

# ***Facing Fear***

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Helping Young People  
Deal With Terrorism and Tragic Events

*Expect the Unexpected™* Curriculum Supplement featuring lesson plans  
and activities about feelings, facts and the future.

**For students aged 11-13.**



Canadian  
Red Cross

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# The Peace Doves



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These doves were selected from a CSQ (Centrale des Syndicats du Québec) campaign that was led after the September 11 events to allow students to express their feelings about the tragedy. These messages were sent to the Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chrétien. 23,500 elementary and high school students participated in the campaign.

# Table of Contents

What We Hope These Materials Will Do .....	ii
Lesson Plans and Objectives .....	iii
Background for the Teacher .....	iv
LESSON PLAN 1	
Be Media Savvy .....	1
LESSON PLAN 2	
Impact of the Facts .....	4
LESSON PLAN 3	
Facts About Terrorism and War .....	7
ACTIVITY SHEETS .....	9

# What We Hope These Materials Will Do

1. Help children feel safe and secure in the aftermath of a terrorist action or tragic event.
2. Help teachers talk to their students about emotionally challenging events.
3. Give students experience in talking about frightening events that they hear or see reported in the media and hear discussed at school and at home.
4. Help teachers and students become critical viewers of the media and use the media to gather facts and distinguish facts from opinion and unsupported observations.
5. Provide a positive outlet for students to express themselves and contribute to the community.
6. Help children and families know what to do and how to prepare for the future.
7. Provide an understanding of the concepts behind the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement—which are based on international laws developed to help and protect people during war or armed conflict—and their application in today's world.

# Lesson Plans and Objectives

Lesson Plans and Objectives for Students aged 11-13.

Lesson Plans	Objectives Students will:
<b>Lesson Plan 1</b> <i>Be Media Savvy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the difference between fact and opinion.</li><li>• Search the media and evaluate the use of fact and opinion.</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Plan 2</b> <i>Impact of the Facts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify initial and secondary effects caused by an event; describe a ripple effect.</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Plan 3</b> <i>Facts About Terrorism and War</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brainstorm, compare and discuss their perceptions of war or armed conflict.</li><li>• Write and perform choral readings to share and analyse their perceptions of war.</li><li>• Design rules of humanitarian behavior toward vulnerable people and compare these rules with the Geneva Conventions.</li></ul>

# Background for the Teacher

*Facing Fear™* is a flexible curriculum to help young people aged 5-16 be prepared for disasters and deal with the aftermath of terrorism and tragic events.

As much as we would like to protect our children, we cannot shield them from personal or community tragedies. We can, however, help them to be prepared for unforeseen dangerous events and to learn about facing and moving beyond their fears and related concerns.

Young people may be particularly worried about issues of safety, security and trust. There are many reactions that are common after a trauma or disaster. These include re-experiencing the event (for example, flashbacks), avoidance and numbing of feelings, increased arousal and changes in functioning. These reactions may be manifested in clingy behaviors, mood changes, increased anxieties, increased startle responses (for example, more jumpy with noises), somatic complaints and regressive behavior. Increased aggressive behaviors may also be seen. When the trauma or disaster is man-made, such as a terrorist event, young people may react with hurtful talk, behaviors or play. All of these reactions are normal responses and will, in general, dissipate with time. However, should these persist or increase over time, a referral to a mental health professional should be considered. Similarly, should these reactions result in a danger to self or others, an immediate referral may be warranted.

Young people 12 to 18 years old have a great need to appear knowledgeable and experienced to the world, especially to their family and friends. However, intense reactions and feelings in the aftermath of a tragic event may overwhelm adolescents. They may deny being impacted as a way to gain distance from the event. Because teens have been struggling with increased independence and autonomy, they may be uncomfortable discussing the event with family members. Teenage years are a period of moving outward into the world, but experiencing a trauma can create a feeling that the world is unsafe. They may have worries about re-occurrence of the event or repercussions, such as war or school violence. One result may be a sense of a foreshortened future—they cannot project themselves into a life years from the present. Although they may not outwardly acknowledge concerns about safety of self and others, these worries and anxieties need to be addressed. Young adolescents may show regression in their increased independence, turning once again to parents and teachers for primary support. Adolescents have a need to perceive themselves as similar to their peers, to “fit in”. This is also seen when they live through a traumatic event; they need to feel that their anxieties and fears are shared by their peers and are appropriate.

