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In the Spirit of Togetherness

The General Assembly of the International Federation has finished its work in Nairobi, and was followed by the Council of Delegates.

All General Assemblies are important, but I believe this one was more than usually so. In the first place, the General Assembly elected a new President: Tadateru Konoé, from the Japanese Red Cross, to follow Juan Manuel Suárez Del Toro Rivero, who has served eight years. Then the Vice Presidents and Members of the Governing Board were elected.

The General Assembly adopted and discussed the implementation of Strategy 2020 – the document and strategy that will guide us, individually and collectively, in our humanitarian work over the coming decade.



Youth commission vice-chair Maiju Jolma presents to the 17th session of the General Assembly. Nairobi, Kenya, 19 November 2009. Photo by Thomas Omond/IFRC

Strategy 2020 building upon Strategy 2010 represents a mix of continuity and innovation. It focuses on three “Strategic Goals”: save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises; enable healthy and safe living; promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

The Strategy also contains three “enabling actions” meant to support a way of working which supports the strategic goals: build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; pursue humanitarian diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability in a globalized world; function effectively as the International Federation.

Strategy 2020 reflects the ambitions to scale up in disaster management, in developing programs and in humanitarian diplomacy, building on the capacities of National Societies and working together in the spirit of togetherness.

Year 2010 will focus on realization of the Strategy into actions and we all look forward to working on this with you.

Anitta Underlin, Director of Europe Zone

Meeting the Global Agenda Goals

Responding to emergencies

Floods in Azerbaijan In September, heavy rainfall caused flooding of hundreds of houses and roads in central Azerbaijan severely damaging 2,300 houses and affecting 5,000 people. The Azerbaijan Red Crescent is providing support with food and non-food items to 300 families. CHF 124,836 (EUR 82,665) has been allocated from the DREF* to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 1,200 persons. See DREF operation bulletin at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?09/MDRAZ001do.pdf

Earthquake in Georgia. An earthquake of magnitude 6.2 on the Richter scale struck northern Georgia in September destroying or seriously damaging 1,400 dwelling houses. Almost 1,500 families have been affected, of which many are now residing in tents. Until November the Georgian Red Cross Society will assist 150 families with mattresses and blankets. CHF 61,016 (EUR 40,337) has been allocated from the DREF to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 750 people. See DREF operation bulletin at http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?09/MDRGE002do.pdf

Turkey floods In September flash floods triggered by torrential rains killed 33 people and left another 7 people missing in north western Turkey. More than 35,000 people have been affected. The Turkish Red Crescent distributed emergency shelter items, food parcels, bottled water and hygiene kits to the affected people and provided psychosocial support. The TRC will continue to support the affected families till December. CHF 294,118 (EUR 194,421) has been allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Turkish Red Crescent Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 5,000 beneficiaries. Read a story at <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/09/09091703/>

Torrential rain and land slides hit Sicily on 1st October. More than 200 mm of water fell within an hour creating devastating flash floods and mudslides that claimed lives of 24 persons. The Italian Government declared a state of emergency. 120 volunteers of the Italian Red Cross as well as five medical doctors and 16 ambulances were operating in the affected area. This was the worst landslide in Italy since 1998 in Naples.

* DREF - International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund

Greece: Freedom from the Fires

In late August devastating forest fires swept over Greece, killing more than 60 people, damaging or destroying hundreds of homes, livestock, crops and other property, and inflicting long-term damage on the environment.

100 volunteers from the Hellenic Red Cross search and rescue teams (Samaritans Corps) have been giving the best of themselves, providing vital assistance to the people affected by the fierce blazes.

"Our volunteers were carrying out search and rescue, evacuation, they provided first aid to the people affected by the fires and helped with fire fighting operations in the areas of Stamata, Penteli, Dionissos, Marathonas, Pikermi," says Angeliki Kanata from the Hellenic Red Cross.

According to Kanata, while coordinating its action with the Government, the Red Cross mobilized volunteers from its Rescue Team, from Nursing and Social Welfare Divisions. 16 cars of the HRC were offered to support the government rescue operation. The Red Cross Central Warehouse was open round the clock offering relief assistance.

Read an eyewitness account from a Hellenic Red Cross rescuer at <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/07/07090402/>



HRC rescuer helping the fire brigades in Greece, August 2009/Photo by the HRC.

Pandemic Influenza in Ukraine



"The epidemic did not take us by surprise as we were aware of the virus and have made some preparedness steps beginning from June," says Tatiana Magera, 35 from the URCS branch in Ternopil as the epidemic was developing in Ukraine. Tatyana was one of those who organized workshops, spread information leaflets and wrote short articles on epidemic preparedness in the local newspapers. "And yet we did not expect the infection to come and spread so quickly," Tatiana remarks. Read a story from Ukraine at

<http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/09/09110602/>

Meeting the Global Agenda Goals



Tajikistan: vaccination against measles

In October the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan in partnership with the International agencies backed up a nationwide campaign conducted by the health authorities in Tajikistan to immunize an estimated 2.5 million children in the mountainous, landlocked country against measles and rubella.

