FLORENCE CALL FOR ACTION

Guided by our Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values which should be promoted, emphasized, and be strictly adhered to at all times and under all circumstances,

Recalling that more people are falling below the poverty line, the gap between rich and poor is growing, savings and salaries are being eroded, and more and more ‘working poor’ are turning to aid agencies, vulnerable groups such as migrants are exposed to further discrimination, marginalization and violence,

Understanding that in Europe and Central Asia the humanitarian consequences of the economic crisis will affect people for decades to come, in varying ways and impact in different countries,

Acknowledging that some National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have expanded and adjusted their programmes to meet growing needs and reach new groups of vulnerable people, others have realised the need to adapt but have not yet been able to mobilize the resources required to respond to the changing needs.

Committed not only to think differently but also to act differently in finding lasting solutions for and with the people affected by the crisis.

We, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Europe and Central Asia, gathered in Florence on 4-6 June 2014, call on governments, corporate sector, partners and other organisations to engage with us and invest in innovative and long term solutions to turn the tide of the crisis and bring hope to those most affected.

As auxiliary to public authorities, National Societies call on their respective governments and parliamentarians to demonstrate leadership and collaborate with us in order to:

- Secure social welfare for vulnerable people,
- Shift from the emergency response mentality to an investment approach with sustainable funding that focuses on securing livelihoods,
- Fulfil their commitments and obligations to meet the right to adequate food by enabling people in need to access affordable food at all times, in a dignified manner, and paying particular attention to nutrition needs,
- Promote food management education and take action to reduce food waste across Europe and Central Asia,
Promote humanitarian education, including through formal curricula to be agreed with relevant Ministries,

Ensure legislative measures that further recognize, promote and protect volunteers, and safeguard their value in meeting humanitarian needs and contributing to social capital,

Secure access for all to information as a human right, especially in a digital environment.

**Specifically in regard to migrants**

- Implement Resolution n°3 of the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent emphasizing the importance of dignity, respect for diversity, and social inclusion for migrants,
- Ensure everyone, especially people fleeing conflict and insecurity, has unhindered access to basic human rights, in particular the right to protection, health care, education and social services, at any phase of their journey.
- Recognize the humanitarian mandate of National Societies of Europe and Central Asia in providing principled humanitarian assistance to migrants,
- Stop labelling migrants as “illegal”
- Highlight the positive contribution that migrants make to respective countries socially, economically, culturally and demographically; and equally recognize the substantial contribution of migrants to their country of origin, for example through remittances which far exceed the value of development aid and cooperation funds spent annually,
- Re-engage in effective cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination, with a priority given to ensuring humanitarian protection of migrants and tackling human trafficking.

**To the corporate sector**

- Take steps to support the integration of migrants and ensure they are valued and respected on equal terms with other employees and in this way preserve the value that migrants bring to the domestic and global economies and the society,
- Respond to the opportunity to make a visible contribution to society by engaging in food management initiatives that help to significantly reduce waste and support the vulnerable communities,
- Embrace the shared value in working collaboratively with us on initiatives that will help build resilient and healthy communities, recognizing that we are a unique global-local partner that offers many opportunities to contribute to humanitarian action,
- Embrace the opportunity to collaborate with us in expanding the use of modern technologies in support of humanitarian activities,
- Recognize the added value of volunteering for employees and employers, and support volunteering commitments by facilitating volunteers in achieving an appropriate life balance.

**To communities**

- Work with us to ensure social inclusion and fight against all forms of discrimination,
- Promote good nutrition practices and reduce food waste,
• Engage with the Red Cross Red Crescent to express your solidarity, and volunteer as an agent of change,
• Through volunteering, build your competences and enrich your experience for future career development.

To National Societies

• Urge National Societies of Europe and Central Asia to actively work on coordinated appeals meant to enhance their capacities in responding and adapting to increasing needs;
• Empower their volunteers by valuing their specific skills and providing certified trainings that contribute to volunteers personal and professional development.
• Lower internal barriers such as membership fees or mandatory time commitment,
• Foster integrated approach to scale up programmes based on data and evidence,
• Invest in new technologies to be more efficient in engaging communities and scale up humanitarian services,
• Engage with communities, including migrants, as partners and full actors of our humanitarian mission.
• Engage in robust advocacy on migrant protection and the promotion of diversity.
• Implement youth-related policies and decisions, ensure youth participation and contribution are effectively integrated into decision-making mechanisms, and promote youth engagement especially through new technologies.
• Strive towards meeting diversity goals, at all levels of National Societies and the IFRC with particular focus on nationality, age and gender.
• Tackle social conditions and determinants that frequently drive health-related vulnerabilities.
• Encourage National Societies to take full advantage of the wealth of knowledge and good practices presented and shared during the European Conference in Florence.