In addition to anxiety related to safety and security, adolescents may have strong feelings of anger and an intense desire for revenge. The anger may be expressed in increased irritability, mood swings and temper outbursts. Adolescents may become hurtful in their talk or actions against others. If signs of potential outbursts are seen (for example, students being more irritable with each other), helping young people gain control and calm down will be important. As discussions of the trauma occur, expressions of intense anger may be voiced. Although these are normal reactions, when the anger is directed to encompass an entire group of people, accurate information about the event and involvement of others is important.

Other feelings in adolescents may also include guilt about the event. This is particularly true if they and their loved ones were spared from a direct impact. Adolescents may also recognize myriad feelings, including sadness in the adults in their world. They may be particularly attuned to conversations about the event, even when they appear uninterested. In an attempt to reduce negative feelings in others, some young people will



develop an intense focus on schoolwork (and homework). They may be concerned that their poor performance will exacerbate the difficulty teachers (or parents) are having with managing the trauma. Adolescents may be overwhelmed by a sense of sadness and despondency. They may experience repetitive thoughts and feelings about the event that are difficult to manage. Comments related to death and dying, particularly suicidal thoughts, should be addressed.

Changes in behavior are common reactions in adolescents in the aftermath of terrorism and tragic events. As mentioned above, they may become more irritable or more withdrawn. Young people may display a lack of interest in activities and friends they used to enjoy. They may withdraw from positive activities and friends because they may feel guilty or upset by having fun in the shadow of tragedy. As they attempt to process the event and related feelings, a decrease in school performance may be seen. This may occur as attention to and concentration on their work diminish. Adolescents may not be able to grasp new concepts as easily as before the event and grades may show a decline. They may become more active in their behaviors as well as more impulsive and reckless. These behaviors often appear similar to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and/or learning disabilities. Although either may be present, the impact of the event as a reason for the behavior changes should be considered. Young people may develop problems in sleep and appetite after a traumatic event or disaster. These changes may contribute to a decrease in school performance.

As young people move into adolescence, they may experience feelings of invincibility and immortality. These feelings can be heightened when they have survived a trauma. This can lead to reckless behavior and taking dangerous risks, including alcohol and substance abuse. These behaviors can be related to suicidal thoughts. Such negative behaviors may warrant immediate intervention.

In the face of tragic events, adolescents will be seeking ways to help others. By finding positive avenues to express their concerns and need for involvement, initial negative reactions to the event may begin to diminish. Working with adolescents to find positive activities can be an important aspect of the healing process.

It is important to remember that all of these reactions are normal and, generally, will diminish with time.

### **Tips for Using the Lesson Plans**

The Canadian Red Cross *Facing Fear*<sup>™</sup> curriculum contains lesson plans for teachers and includes hands-on or interactive activities for the classroom that will help students and their families prepare for disastrous situations and equip them with tools to sort out their feelings and fears.

Components of this curriculum supplement the lessons in core classroom subjects that teachers are already teaching. Based on the abilities of your students, their interests and their experiences, you can choose which lesson plans to introduce and how extensively to cover them.

An important goal is to engage families in this curriculum. To this end, “Home Connection” segments of the lesson plans offer you opportunities to enhance parental involvement in the curriculum experiences covered in the classroom.

The lesson plans are presented in a two-column format. The wider, right column contains the lesson descriptions; the estimated time required for setting up, conducting and wrapping up; and activities for students that reinforce the lesson learning objectives. The left column contains the materials needed for activities and symbols that quickly alert you to activities, curriculum links, wrap-ups and home connections.

As you lead the *Facing Fear*<sup>™</sup> activities, it's important to emphasize that students must listen to and respect each other. Everyone can have the opportunity to share and participate. No inappropriate laughter, teasing or denial of any individual's ideas should occur. Students may have similar as well as different ideas, and all are valid.

During discussions, many students will want to talk. When young people share feelings and thoughts, they may have difficulty finding the right words. You can help them communicate by locating the emotions behind their statements. For example, you could say something like, "It sounds as if you don't like to spend all your free time cleaning up. I wonder if that makes you feel angry sometimes." Or, "Everything is quiet at night. I wonder if that is a time you feel most scared or worried." Sometimes, students may have difficulty talking about their own thoughts and feelings. In addition to encouragement and support for sharing, you may also phrase discussion questions in the third person. For example, rather than, "How do you feel about..." you may also try, "How do you think children may feel about..."