Hundreds of Red Crescent volunteers in six remote districts of the country helped health officials in community mobilization and information activities, targeting 160,000 households with children aged 0-14 years. In cities and in rural areas the families were informed and invited to the nearest vaccination centres. The campaign was completed by 12 October reaching 97,1 % of the target group. In November the mop-up activities will be continued.

The campaign is taking place as UN aid agencies warn that an appeal launched earlier this year to help Tajikistan recover from the destruction brought by spring floods and mudslides remains seriously underfunded. The appeal, launched by the UN and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in August, has so far attracted 16 per cent of the needed \$7.7 million. The International Federation has allocated \$78,872 assisting the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan in social mobilization in several districts.

Preparedness for H1N1 Pandemic in Europe



A workshop on pandemic preparedness in Budapest in October was conducted within the framework and objectives of the global H1N1 pandemic campaign. The participants discussed ways of developing and maintaining business continuity plans for their National Societies and practiced simple messages of self protection aimed to fight the pandemic. The IFRC is supporting seven National Societies in Europe zone that joined a global campaign and are involved in preparing for and responding to risks associated with A/H1N1. (Photo IFRC)

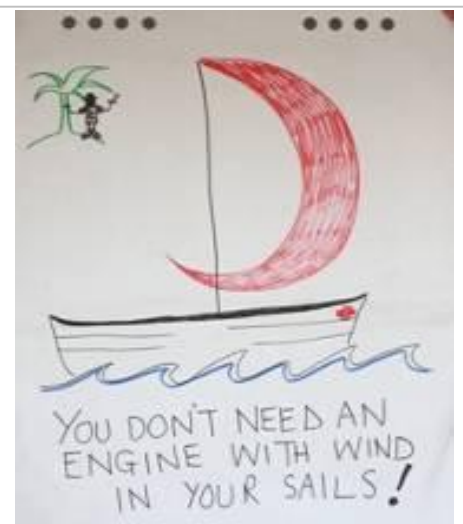
IFRC Learning Platform An online course has been launched on pandemic preparedness and response for Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers. The course is available on the International Federation's new learning platform launched in September. The Europe zone office led the development of the content of the course, in cooperation with the Training Department in Geneva who was liaising with an external company to adapt the developed materials to the online learning environment. The course is also available to the general public, and can be accessed at: <https://ifrc.cyberu.com/client/ifrc/default.aspx>

From “How we work together” to “How we ensure continuity”

In September the second meeting of organizational development practitioners of Europe zone held in Budapest moved the last year's agenda “How we work together more effectively” to “How we ensure continuity in our capacity building and development”.

Five of the 15 National Societies participating in the meeting presented their experience in the field. A session on leadership development facilitated by Geri Lau, Head of OD department in Geneva, was focused on a harmonized approach to building a strong National Society.

Kate Lee, Director of Strategy and Corporate Performance of the British Red Cross conducted a session “What is good leadership for a global organization?”



Platforms for Uniting Voices

Report on Istanbul Commitments:



Make Your Input

How have National Societies moved on since the last European conference in Istanbul in 2007? This is the question we are setting out to answer in a new report for delegates attending the 8th European Red Cross Red Crescent Conference in Vienna in April 2010.

Drawing on case studies, photographs, facts and honest reflections, the report will profile successes and examples of good practice from National Societies across Europe and Central Asia over the last few years without shying away from some of the challenges they've encountered along the way.

The report aims to inform and to inspire delegates. It will also have a life beyond the conference as delegates take it back as a useful resource to share with their National Societies.

To achieve this, we need to hear your stories. The report will focus on the main issues that were carried along from the last Conference: migration, partnerships and programming in health and care, participation, how National Societies collaborate and work together.

Proud of the progress your National Society has made? Tell us, so we can tell others.

To profile work from your National Society in one of these topic areas, please write a couple of paragraphs about what you did and how you did it, the difference the work has made and why you are proud of it. It may be because you've overcome a challenge, seen improvements, developed a new way of working or reached more people. We want to hear about all types of progress - both big and small.

Please send your stories, questions and comments about the Istanbul Commitments report to Project Manager, Liz Hendry at ehendry@redcross.org.uk

To Copenhagen – and beyond

It is already late November, and the United Nations Climate Change Conference is only a week away. From 7 to 18 December, UN Member States will meet in the Danish capital to seek agreement on how to go forward in dealing with the changing climate. Although it seems that a legally binding treaty will not be possible to achieve at the Copenhagen conference, progress is possible.

The International Federation focuses on supporting and giving a voice to communities already affected or likely to be impacted by climate change, and highlight the human face of this unprecedented and growing challenge.

To support that, an advocacy toolkit has been produced and made available on FedNet where it can be accessed at: <https://fednet.ifrc.org/sw184125.asp>.

