

# Statutes of the International Committee of the Red Cross

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## ANNEX

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### Annex I

#### STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (Adopted September 25, 1952)

##### *Article 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.

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

##### *Article 2*

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

##### *Article 3*

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".

##### *Article 4*

The special role of the ICRC shall be :

- (a) to maintain the fundamental and permanent principles of the Red Cross, namely : impartiality, action independent of any racial, political, religious or economic considerations, the universality of the Red Cross and the equality of the National Red Cross Societies ;

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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 and the Red Lion and Sun Society.

- (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 contribute, in view of such conflicts, to the preparation and development of medical personnel and medical equipment, in co-operation with the Red Cross organizations, the medical services of the armed forces, and other competent authorities ;
- (f) to work for the continual improvement of humanitarian international law and for the better understanding and diffusion of the Geneva Conventions and to prepare for their possible extension ;
- (g) to accept the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conferences of the Red Cross.

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 5*

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.

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 assured by a representative of the ICRC accredited to the League and a representative of the League accredited to the ICRC.

### *Article 6*

The ICRC shall co-opt its members from among Swiss citizens. The number of members may not exceed twenty-five.

The rights and duties of members of the ICRC shall be laid down in internal regulations which shall also govern the appointment of honorary members.

Members of the ICRC shall be subject to re-election every three years. If the ICRC elects an Honorary President, the appointment shall be for life.

### *Article 7*

Decisions shall be taken by a majority of the members of the ICRC present.

In the interval between sessions of the ICRC, current work shall be directed by the Presidential Council, composed of the President and at least three members of the ICRC. Any decision of general import shall be reserved for the Committee sitting in plenary session.

The ICRC shall decide the duties of the Presidential Council and the term of office of its members.

### *Article 8*

The ICRC shall establish such services as the extent and nature of its activities make necessary for the accomplishment of its work.

It may establish a Secretariat and appoint Directors to conduct its affairs under its supervision and in accordance with its instructions.

The Directors, the members of the Secretariat and a Treasurer, may be chosen from amongst the members of the ICRC itself, or from outside.

### *Article 9*

The ICRC may appoint delegates for its outside activities. It shall determine, in each given case, the powers and duties of such delegates.

### ARTICLE 10

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*

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 the proceeds of the sale of its publications.

These assets, the utilization of which shall be subject to independent financial verification, and such private 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.

*Article 12*

The present Statutes may only be amended by members of the ICRC meeting in plenary session convened for the purpose, and after two discussions.

No amendment of the Statutes shall be valid unless accepted by two-thirds of the members of the Committee.

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