Young people may also make negative or hateful remarks, particularly when they have been affected by a trauma or disaster that is human-caused. Acknowledge the anger, but help them differentiate between the perpetrator(s) and other people in the community who may share, or appear to share, similar ethnic, religious or cultural characteristics, but who have no connection to the traumatic event. Discussion of how intolerance can lead to violence against everyday people is important.

Younger children need to see the adults as in control and as a strong support during a difficult time. With older (middle and high school) students, it's okay to acknowledge that you may be experiencing some of the same difficulties they are, but express assurance that healing will occur.

Be sure to use encouragement and praise.

It's also important that you be aware of your own reactions and feelings. Be conscious of your own opinions, feelings and thoughts as you guide the class. You may want to review the lesson plan and the feelings it evokes in you before presenting it to the class. Share your own feelings with someone in your support system. Young people take cues from the important adults around them. Think about what you wish them to hear from you. Be aware that you will not be effective if you purposely or inadvertently take one side over another in controversies of a political, religious or other nature, including taking the side of one student over another. When you model respect for and tolerance of all the views and feelings that your students share, your students will try to do the same.

### **Moving Forward in Spite of Life-Affecting Events**

Frightening events, such as the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, major floods and tornadoes, earthquakes here and in other countries, massive transportation accidents, war or armed conflict or other military action, impact us all. Events caused by human beings can be particularly frightening and raise unique concerns.

Terrorist actions are designed to instill fear in individuals and communities, if not countries. Because they happen without warning, there is no time to prepare. This unpredictability leaves us with a heightened sense of vulnerability and anxieties that the event could be repeated again, anywhere. With increased media coverage, even those not directly impacted can be significantly affected by the event. Images make us feel closer to the victims and we may perceive ourselves as victims of the actions as well. The questions that arise from disasters of human design are difficult, if not impossible, to answer. We want answers to "why" and "how could they" and are often left frustrated by lack of satisfying responses. This frustration also gives rise to intense feelings of anger.

The anger toward the perpetrators may be uncomfortable and difficult to express in productive ways. Generalizing about the terrorists (for example, all Muslims, all Arabs, or all people with strong disagreement with the government) may lead to an increase in hate, prejudice and violence toward innocent people and groups, thus expanding the victims of the initial attack. As adults struggle with reactions and feelings in the aftermath of a terrorist action or tragic event, children are similarly searching for how to best handle their feelings. At all ages, they take cues from adults around them (parents, teachers and community and national leaders).

Young people need to know that their reactions and feelings to such events are normal. They need to recognize that others feel very similar. Most important, young people need to know that they will begin to feel better with time and that it is acceptable to enjoy friends, family and activities. They need to know that there are things they can do to help themselves move forward in a positive way.

The lessons and activities in this curriculum are designed to help you help your students address their fears and move beyond them.

The *Facing Fear*<sup>™</sup> curriculum supplements the Canadian Red Cross *Expect the Unexpected*<sup>™</sup> curriculum, which provides standards-based lesson plans and activities about natural hazards, including hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and lightning, and general family disaster preparedness. For more information, visit [www.redcross.ca/facingfear](http://www.redcross.ca/facingfear).

With permission, parts of Background for the Teacher above were adapted from *Healing After Trauma Skills*, Robin H. Gurwitch and Anne K. Messenbaugh, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Department of Pediatrics, 2001.



## Lesson Plan 1

# Be Media Savvy

### Purpose

To compare and evaluate news stories based on point of view, the use of fact, opinion and bias.

### Objectives

Students will:

- Identify the difference between fact and opinion.
- Search the media for and evaluate the use of fact and opinion.