The main messages are:

- Climate change has a human face – it is increasing disaster risk for millions of the world's most vulnerable people
- Copenhagen represents an opportunity to protect our future generations
- The current global humanitarian system does not have the capacity to handle any increased demand
- Improving safety and resilience through early adaptation action

For the conference, the International Federation has come up with seven recommendations to States. These recommendations included in the advocacy toolkit can be summarized as:

- Disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and scaled-up disaster response are key elements of adaptation strategies
- Strengthen disaster response systems at all levels to enable early action triggered by early warning
- Highest priority to adaptation efforts in vulnerable communities, and integrating adaptation into disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies
- Local preparedness and risk reduction should be recognized as key elements in adapting to climate change; and involve and empower local people, local governments and local civil society actors
- Adaptation funding should cover increased costs of humanitarian action to respond to climate related disasters
- Resource mobilization mechanisms must ensure flow of support to local actors
- Drastic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.



People Trafficking on the Agenda

Representatives from 11 National Societies in Europe met in Budapest in September to discuss issues and activities related to trafficking of human beings. The spectrum of their National Societies' work ranges from awareness raising campaigns to provision of shelter, help centres, screening of victims of trafficking and assistance through vocational training programs.

The workshop allowed the participants to get an inspiring insight into the British Red Cross experience that for nearly a year conducted a process of mapping the trafficking situation in the country. It was an effective way to identify their role and include the activity in the new corporate strategy.

"Our main priority when starting this work was to ensure buy-in from the rest of the organisation," said Eleanor Fethney from the British Red Cross. To achieve that the BRC presented activities related to trafficking as a disaster relief which made it easier to understand and recognize by the rest of the organisation.

Of particular importance was awareness raising and how to really make people change behaviour. "We should reserve the annual meeting for broader perspectives in maintaining the network," says Lars Linderholm, Anti-Trafficking Network facilitator. "Sub-group meetings are a better way to deal with the diversity of interests when some National Societies are only beginners and others need specific thematic discussions." The participants agreed to have their general annual meetings and encouraged IFRC to organize meetings focused on particular topics for national societies with that particular activity.

Humanitarian Diplomacy in Action: Strengthening the Russian Red Cross

Developing the capacities of the Russian Red Cross (RRC), examining new opportunities for international humanitarian assistance projects was high on the agenda of meetings between the secretary general of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Bekele Geleta, and Russian officials on his four-day visit to Moscow in October.

In Moscow, the IFRC secretary general met with Alexander Zhukov, Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Shoygu, Minister of Emergency Situations and Veronika Skvortsova, deputy Minister of Health and Social development. They exchanged views on the RRC as a key civil society organization in the country – with a modernized legal base and a higher public profile. The IFRC expressed its commitment to support the process and high-level Russian government officials also responded positively. “It is our common goal to make the Russian Red Cross stronger,” concluded the deputy minister of Health and Social development at the meeting with Bekele Geleta.



Apart from meeting the top level officials from the Russian Government, Bekele Geleta gave a lecture “The IFRC and humanitarian diplomacy” for students and professors of the Russian Diplomatic Academy. (photo above)



▲ Bekele Geleta (center) answering questions after the lecture at the diplomatic academy. Simon Missiri (left), Head of Resource Mobilization and Government Relations, IFRC and Alexander Panov (right), Rector of the Diplomatic Academy. Photo by G.Kalina

“With this visit the International Federation stressed the importance of closer dialogue and cooperation between the IFRC, the Russian government and the Russian Red Cross,” said Jaap Timmer, head of the IFRC regional representation in Moscow. “These high level talks are crucial in advocating for a strengthening of the Russian Red Cross, and exploring opportunities for the International Federation to serve as a channel of international humanitarian and development aid financed by the Russian government,” he added.

Read full story at
<http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/News/09/09111201/index.asp>

ERNA Meets at Issyk Kul

“Inclusion, Communication and Respect” – was the theme of the 13th ERNA (European Red Cross Red Crescent Network on HIV, AIDS and TB) meeting in September that was hosted by the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Society at the famous mountain lake Issyk Kul. Today ERNA joins 40 National Societies. 45 representatives from 21 countries participated in its September forum.

To make a difference it is crucial to work closer with affected communities. Besides inviting them to share experience, ERNA wants to establish official links with PLWA organizations and encourages its members to look for effective ways of cooperation. Evgeny Pisemsky, a representative of the Russian national organization of PLWA, warned the participants of stigma against PLWA among humanitarian workers and called for a wider involvement of these people in humanitarian action not as beneficiaries but as participants.

2009 showed that the activities aimed at reducing the harm of intravenous drug use are expanding the region of eastern Europe and central Asia. National societies presented their work in the field of TB and HIV. The Italian Red Cross project “Improving harm reduction strategies: Red Cross approach in Europe” approved by the European Commission advocates for a humanitarian approach to the drug problem based on a just and fair treatment of drug users, free from ideology, force, stigmatization and discrimination. Project partners are National Societies from Bulgaria, France, Italy, Latvia and Portugal. Red Cross societies of Croatia and FYR of Macedonia are associate members.



▲ Roza Shayahmetova (on the right) Secretary General of the Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent chairing a session at the ERNA meeting. / Photo by Aigul Niazaliev, RCSK.

