date)
Its constitution is based on the Geneva Convention, to which
is a Party, and on the fundamental principles of the Red Cross,
namely:

Humanity: The Red Cross, 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.

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It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation 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 Red Cross may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence: The Red Cross 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 Red Cross principles.

Voluntary service: The Red Cross is a voluntary relief organization not promoted in any manner by desire for gain.

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

Universality: The Red Cross is a world-wide institution in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.

The Red Cross is a legally constituted association. It possesses legal status. Its term of existence is unlimited. Its headquarters is located at (name of capital).

ARTICLE 2

National and International Character

The Red Cross is officially recognized by the Government as a voluntary relief Society, auxiliary to the public authorities, and particularly to the Medical Services of the Armed Forces in accordance with provisions of the First Geneva Convention, and as the only National Red Cross Society which may carry out its activities in territory.

In relation to the public authorities the Red Cross maintains an autonomy which allows it to act at all times in accordance with the fundamental principles of the Red Cross.

The Red Cross, which was recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (date) is part of the International Red Cross. It is a member of the League of Red Cross Societies.

ARTICLE 5

General Object and Principal Aims

The general object of the Red Cross is to prevent and alleviate suffering with complete impartiality, making no discrimination as to nationality, race, sex, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.

For this purpose its task is in particular:

- (1) to act in case of armed conflict, and in peace prepare to act in all the fields covered by Geneva Conventions and on behalf of all war victims, both civilian and military;
- (2) to contribute to the improvement of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering by programmes of training and services for the benefit of the community, adapted to national and local needs and circumstances;
- (3) to organize, within the scope of the national plan, emergency relief services for the victims of disasters, howsoever caused;
- (4) to recruit, train and assign such personnel as are necessary for the discharge of its responsibilities;
- (5) to promote the participation of children and young people in the work of the Red Cross;
- (6) to propagate the humanitarian principles of the Red Cross in order to develop among the population, and in particular among children and youth, the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding among all men and all peoples.

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ARTICLE 6

Membership of the Society

Membership of the Red Cross is open to everyone without any discrimination based on race, sex, class, religion or political opinions.

There are acting, subscribing and honorary members.

ARTICLE 15

Composition

The Red Cross is controlled and administered by a Central Committee composed:

- (1) of . . . members elected by the General Assembly, . . . of these shall retire and be replaced at each General Assembly;
- (2) of the chairmen of Regional Committees;
- (3) of . . . members, appointed by the different government departments particularly interested in the work of the Red Cross;
- (4) of . . . outstanding personalities chosen by the Central Committee for their special qualifications or because of their interest in the Red Cross.

The term of office of members of the Central Committee is . . . years. It may be renewed.

ARTICLE 16

Powers

Subject to the provisions of Articles . . . and . . . and within the framework of the decisions and general directives adopted by the

General Assembly, the Central Committee is vested with all the powers necessary for carrying out the aims of the Red Cross:

It elects or provides for the election of the President, the Vice Presidents, the Treasurer, the Managing Committee and the Finance Commission.

It appoints and agrees the terms of service of the Secretary General (or Director General).

It provides for the setting up and dissolution of Regional and Local Committees.

It draws up, approves or amends all regulations which are necessary in order to give effect to the present Statutes.

It sets up the committees or commissions which it deems desirable or necessary for carrying out these tasks.

It votes on measures taken by the Managing Committee or President between its sessions.

It appoints the Governor representing the Red Cross on the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies.

ARTICLE 35

Relations and Actions

The Red Cross is party to the solidarity which unites all members of the International Red Cross, National Societies and international organizations of the Red Cross, and maintains continuous relations with them.

It participates to the extent of the means available in international actions of the Red Cross.