### Activities

- Fact Versus Opinion



## Lesson Plan 1

# Be Media Savvy

## Fact Versus Opinion Activity

Set up: 15 minutes

Conduct: 50 minutes

### Material

- Activity Sheet 1:  
*Fact Versus Opinion*
- Newspapers and magazines

1. Divide the chalkboard in half. On one side, write “Fact”; on the other, write “Opinion.” Have students come to the board and write statements under the correct category. For example, “José is 12” is a statement of fact; “José is good looking” is an opinion.
2. After several minutes, have students share their statements and agree or disagree about where they are placed on the chalkboard. Are some statements more difficult to distinguish as fact or opinion (for example, “José is smart”)? The statement may be shown to be true if José makes all A’s, but “smart” is a subjective term. The truly factual statement would be, “José makes all A’s.”
3. Distribute Activity Sheet 1. Have students—in small groups or individually—use newspaper and/or magazine articles on the op-ed page to complete the chart. How are facts and opinions used to persuade the reader?
4. Have students use the chart once more to review statements in news articles from newspapers and magazines. Do they still find statements of opinion? How are they used? Are these opinions balanced in reports showing more than one side of a story? Explain.
5. As a class, discuss student findings. When, if ever, is it appropriate to use opinion in a news story?



## Lesson Plan 2

# Impact of the Facts

### Purpose

To identify the impact of terrorism and tragic events on the family, community, nation and world.

### Objectives

#### Students will:

- Identify initial and secondary effects caused by an event; describe a ripple effect.
- Determine whether effects are local, statewide, national or global.

### Activity

- Ripple Effect



## Lesson Plan 2

# Impact of the Facts

### Ripple Effect Activity

Set up: 15 minutes

Conduct: two class periods

An act of terrorism or other tragic event can have far-reaching effects. Help students apply the concept of the ripple effect to understand the chain of events started by an initial event.

#### Material

- Water and pebbles
- Activity Sheet 2: *Ripple Effect*
- Bulletin board covered with plain paper, titled “Ripple Effect”
- Cut-out paper stone shapes
- Five different colored markers

1. If there is a pond or body of water on the school grounds, gather students around it. If not, fill a large washtub with water and have students gather around.
2. As students watch, toss a small pebble lightly into the water. How many ripples did the students count? Approximately how far out from the center did the ripples reach? Toss in a larger stone. How did the ripple effect change? Have students compare these ripple effects to the effects of the event under discussion. If the pebble or stone represents the event, what would be the first ripple, the second, the third and so on (the families, the community struck by the event, the state, the nation, the world)?
3. Have several students take a turn tossing stones as they describe an effect of the event. Discuss which ripple(s) would feel the impact. For example, “people died” would have a family impact; if these people were fathers and mothers, the impact could reach the next ripple, the community, as it tries to respond to the needs of orphans; if these people were insured, there could be a financial impact on national insurance companies; if these people were not insured, there could be a financial impact on families and the state and national social system; if these people were teachers, it could affect the local school system, and so forth.
4. After students understand the many ripples of an event, distribute Activity Sheet 2 and have them work in small groups to illustrate some of the effects of the event under discussion.
5. Have students share their ideas with the rest of the class. Designate each ripple of the event as a different color. As students share effects from their activity sheets, have them write the effects on a paper stone in the center of the bulletin board and use the designated markers to write in the ripple effects, from local to far-reaching.
6. As a class, consider the resulting ripples. How far-reaching were the effects of the event? How many different initial and secondary effects did students find? Explain. Did this very negative event cause any positive effects? Explain. How does the ripple effect illustrate humanity’s interdependence?

**Activity Sheet 2**  
**Ripple Effect**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Consider the far-reaching effects caused by an important event or event effect in one of the boxes below. Use the same color marker to show the ripple effect. Use a different color marker for each ripple effect category.

Event: \_\_\_\_\_

National  
National  
Financial  
Community  
Family

○ ○  
○ ○

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## Lesson Plan 3

# Facts About Terrorism and War

**TEACHING NOTE:** During war, or when acts of terrorism occur, students have some hard questions. To help you find a way to answer these questions, please see Background for the Teacher on page iv.

Most nations agree that in times of war there should be rules to protect groups of people, including children and other civilians, from the fighting. These rules are found in international humanitarian laws like the Geneva Conventions. Symbols such as the red cross, red crescent and red shield of David legally identify humanitarian organizations, such as the Red Cross, that remind everyone that innocent people should be protected from harm. Acts of terrorism violate or go against all humanitarian rules and behavior.

The activities in this lesson plan are meant to help students understand that even during the most tragic events, there are people to help those affected by the tragedy and humanitarian rules by which people live.

## Purpose

To recognize that during times of disaster or war there are vulnerable people who need help and protection and that there are rules and principles to address these needs.