Participants noted insufficient visibility of their HIV, AIDS and TB programmes. For two days, at plenary meeting and in groups, they were discussing issues of communication, understanding and involvement of media, beneficiaries and donors in their work. “We are not experts in media relations,” said Sholpan Ramazanova from Kazakhstan Red Crescent. “The media trip organized to Kirgizstan by the British Red Cross in March this year was an unforgettable example of beneficiary communication and getting their story. For me it was a lesson of getting a human story of our beneficiaries through a patient, caring and tactful talk with them,” she said.

After finishing his second term of ERNA presidency **Dr Anders Milton** (Swedish Red Cross) handed over the mission to **Dr Fabio Patrino** (Italian Red Cross) whom the participants elected as the new President. **Sylvie Wieviorka** from the French Red Cross was elected as the vice-president of ERNA. The meeting also approved the new Terms of Reference for the Network. Read more on ERNA at www.erna.rs

Platforms for Uniting Voices

Economic Crisis Report: Next Steps

In October the International Federation published a document setting out some of the humanitarian consequences in Europe of the current economic crisis. It can be accessed at the website of the International Federation (www.ifrc.org).

Building on interviews with the leadership of practically all Red Cross Red Crescent Societies in Europe, the report represents testimonies from them – not statistical or economic research. This is about people – both those in difficulties, and those who try to give them a hand.

These testimonies are stark. Millions and millions of people across the continent suffer the consequences of unemployment, reduced purchasing power, loss of remittances, and a host of other difficulties associated with the economic downturn that followed in the wake of last years' financial crisis.

National Societies, too, have been affected: precisely when the demand for their services goes up, their income base goes down.

Nevertheless, they have maintained their operational ability and capacity to take action, and in the form of the report, have an evidence based set of conclusions and observations that can be used as the basis for discussions on next steps – with governments, with partners, with supporters, or donors.

Much of the action taken by the Red Cross Red Crescent in response to needs generated by the economic crisis is based on existing programmes. Similarly, the International Federation has not recommended the development of new government programmes, but suggested that expanding eligibility criteria combined with adding response capacity through identifying and resourcing non-governmental partners might be a way forward.

The Report has generated much interest both in media and among other audiences. The economic crisis is, of course, not an exclusively European phenomenon, and recently *The New York Times* published an article on an intriguing aspect of the impact on Mexico and on the United States under the headline "Money Trickles North as Mexicans Help Relatives."

The article reveals that, as a result of rising unemployment in the US, Mexican migrants find life there difficult to sustain and have now come to rely on their relatives back home to support them. One explanation offered for the fact that this happens, rather than the migrants simply going home (which, of course, also happens), is the high cost of *becoming* a migrant worker – and the wish to avoid having to pay for that twice.

During the collection of material for the economic crisis report earlier this year, we did not pick up any similar information from National Societies, but we'd be very interested to learn from the readers of this newsletter if they have observed similar phenomena. If so, please do not hesitate to contact us at tore.svenning@ifrc.org.

For those who are interested, the New York Times article can be found at:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/16/world/americas/16mexico.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

Kiev Meeting: From Donorship to Partnership

A partnership meeting under this title organized with support of the IFRC took place in Kiev, Ukraine in September. It was attended by representatives of Red Cross societies from 18 European countries, from Japan and from the USA.



The objective of the meeting was to encourage and initiate new or stronger partnerships and cross border cooperation between Red Cross national societies in the region to enable increased funding possibilities for Red Cross programmes in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine as well as for their neighbouring National Societies.

The meeting welcomed representatives of the Minsk-based Commonwealth of Independent States, the regional European Union and USAID delegations and the regional BBC correspondent, who opened the meeting.

This meeting was the first of its kind, and expectations were high. Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Romania participated as National Societies from experienced EU member states. It showed their level of engagement and experience and willingness to learn and impart the knowledge of their contexts, and most importantly their transitions and their evolving relations with their governments. "The way ahead is difficult, but you can learn from our experience," noted Riina Kabi, Secretary General of the Estonian Red Cross.

"The Conference definitely helped change mindsets," said Joe Lowry IFRC country representative for Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova. "The National Societies in this region are much more willing to specify their priorities and look for funds, rather than to be told what will be funded. There is a long road to travel in terms of resource mobilization in this region but the National Societies understand that they have to start doing it themselves. And they are reaching out to their neighbours, looking for advice, best practices and ideas. Better yet, the "older" EU societies, particularly Italy, Germany, Denmark, Austria and Switzerland are looking to places like Ukraine for examples of how to best run a visiting nurse's service, or to Belarus for ideas on how to retain volunteers. Moldova is being seen as an area where lessons on climate change and the effects of migration can be studied. CHARP serves as a best-practices case for how to run a long-term programme in response to a technological catastrophe," Lowry concluded.

The long-term impact of this meeting will be seen over time, but some immediate initiatives include financial support from Japanese and Italian Red Cross societies; resource mobilisation support from Romania RC to Belarus and Ukraine, a BBC report on Belarus Red Cross support for victims of trafficking; more dialogue with the RC secretariat in Minsk; enhanced donor intelligence (USAID) from American RC; possibilities of support to Moldova from *SlovakAid* and the Austrian Development Authority; creation of a trans-regional database to share best practices, challenges, funding opportunities; a cross-border application to an EU environment call from Moldova, Ukraine and Romania RC; possible cross-border first aid activities for Euro 2012 (Poland-Ukraine, Estonia, Slovakia).



