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**Special  
issue**

# Europe Zone

A newsletter of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



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## World Red Cross Red Crescent Day 2011

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International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Editorial

“Dear friends,

Last Sunday, our Movement celebrated the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day 2011. Our day.

Coming back from the celebrations held on Sunday by the Hungarian Red Cross here in Budapest, during which almost a hundred medals were handed over to volunteers for their many years of dedication and hard work, my mind went immediately to the tens of thousands of other Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers who were celebrating and being celebrated at that very moment.

That was the difference which marked this year's edition of the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day: the fact that this year we wanted every and each of our volunteers to be the reason why we celebrated: in 2011, marked by both the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Volunteer and the European Year of Volunteering, the 8 of May represents an incredible opportunity to promote and recognise the role that volunteers have played in enabling our Movement to become the largest humanitarian network in the world.

If I think about the last year alone, the Europe Zone has been facing an increasing number of disasters and crises: the ongoing migration flow from North Africa and the Middle East to Italy and Malta, the population movement from Kyrgyzstan to Uzbekistan, the red sludge in Hungary last October, the higher and higher number of floods and natural disasters related to climate change which have been striking South Eastern Europe, just to list a few.

In each of these difficult situations, Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers were there to support the affected populations, even if they were themselves the



**Ms. Anitta Underlin**  
Director of Europe Zone

victims of the crises they were responding to.

Quoting the words of our President, Mr. Tadateru Konoé and the President of the ICRC, in their joint statement for the 8 of May, “Disasters will continue to happen. War and other situations of violence, natural and technological disasters, hunger, disease, and discrimination are the reality of our humanitarian landscape. One of the greatest resources we have in addressing these crises is our volunteers, and that’s why we’re using World Red Cross Red Crescent Day this year to pay tribute to their invaluable service.”

This special issue of our newsletter, collecting some examples of the activities organized by National Societies throughout Europe and Central Asia on the 8 of May and during the week leading up to that, is dedicated to the over one and a half million Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers in our Zone, and the enormous social value that they bring to their communities.

**Anitta Underlin**  
Europe Zone, Director

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## World Red Cross Red Crescent Day 2011

### Azerbaijan: social media, promotion of volunteering and advocacy work

In the week leading up to the 8 of May, the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), in the framework of 2011 'Find the volunteer inside you' campaign, put in place a number of activities, such as blood donation campaigns, visits to lone elderly, meetings at the Association of People with Haemophilia and Thalassemia, and a march of National Society staff members and volunteers to Baku city National Park, which took place on the 8.

The main purpose of the events was for the National Society to express its gratitude to all the volunteers who provided support in different situations, and reaffirm their crucial role in the life of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement before partners, government structures and public organizations, as well as remark the need for more support in better protecting them as they provide their service.

The celebrations for the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day started on 3 May with the organisation of a recruitment event for voluntary non-remunerated blood donors in two universities in Baku, where students were encouraged to donate their blood, especially to support people with blood diseases such as haemophilia and thalassaemia. The National Society also agreed with both institutions to hold a series of workshops on healthy lifestyles, correct nutrition and recreation. On the occasion of the event, more than one fifth of the over 500 participants became blood donors.

As a continuation of the initiative started on 5 December 2010, International Volunteers Day, to organize different events involving children with haemophilia and thalassemia on a regular basis, and help them better integrate them into society, on 5 May 2011 the Azerbaijan Red Crescent held a workshop at the Training Centre of the Azerbaijan Association of People with Haemophilia and Thalassemia, where children were involved in discussions and activities around the topics "What does it mean to be a Volunteer?"

On 6 May, staff and volunteers from the Headquarters, chairpersons from 11 Red Crescent local branches of Baku city, Red Crescent visiting nurses and doctors paid a visit to 22 lone elderly people. Thanks to their close relationships with local authorities and hospitals, the chairpersons of Red Crescent local branches are working to advocate for the needs of the elderly, trying to solve issues related to pensions, the assessment of the level of disability and related pension scheme, frequency of doctors' visits, etc.



**March of Red Crescent leadership and management, staff and volunteers of the ARCS to Baku city National Park**

**Find out more on the ARCS on:**

- **Website**
- **Facebook**
- **Twitter**
- **Youtube**



## World Red Cross Red Crescent Day 2011



Kyrgyz Red Crescent volunteers during one of the activities with children held in Bishkek on 8 May

### Kyrgyzstan: bringing joy to vulnerable children

On 8 May, the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan organised an event dedicated to some 250 vulnerable children, in particular street children and orphans, in one cinema of Bishkek.

“The cartoon about this parrot has given me so many good emotions” said one of the boys staying in a children’s protection centre. “For a moment I even forgot that I am completely alone. I wish that this bird could find my family, home and friends and bring them back to me. I would like to thank the Red Crescent for this wonderful day!”

All Red Crescent branches organised events devoted to the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day: in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan alone, the National Society held 13 public events. A parade of Red Crescent volunteers marched through the streets of Jalalabad town, while the Red Crescent regional branch in Issyk Kul gathered together staff and volunteers for a first aid competition.

### Kazakh Red Crescent focusing on inclusion

The Kazakh Red Crescent Society marked the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day with a series of initiatives, such as round tables, public events, competitions and meetings for staff and volunteers, especially including those from vulnerable groups, like labour migrants and sex workers.