## Objectives

### Students will:

- Brainstorm, compare and discuss their perceptions of war or armed conflict.
- Write and perform choral readings to share and analyze their perceptions of war.
- Design rules of humanitarian behavior toward vulnerable people and compare these rules with the Geneva Conventions.

## Activity

- Perceptions of War
- Rules for Humanitarian Protection





## Lesson Plan 3

# Facts About Terrorism and War

## Perceptions of War Activity

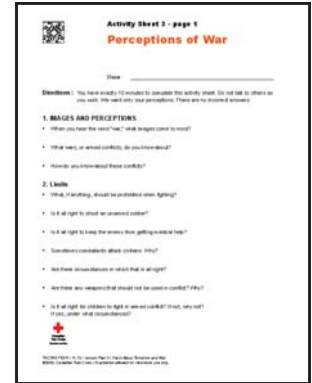
Set up: 10 minutes

Conduct: two class periods

### Materials

- Activity Sheet 3: *Perceptions of War*
- Highlighters

1. Tell students that you are about to distribute a handout to find out their perceptions of war. They have exactly 10 minutes to complete the activity, and they are not to talk to each other as they work. Distribute Activity Sheet 3 to each student and start the timer.
2. After 10 minutes, divide the class into small groups. Have students share their answers to the questions and highlight those they would like to have as part of a choral reading.
3. Allow time for students to go to the media center or local libraries to find music and/or photographs and paintings that would enhance their choral readings. Students may wish to work out sound effects or costuming to dramatize their presentation.
4. The next day, after preliminary rehearsals, invite student groups to perform their choral readings for the class. Have students discuss and compare the perceptions of war across the groups. What elements are always part of the answers to such questions? What unique perspectives were offered by students who may have directly or indirectly experienced war (or armed conflict)?





# Lesson Plan 3

## Facts About Terrorism and War

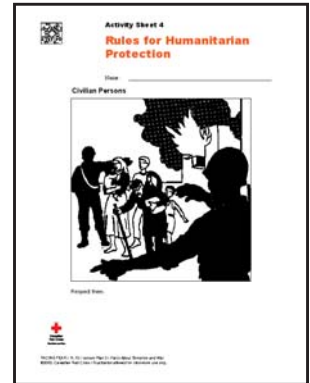
### Rules for Humanitarian Protection Activity

Set up: 10 minutes  
Conduct: 50 minutes

#### Materials

- Activity Sheets 4-7: *Rules for Humanitarian Protection*
- Activity Sheet 8: *A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols*
- Newspapers and news magazines

1. As a class, define “vulnerable.” Who or what do they believe are most vulnerable in a war-torn area? (Possible answers include unarmed civilians, the aged, women and children, wounded combatants, prisoners of war, humanitarian groups and/or facilities and cultural objects, such as monuments, places of worship and museums.) How can people increase their protection?
2. Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group one of the Activity Sheets 4-7.
3. Have student groups use their activity sheet as starting points for writing rules that would help protect the people or objects depicted. They should consider the people and objects in this group, including their needs and their rights.
4. Have groups share their rules for protection. Then distribute copies of Activity Sheet 8 to have students compare their rules with those set up by the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law.



#### Extension:

Have students go through newspapers and news magazines to find photographs and stories about vulnerable people around the world. Have them select one article and prepare a summary to share with the class. Summaries should include location, countries/peoples involved, statistics (if available), problems and how needs are being met.



## Activity Sheet 1 - Part A

# Fact versus Opinion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Working with your team, define "fact" and "opinion".

**A fact is:**

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**An opinion is:**

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## Activity Sheet 1 - Part B

# Fact versus Opinion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Choose articles from a newspaper or magazine op-ed section and a regular news story. As you read the articles, highlight statements you think are facts and statements you think are opinions. Discuss these selections within your group. Then complete the chart below.