▲ (From left to right) Representatives of the IFRC Minsk office, Polish, Bulgarian, Japanese and Austrian Red Cross societies discussing "Beyond Borders" collaboration at a partnership meeting in Kiev in September. Photo Kirstin Nohr, Danish RC.

Learning IDRL in Almaty

Nearly fifty individuals – members of parliament, civil servants, United Nations personnel and – of course National Society representatives – from Central Asia attended a training workshop on the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) held in Almaty (Kazakhstan) in October.

Co-organised by UN OCHA and the International Federation with support from the European Commission, the event was an opportunity for participants to familiarize themselves with the IDRL Guidelines and discuss their practical implementation in various aspects of disaster management.

From the question of initiation of international assistance, via the issues of foreign relief personnel and legal status and the entry of transport, goods and equipment, the partners went on to discuss protection and humanitarian principles and the role of military assistance. Given the present situation of spreading influenza, the question of humanitarian access in situations of pandemic was also on the agenda.

In the background for the discussion of these topics was the question of how Red Crescent Societies, OCHA and the IFRC might assist governments as they seek to strengthen their regulatory structures for disaster cooperation.

The two-day workshop with participation from governments, parliaments and the UN was followed by a Red Cross Red Crescent follow-up day focusing on legislative advocacy, based on the draft manual developed for that purpose, and intended as an opportunity for National Societies to exchange experiences, examine advocacy in the light of the Principle of Neutrality, and discuss strategies for successful work in this field.

"Both the training workshop with external participants and the follow-up day were successful," said Drina Karahasanovic, the IFRC representative in Central Asia. "It was a good level of dialogue that left a fertile ground for follow up steps and action," she said.

Country-level technical assistance projects will be initiated in two countries. Based on discussions at the Almaty forum, the first candidates for these projects would be Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.



▲ David Fisher, Coordinator of the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles Programme presented IDRL Guidelines and initiated discussion on their practical use (Photo IFRC/Almaty)

Road Safety: the IFRC calls for urgent and global action



More than a thousand representatives from nearly 140 states gathered in Moscow in November for the first global ministerial conference on road safety.

As a member of the Global Road Safety Partnership the International Federation took an active part in the world forum presenting its recent advocacy document *Road Safety Call for Action*. Vadim Kadyrbaev, Vice President of Kazakhstan Red Crescent, participated at the panel discussion representing the IFRC Secretary General.

"The last decade has been used to prepare minds and nations to effectively address the road safety issue. It is now clearly, urgently, time for action. This is what we advocate in our report," says Gerard Lautredou, IFRC Road Safety Advisor.

Out of the three factors – roads, vehicles and human culture – people's behavior accounts for nearly 90 per cent of road accidents through speeding, drinking and driving without wearing seatbelt/helmet.

"We, as leaders in the health and social sectors, must set a good example in our countries by persuading our staff and our partners to be model road users. That's why we have created a *Personal Road Safety Commitment Card* for our members worldwide that I invite you to use and adapt to your context," Vadim Kadyrbaev said presenting the card to the world community of experts dealing with road safety.

The Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) will receive a grant from *Bloomberg Philanthropies* to collaborate in a five-year, 125-million-USD programme to reduce death and injury on the roads of low- and middle-income countries.

Read the story at <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/News/09/09112401/index.asp>

You can find the *Call for Action*, the *Personal Commitment Card* and Road Safety on **Face book** at <http://www.ifrc.org/what/health/roadsafety/call-for-action.asp>)

*Sign your IFRC Road Safety Personal Commitment Card!
Join us on the Facebook!*

10
road safety
commitments

I COMMIT TO:

- Use a seatbelt
- Wear a helmet on a motorcycle
- Drive at a safe speed and distance suitable for the conditions
- Not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Not use a mobile phone when driving
- Be visible as a pedestrian or cyclist
- Know and respect the highway code
- Maintain my vehicle in a good condition
- Be licensed and trained for the vehicle I drive
- Know how to react in case of a crash

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

News from National Societies

A Prize for Inspiration

Somewhat to the surprise of most of the world, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the 2009 Peace Prize to Barack Obama, President of the United States of America.

The International Federation, itself a laureate in 1963, of course congratulates Mr Obama on his selection for this honour, hoping and wishing that it will serve him well in his efforts to make the world a better place for all its inhabitants.

The most-often cited reason for surprise at the award of the Peace Prize to Barack Obama has centred on the fact that he is still relatively new to his position and, as some have pointed out, he would have had to be nominated less than two weeks into his presidency in order to be considered by the Nobel Committee.

The response, from many, has been that the award is a recognition of, and expression of support for, the promise of Mr Obama's tenure: a world in which common problems are addressed jointly, nations respecting one another, and the ability of human beings to live together peaceably made an attainable goal.

