



Mr. Francesco Rocca  
Extraordinary Commissioner  
Italian Red Cross

Ms. Patrizia Ravaioli  
General Director  
Italian Red Cross

Leonardo Carmenati  
Director Operations Division

Budapest, 21 November 2012

**Re: Italian Red Cross National Simulation**

Dear Francesco, Patrizia and Leonardo

Let me congratulate all of you for the excellent organization of the National Civil Protection Exercise, which I had the chance to witness last Saturday. I must admit I am impressed by the level of preparedness and response capacity of the Italian Red Cross.

As we all know, we live in a continuously-changing world, where the number, size and complexity of disasters continue to increase. Decades of development gains can be wiped out in minutes, lives destroyed, and livelihoods lost.

The first months of 2012, in particular, have seen a significant increase in the number of natural disasters affecting countries of the Europe Zone, with a high number of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff engaged in the response operations. These events show not only the strong response skills of National Societies, but particularly their capacity to adapt to different and unpredictable disaster scenarios.

Each Euro spent on disaster preparedness can save four Euros spent in responding to it afterwards. So disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities - like the one that I was honoured to attend last Saturday - are cost-effective ways for governments to protect not only their people, but the infrastructure their economies depend on.

Let me also remark the leading role played by the Italian Red Cross on an international level, in tackling the humanitarian consequences of disasters and crises around the world, and in supporting sister National Societies in their emergency response efforts.

A not less relevant element to be remembered is the effective working relationship between the Italian Red Cross and the National Civil Protection Department. It is also thanks to such a well-functioning cooperation – which guarantees good coordination and integration of the activities at national, regional and local level – that your National Society has managed to guarantee timely and quality support to the people affected by disasters and crises on your national territory.

Let me once again congratulate the management, staff and volunteers of the Italian Red Cross for their great work both at domestic and international levels, and let me encourage you to keep leading by example across our Movement, as a strong and innovative National Society that cares, prepares and connects.

Sincerely yours



Getachew T'aa  
Head of Corporate Services and National Society Support  
Acting Director  
Europe Zone Office