**Op-Ed Article:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Source:** \_\_\_\_\_

Facts	Opinions

**New Story:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Source:** \_\_\_\_\_

Facts	Opinions





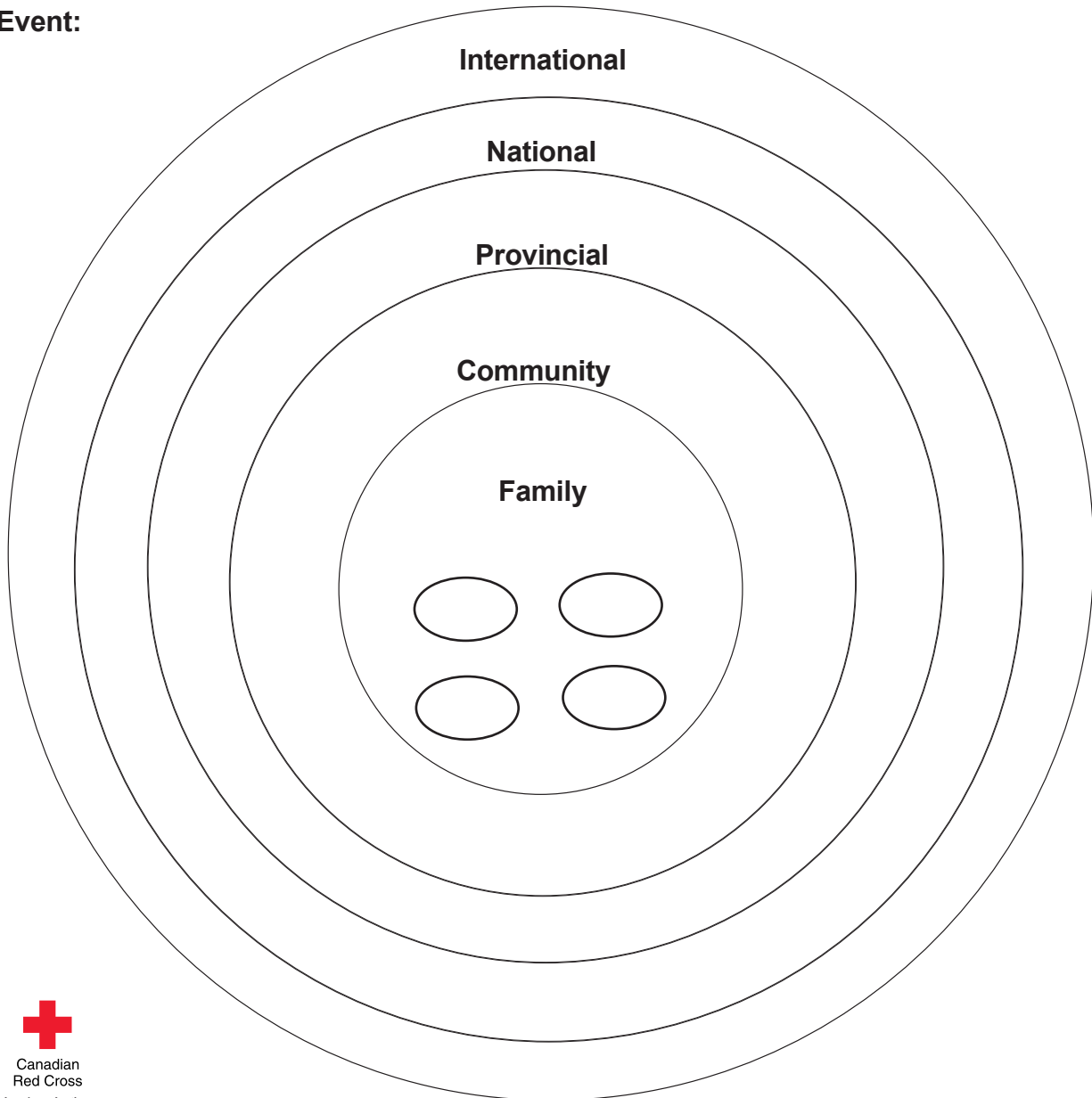
## Activity Sheet 2

# Ripple Effect

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Consider the far-reaching effects caused by a single event. Write an initial effect in one of the stones below. Use the same color marker to show its ripple effect. Use a different color marker for each stone and its ripples.

**Event:**





## Activity Sheet 3 - page 1

# Perceptions of War

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** You have exactly 10 minutes to complete this activity sheet. Do not talk to others as you work. We want only your perceptions. There are no incorrect answers.

### 1. Images and perceptions

- When you hear the word “war,” what images come to mind?
- What wars, or armed conflicts, do you know about?
- How do you know about these conflicts?