Thus, for the first time, the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to support an aspiration - not to reward an achievement.

Let us speculate in that regard: The International Federation and the ICRC received, jointly, the Prize in 1963 – the 100th anniversary of the origins of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It was a reward for past achievement – very great, no doubt, but still past.

The award to Mr Obama raises the question, for us in the Red Cross Red Crescent, of whether we still offer enough promise to merit a future prize. Are we dynamic enough, bold enough, passionate enough and true enough to our origins that we might receive similar encouragement?

The millions of members and volunteers of National Societies deserve every reward and encouragement that can be thought of but, collectively, are we on the right track?

Are the issue we address the right ones?

Are we prepared for the future and the demands it will place on us?

We need to talk about that – not because we need another Peace Prize, but because the vulnerable among us deserve it and need it.

Belarus Red Cross: Involving Older People

"We understand that social vulnerabilities of older people increase with age," says Victor Kabanov, Belarus Red Cross secretary general on the eve of the World Day of the Elderly on 1 October. "One of the Red Cross priorities in Belarus is to support the older people, involve them in social activities, and provide information about their legal rights and social allowances granted by the state. We help develop and implement their individual potential in their communities," he said.

BRC youth are looking for ways of cooperation for young volunteers who could benefit from the wisdom and experience of Red Cross volunteers of older age.

The mini projects for the elderly implemented in several Belorussian regions are supported by the International Federation, by the National Societies of Norway, Switzerland, Austria and Germany. Local authorities support the Red Cross initiatives.



▲ The elderly people from Dashkovka village in Mogilev region of Belarus participated in an excursion to the old Belorussian town of Mstislavl organized by the Red Cross August 2009./Photo BRC.

Croatia: National Life Saving Championship

In September Water Life Saving Service of the Croatian Red Cross held the IV National Life Saving Championship in the coastal town of Omis. This year there were more than 70 competitors from all regions of the country. They competed in six disciplines: surf race, rescue tube race, rescue tube rescue, beach flag, beach sprint and beach relay. Croatian Red Cross - a full member of the International Life Saving Federation (ILS) since 1996 – has its own Water Life Saving Service.



▲ Participants of the Championship performing a rescue operation./Photo CRC

News from National Societies

Kyrgyzstan: Support for Internal migrants



1

Since April 2009, within the regional programme *Central Asian Red Crescent Labour Migration Network* supported by the European Union, Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent Society (KRC) has been providing support for internal migrants in the country.

According to the official statistics, the number of registered internal migrants living in Bishkek alone exceeds 220,000. Most of them live in spontaneous unauthorized settlements that have sprung up around Bishkek. The internally displaced people have neither registration, nor access to the social or health services.

The KRC works with the authorities on legislation changes; provides information for the local communities on their rights and social possibilities; takes steps to ease the procedure of registration for internal migrants.

In settlement Alato in Bishkek, Red Crescent organized a simple way of temporary registration for migrants through volunteer home visits (Photo 1).

Twice a week Lira and Jingal, Red Crescent volunteer instructors set out to conduct workshops for migrants in settlement Ak-Bosogo in Bishkek. (Photo 2,3)

Maksuda, 37 attended the RC workshop with her six-year-old grand daughter. She wants to learn about the risks of working abroad as her two daughters are looking for a job outside Kyrgyzstan. (Photo 4)



3.



4



2

Georgia: A Way out of Loneliness



Lili Lortkipanidze, 75, has been actively involved in the Red Cross social centre for older people in Kutaisi – the second largest city in Georgia 200 km west of Tbilisi - since the day she arrived there in 2006.

“After I lost my job, I felt so isolated,” Lili explains. “This club was a way out of my loneliness. I come here every morning and help elderly people learn about their rights.”

When Georgia emerged from the Soviet Union as an independent state in 1991, its economy and public services quickly fell into decline and older people particularly suffered. Pensions were not paid and medical facilities were turning them away, disregarding their rights to free treatment.

Older people without family or other social networks to support them became destitute. In response to this situation, the Georgia Red Cross set up a programme in Kutaisi to help socially excluded older people. As well as practical support, the programme includes ongoing advocacy to authorities by older people, volunteers and project staff.

Lili is the head of the advisory committee set by the project. Dialogue with the local authority has led to changes, not least in the authority's change in attitude and respect for older people. “With our help, one elderly person received a new roof for her house,” Lili says. “Our mediation also led to 500 people obtaining a free transportation allowance and 15 people receiving walking sticks.”

“Now we have a media group, which makes TV programmes and writes newspaper articles about our organisation. As a result, everybody knows about this club. I think there are 1,200 elderly people in Kutaisi who need support. Those who don't come to our club learn about their rights through the brochures and booklets that we place at different municipal centres.”

Older people involved in the project say they have regained a sense of dignity. Having better information about their entitlements and then working together to secure them has reduced their sense of powerlessness. (By Sarah Oughton, British Red Cross)

Volunteers' Agenda

Your help is also needed – a volunteer's poster at the HRC branch in Heves County, Hungary



▲ On Behalf of ENDOV Maryanne Burton (centre) greeted the volunteers of the Hungarian Red Cross at the Heves County branch in Eger.