On the 7 and 8 of May, the Red Crescent regional branch in Almaty, for instance, conducted an awareness-raising initiative covering about 300 people; “Safe wheel”, a road safety competition among 70 school students was organised by Red Crescent staff and volunteers in one of the secondary schools of Taldykorgan city. Peer-to-peer education on HIV prevention was also provided by young volunteers to some 60 medical college students.

Active volunteers from labour migrant groups in Almaty region helped the Red Crescent staff to invite migrant people to a celebration lunch held in the Red Crescent canteen, where they got consultations about legal and social issues and health protection. Most vulnerable people also received humanitarian assistance from the Red Crescent Society, in the form of food parcels, shoes and clothing.

## World Red Cross Red Crescent Day 2011

### Italian Red Cross: *eight minutes for life*

On 8 May, 2011, 68 local branches and thousands of youth volunteers of the Italian Red Cross gathered in squares, parks, promenades and other public places to raise general awareness of all the range of activities the Italian Red Cross volunteers are engaged in on a day-to-day basis, by distributing information materials, showcasing activities, doing simulations, and involving the population in games and leisure activities. Club 25, STDs prevention, dissemination of IHL, first aid and moulage simulations, provision of basic health services such as measurement of blood pressure, concerts, campaigns on road safety and climate change, clown shows, and photo exhibitions were some of the activities performed by the volunteers. A few local branches organised a ceremony for the delivery of the IFRC Youth Declaration to local authorities.

From 28 April to 8 May, in the framework of the 2011 edition of '30 ore per la vita' (lit. Thirty hours for life), an awareness- and fund-raising campaign which every year goes in the air on Italian TV channels and which this year will support the Italian Red Cross, local branches set up display booths throughout the national territory.

This year, indeed, under the slogan, '8 minutes for life. Surviving a cardiac arrest is possible. But not a belated rescue', such campaign will raise funds for the Italian Red Cross in order to purchase semi-automated external defibrillators and first-aid kits, with the overall goal of providing public schools and sports centres on the national territory with such life-saving equipment, and thus reducing the number of preventable deaths from cardiac arrest.

Strong media coverage on national media wires was provided, especially during the week from 25 April to 1 May, and a series of audiovisual materials, including videos, were produced.

For more information on the campaign, click [here](#).

To watch the videos of the campaign, click [here](#).



A youth volunteer of the Italian Red Cross doing face painting to a little girl





## World Red Cross Red Crescent Day 2011



**Official reception dedicated to the 8 of May, held on 3 May in Tbilisi**

RCRC Day was organized by Movement partners. Among the guests invited to the reception were GRCS volunteers, 'Social support to elderly' project beneficiaries, as well as representatives of the government, international organizations, diplomatic missions, and private sector.

Welcome speeches were delivered by the President of GRCS, Mrs. Nana Keinishvili, the IFRC Country Representative in Georgia, Mr. Elkhan Rahimov, and the ICRC Head of Delegation in Georgia, Ms. Ariane Tombet, who gave special attention to the NS's volunteers for their valuable input in Red Cross work, noting how the overall number of volunteers significantly increased last year, as well as the professional quality of the services delivered.

On 4 May, the opening ceremony of the new social centre for elderly was held in Isani-Samgori district of Tbilisi. This centre is a place where older people will have the opportunity to spend leisure time getting involved in a number of activities according to their interests, as well as get information about their rights, and better integrate with society.

On 5 May, the Health and Care department of the GRCS conducted a presentation on TB transmission, prevention, and treatment to students of the secondary school "Mtiebi", in order to raise awareness of tuberculosis among young people, and especially of the related issues of stigma and discrimination of people with TB.

As part of its tradition to organise events in support of children with leukaemia, on 6 May, Red Cross volunteers dressed in clowns costumes, visited a hospital in Tbilisi and held a show for children, which a physician working in the clinic, Mrs. Guliko Gorelishvili, praised as "useful tool to stimulate positive emotions, which have a valuable influence in the process of treatment."

### Georgia: a whole week of celebrations

It has become a tradition for the Red Cross Society of Georgia (GRCS) to celebrate the World Red Cross Red Crescent Day with a series of events during the whole week concluding with the 8 of May, and which this year was organized under the 'Find the Volunteer inside You' campaign.

On 2 May, 2011, the Red Cross Red Crescent Week was opened by a charity concert organised by the local Red Cross branch in Gori, where internal displaced people living in the collective centres of Karaleti and Verkhvebi and Red Cross volunteer leaders were invited.

On 3 May, an official reception dedicated to the World RCRC Day was organized by Movement partners. Among the guests invited to the reception were GRCS volunteers, 'Social support to elderly' project beneficiaries, as well as representatives of the government, international organizations, diplomatic missions, and private sector.

Welcome speeches were delivered by the President of GRCS, Mrs. Nana Keinishvili, the IFRC Country Representative in Georgia, Mr. Elkhan Rahimov, and the ICRC Head of Delegation in Georgia, Ms. Ariane Tombet, who gave special attention to the NS's volunteers for their valuable input in Red Cross work, noting how the overall number of volunteers significantly increased last year, as well as the professional quality of the services delivered.

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