### 2. Limits

- What, if anything, should be prohibited when fighting?
- Is it all right to shoot an unarmed soldier?
- Is it all right to keep the enemy from getting medical help?
- Sometimes combatants attack civilians. Why?
- Are there circumstances in which that is all right?
- Are there any weapons that should not be used in conflict? Why?
- Is it all right for children to fight in armed conflict? If not, why not?  
If yes, under what circumstances?





## Activity Sheet 3 - page 2

# Perceptions of War

- Is it all right to attack religious, cultural or historical places? If not, why not? If yes, under what circumstances?
- Is it all right to destroy people's homes, towns, etc.? If not, why not? If yes, under what circumstances?
- Should combatants be allowed to cut off or destroy a town's water or electricity? If not, why not? If yes, under what circumstances?
- How should prisoners of war be treated?
- Is it all right to force a prisoner of war to give information?

### 3. Humanitarian Acts

- Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881) has written: "We are all responsible for each other." In armed conflict, are there ways the spirit of this saying could be applied?
- Do you think it makes sense to try to limit the suffering in armed conflict?
- What reasons can you think of for making laws about how people must behave in armed conflict?
- Do you know of any laws about armed conflict? What do they say?
- If there are laws, who should be responsible for carrying them out?





## Activity Sheet 4

# Rules for Humanitarian Protection

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Civilian Persons







## Activity Sheet 5

# Rules for Humanitarian Protection

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Enemy Comabatans Who Surrender



Disarm them.





## Activity Sheet 6

# Rules for Humanitarian Protection

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Wounded Enemy Combatants



Care for them.





## Activity Sheet 7

# Rules for Humanitarian Protection

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Civilian Objects and Protected Symbols



Leave these buildings, establishments, monuments untouched and do not enter them.





## Activity Sheet 8 - page 1

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Protecting the Victims of War

International humanitarian law (IHL) is the branch of international law that encompasses both humanitarian principles and international treaties that seek to save lives and alleviate suffering of both combatants and noncombatants during armed conflicts.

IHL's principal legal documents are the Geneva Conventions of 1949 — four international treaties signed by almost every nation in the world. These Conventions provide specific rules to safeguard combatants (members of the armed forces) who are wounded, sick, or shipwrecked; prisoners of war; and civilians; as well as medical personnel, military chaplains, and civilian support workers of the military. The 1977 Additional Protocols, which supplement the Geneva Conventions, further expand these humanitarian rules.

International humanitarian law is founded on the principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality. Its roots extend to such historic concepts of justice as Babylon's Hammurabic Code, the Code of Justinian from the Byzantine Empire, and the Lieber Code used during the United States Civil War.

The development of modern international humanitarian law can be credited to the efforts of a 19th Century Swiss businessman, Henry Dunant. In 1859, he witnessed the aftermath of a bloody battle among French and Austrian armies in Solferino, Italy. The departing armies left a battlefield littered with wounded and dying men. Despite Dunant's valiant efforts to mobilize aid for the soldiers, thousands died.

In *A Memory of Solferino*, his book about the experience, Dunant proposed that volunteer relief groups be granted protection during war in order to care for the wounded. A group known as the Committee of Five (later to become the International

Committee of the Red Cross) formed in Geneva in 1863 to act on Dunant's suggestions. Several months later, diplomats from 16 nations, assisted by representatives of military medical services and humanitarian societies, negotiated a convention (treaty) containing 10 articles specifying that—

- Ambulances, military hospitals, and the personnel serving with them are to be recognized as neutral and protected during conflict.
- Citizens who assist the wounded are to be protected.
- Wounded or sick combatants are to be collected and cared for by either side in a conflict.
- The symbol of a red cross on a white background (the reverse of the Swiss flag in honor of the origin of this initiative) will serve as a protective emblem to identify medical personnel, equipment, and facilities.

Known as the Geneva Convention, this agreement became the foundation of modern international humanitarian law, which now encompasses four conventions and two additional protocols. Collectively, they represent the world community's modern efforts to protect people in times of armed conflict.

### The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Their Additional Protocols of 1977

In 1949, an international conference of diplomats built on the earlier treaties for the protection of war victims, revising and updating them into four new conventions comprising 429 articles of law. These treaties, known as the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, have been signed by almost every nation in the world. The Additional Protocols of 1977 supplement the Geneva Conventions.





## Activity Sheet 8 - page 2

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The Geneva Conventions apply in all cases of declared war, or in any other armed conflict between nations. They also apply in cases where a nation is partially or totally occupied by soldiers of another nation, even when there is no armed resistance to that occupation.