▲ Ferran Cobertera Hidalgo updated the ENDOV on the news from the Reference Centre of Volunteering hosted by the Spanish Red Cross.

Volunteering – an issue for all

Adelina Misi, 17 together with Sándor Toth, 86 presented the volunteers of the Heves County branch of the Hungarian Red Cross that hosted a half day session of the ENDOV (European Network for the Development of Volunteering) during its bi-annual meeting in Budapest in November.

Sándor Toth (top left photo) devoted part of his life to the blood donor service of the HRC. Adelina (photo on the right) was one of the 364 Hungarian Red Cross young volunteers, winners of the national first aid competition, who worked at the lake Balaton last summer. Nearly 3,000 holiday makers received assistance from the Red Cross first aiders, she said.

The ENDOV brings National Societies together to study, explore and promote various aspects of volunteering.

To know how you work at branch level, to learn about twinning projects, to learn about the e-learning system, to look for the ways to adapt volunteer initiatives between east and west – were the expectations of 29 participants from 18 countries at their ENDOV meeting in Budapest.

Addressing the meeting Tore Svenning, advisor on humanitarian diplomacy for Europe zone, provoked thinking on the benefits of networking. Zlatko Kovac, IFRC human pandemic preparedness coordinator, involved the participants in interactive discussion on the key issues related to the National Societies' work in pandemic preparedness and response. According to Lena Andren from the Swedish Red Cross, 3,000 volunteers in Sweden are assisting in vaccination process. Maryanne Burton from Great Britain shared experience of their "Flu Friends" programme.

Diana Sasz from the IFRC Europe zone office, facilitated a session on e-learning that caused a lot of interest among the participants. Read more on the results of the meeting at www.rcvolunteering.org.



▲ Székács Ferencné (left) and Adelina Misi presenting HRC volunteers to ENDOV.



▲ Frank Cleassens (Netherlands RC) and Salima El Khattabi Iglesias (Andorra RC) at the ENDOV meeting in Budapest.



Cash Transfers in Humanitarian Assistance

In September, representatives from 11 National Societies and from partner organizations such as Help Age International, World Food Programme, Oxfam and Mercy Corps got together for a three-day workshop on cash transfer programming in humanitarian assistance. The course organized by the International Federation was hosted by the Montenegro Red Cross at its training centre called *House of Solidarity* in Sutomore.

The training was initiated through collaboration with the *Cash and Learning Partnership* (CaLP), a consortium consisting of *Save the Children*, *Oxfam* and the British Red Cross, that aims to strengthen the quality of cash transfer programming in the humanitarian sector.

The course was developed for practitioners who make decisions on the appropriateness of cash programmes after emergencies and are involved in their implementation.

The agenda included a study of cash programming as a possible response to humanitarian needs; assessment and analyses of data that helps identify the needs of cash transfers; operational and delivery mechanisms required for a cash project as well as ways of their monitoring and evaluation.

The participants learnt and shared experience on providing cash as part of emergency relief projects. The costs, benefits, timeliness and appropriateness of different ways of providing cash to people in emergencies as well as different delivery mechanisms (direct delivery, banks, remittance companies, mobile banking) were touched upon in the discussions, as well as possible arrangements with potential commercial providers.



▲ Participant of the workshop at Sutomore./Photo by MRC.

"Direct cash transfers to beneficiaries are relatively new for the National Societies in Europe zone," says Slobodanka Curic, EZ Disaster Management coordinator. "The Ukrainian Red cross started such programme in 2007. This year the Czech Red Cross was transferring money for renovation of houses that suffered from the summer floods. Austrian, German, British and Finnish National Societies also have had such programmes. This workshop gave us all a chance to learn from other agencies and from National Societies from countries outside Europe that have experience in this field."

Representatives of the National Societies from Spain, Croatia, Bulgaria, Austria, Cyprus, Malta, Finland, Ethiopia, Nepal, Montenegro and MDA Israel were at the workshop. Montenegro Red Cross ensured efficient organization of the workshop at its *House of Solidarity* - a centre that has welcomed a series of national and international events in disaster management.

*** **Cash Based Responses Discussion Forum** that stemmed originally from the Tsunami Cash Learning-Project is a forum for a global discussion of cash based responses and related work in emergencies at <http://dgroups.org/CommunityInfo.aspx?c=4c1906e1-5aae-4fc6-9c1f-aa950cea4595>

