



Geneve, 6th December 2015

*Mr. President, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Participants and Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Monsieur le Président, vos Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les participants et invités,*

On behalf of Italian Red Cross, Regional Branch of Sicily, I am delighted and honoured to be here with you and to receive this prestigious award, given for the important effort on the field of humanitarian action for people on the move.

With the hard work of thousands of Volunteers and Staff members, we tried to put into action the noble Idea of our founder: helping vulnerable people with humanity and impartiality, saving their lives, providing safe livelihoods, restoring family links, assisting with psychological support, fighting against discrimination.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and also to thanks all the members of the Governing Board, the Secretary General, Mr. Elhadj As Sy, and the President of Italian Red Cross, Mr. Francesco Rocca, for having thought of us. But let me especially thanks all Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies for the continuous support they gave us. Messages, encouragement, resources: we strongly felt, also in the most difficult moments, the perception of Universality of our Movement. We've never felt alone!

Fifty representatives out of eight thousands of Red Cross members of Sicily are here. I want to underline that their faces were, and are, the first helping face migrants see at their arrival in Italy, after a trip in which they suffer violence and trauma. Red Cross Volunteers were, and are, on the harbours, exactly where they need to be, to welcome hundreds of thousands of people as they arrive, trying to restore their dignity.

This award is given to them, to the their hands, to their conviction on changing minds, to their willingness to innovate our local branches, to their courage to scream to all, citizens, governments, international institutions and organizations, that no human being is illegal!

*Simply, but from the deep of our heart,
Thank you! Merci! Gracias! شكر (sciucran)! Cracu6o (spasiba)!*

Rosario M.G. Valastro