Funding for 2009

Programmes in Europe zone		Budget	Funding	Coverage*
MAA65001	Europe Zone	1,970,796	1,045,914	53%
MAA66001	C Europe and S Caucasus	698,058	560,929	80%
MAABA002	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,118,083	506,818	45%
MAAKV001	Kosovo	799,260	1,078,782	135%
MAAME001	Montenegro	560,289	90,900	16%
Traditional MAARS001	Serbia	1,952,439	1,230,105	63%
MAA67002	CHARP (Chernobyl)	544,248	378,053	69%
MAA67003	Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine	294,332	260,599	89%
MAABY002	Belarus	1,254,354	1,146,722	91%
MAAMD002	Moldova	455,106	187,145	41%
MAARU002	Russian Federation	3,491,712	4,481,479	128%
MAAUA002	Ukraine	586,818	119,810	20%
MAAAM002	Armenia	621,585	384,698	62%
MAAAZ002	Azerbaijan	586,120	269,992	46%
MAAGE002	Georgia	1,324,605	905,827	68%
MAAKG001	Kyrgyzstan	1,190,433	922,942	78%
MAAKZ001	Kazakhstan	1,927,469	1,659,950	86%
MAATJ002	Tajikistan	1,952,629	1,999,406	102%
MAATM001	Turkmenistan	1,347,134	731,173	54%
MAAUZ001	Uzbekistan	1,220,975	777,183	64%
Subtotal EUROPE ZONE		23,896,443	18,738,426	78%

*The table reflects the situation with funding coverage by country. November 2009.

HR: Getting Acquainted

In September the participants from National Societies of Belarus, Finland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the UK attended the first Europe Zone Human Resources Network meeting held in Budapest.

"While working on certain issues of capacity building, identifying our strengths and areas for development, we were building relationships amongst participants thereby forming a Europe zone network for continued collaboration after the meeting," said Fiona Walker, HR manager for Europe zone.

"For me it was an important opportunity to get acquainted with people and with the HR structures beyond my office," says Elena Dorzhieva, HR manager from the IFRC regional representation in Moscow. "In live discussions with peers from various countries and National Societies we identified the crucial role of National Societies' HR policies and practices to ensure the success of Strategy 2020," she said.

The Belarus Red Cross, one of the first among the former soviet states, developed and adopted a new policy on human resources. This significant step forward in their organizational development can become a case study for many National Societies.

In Kyrgyzstan the Red Crescent Society faced a challenge of lack of human resources which became a stumbling stone in implementing various programmes. They invited colleagues from the British Red Cross to help develop a new policy that would improve recruitment and people management.

The experience of such cooperation between the two National Societies was shared with the participants.

"This workshop opened for us opportunities of matching challenges and capacities in human resources between National Societies within Europe zone," said Elena Dorzhieva.



Human Resources

Staff changes in the EZ team

Elias Ghanem has been appointed as Head of Support Services, Europe Zone and will start on 1 December.

Mirva Lindqvist Okoye from the Finnish Red Cross has been selected as Human Resources Manager, Europe Zone and will start her mission on 1 January.

Timea Kramcsak (Hungary) will start her work as a Finance Analyst, Europe Zone on 4 December.

Nelima Lassen (nel@drk.dk) from the Danish Red Cross has taken the position of Regional Programme Delegate Danish Red Cross in the Balkan region as Line **Thaudahl Jakobson**, ended her mission in Belgrade.

As part of the Psychological Support roll-out to zones two stress counselors are sought for the Europe Zone. These positions are part-time and successful candidates will be contracted on retainer contracts. A selection / training workshop will be held in the Europe Zone Office the week of 23 November 2009 to select the two successful candidates. A workshop on Stress Management will be held for Europe Zone staff members on Friday 27 November 2009.

ADVERTISEMENT: BOOKS WANTED!

At Europe Zone Office, there are many publications available – produced by the Secretariat in Geneva, by National Societies, the ICRC or by other organisations. Most of these are of a technical nature – giving guidance on disaster management, health issues, how to go about programming or raise funds.

We have much fewer books and publications about the Red Cross Red Crescent, or personalities associated with the Movement, or written by them.

In order to build up a little library of books concerning or written about the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we would appreciate it if National Societies would send us copies of publications they have issued, or can obtain for us.

Please do not restrict your selection to the English language: we want our library to reflect the glorious diversity of the Zone and its people as reflected in National Societies across Europe.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact [Margarita Plotnikova@ifrc.org](mailto:Margarita.Plotnikova@ifrc.org) or [Tore Svenning@ifrc.org](mailto:Tore.Svenning@ifrc.org)

Miscellaneous

Buy Jewellery and Do Some Good!

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the idea of the Red Cross, Pierre Lang, an Austrian jewellery manufacturer, designed and manufactured a cross pendant with glittering, hand-set red crystals on two ribbons.

The anniversary necklace is available for the price of EUR 39 throughout Europe and can be purchased at Pierre Lang Jewellery Consultants and via www.pierre-lang.com.

EUR 3 of each sale are donated to the Red Cross.

Participating countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia and Switzerland.

Visit a link Pierre Lang installed at the Austrian Red Cross web-site:

<http://www.roteskreuz.at/berichten/aktuelles/news/datum/2009/08/20/pierre-lang-entwirft-rotkreuz-schmuck/>

For further requests feel free to contact *Andrea Winter*, Austrian Red Cross, Head of Public Relations, Press and Media Service [mail to: andrea.winter@redcross.at](mailto:andrea.winter@redcross.at)



This newsletter is produced bimonthly in Europe zone based on the International Federation's monthly management reports and materials prepared and sent by National Societies and International Federation communication officers.

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