Nations that ratify the Geneva Conventions must abide by certain humanitarian principles and impose legal sanctions against those who violate them. Ratifying nations must “enact any legislation necessary to provide effective penal sanctions for persons committing or ordering to be committed any of the grave breaches (violations)” of the Conventions.

Following is a basic overview of the Conventions and Protocols and a quick reference to the legal text of the treaties. For a comprehensive listing of all legal provisions, refer to the actual treaty documents The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977.

### The First Geneva Convention

(The Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field of August 12, 1949)

The First Geneva Convention protects soldiers who are *hors de combat* (out of the battle). The 10 articles of the original 1864 version of the Convention have been expanded in the First Geneva Convention of 1949 to 64 articles that protect:

- Wounded and sick soldiers.
- Medical personnel, facilities, and equipment.
- Wounded and sick civilian support personnel accompanying the armed forces.
- Military chaplains.

- Civilians who spontaneously take up arms to repel an invasion.

### Specific Provisions:

This Convention specifies that the wounded and sick shall:

- Art. 12** Be respected and protected without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, nationality, religion, political beliefs, or other similar criteria.
- Art. 12** Not be murdered, exterminated, or subjected to torture or biological experiments.
- Art. 15** Receive adequate care.
- Art. 15** Be protected against pillage and ill-treatment.
- Art. 15-16** All parties in a conflict must search for and collect the wounded and sick, especially after battle, and provide the information to the Central Tracing Agency of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- Art. 9** This Convention, like the others, recognizes the right of the ICRC to assist the wounded and sick. Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies, other authorized impartial relief organizations, and neutral governments may also provide humanitarian service. Local civilians may be asked to care for the wounded and sick.





## Activity Sheet 8 - page 3

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Second Geneva Convention

(The Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea of August 12, 1949)

The Second Geneva Convention adapts the protections of the First Geneva Convention to reflect conditions at sea. It protects wounded and sick combatants while on board ship or at sea. Its 63 articles apply to:

- Armed forces members who are wounded, sick, or shipwrecked.
- Hospital ships and medical personnel.
- Civilians who accompany the armed forces.

#### Specific Provisions:

**Art. 12, 18** This Convention mandates that parties in battle take all possible measures to search for, collect, and care for the wounded, sick, and shipwrecked. "Shipwrecked" refers to anyone who is adrift for any reason, including those forced to land at sea or to parachute from aircraft.

**Art. 21** Appeals can be made to neutral vessels, including merchant ships and yachts, to help collect and care for the wounded, sick, and shipwrecked. Those who agree to help cannot be captured as long as they remain neutral.

**Art. 36-37** Religious, medical, and hospital personnel of hospital ships must be respected and protected. If captured, they are to be sent back to their side as soon as possible.

**Art. 24** military purpose. They cannot be attacked or captured. The names and descriptions of hospital ships must be conveyed to all parties in the conflict.

**Art. 14** While a warship cannot capture a hospital ship's medical staff, it can hold the wounded, sick, and shipwrecked as prisoners of war, providing they can be safely moved and that the warship has the facilities to care for them.

### The Third Geneva Convention

(Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of August 12, 1949)

The Third Geneva Convention sets out specific rules for the treatment of prisoners of war (POWs). The Convention's 143 articles require that POWs be treated humanely, adequately housed, and receive sufficient food, clothing, and medical care. Its provisions also establish guidelines on labor, discipline, recreation, and criminal trial. Prisoners of war may include:

- Members of the armed forces.
- Volunteer militia, including resistance movements.
- Civilians accompanying the armed forces.

#### Specific Provisions:

**Arts. 70-72, 123** Names of prisoners of war must be sent immediately to the Central Prisoners of War Information Agency of the ICRC. POWs are to be allowed to correspond with their families and receive relief packages.

**Arts. 13-14, 16** Prisoners of war must not be subjected to torture or medical experimentation and must be protected against acts of violence, insults, and public curiosity. Captors must not engage in any reprisals or discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, religious beliefs, political opinions, or other similar criteria. Female POWs must be treated with all the regard due their sex.



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## Activity Sheet 8 - page 4

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Art. 17** POWs are required to provide to their captors only their name, rank, date of birth, and military service number.
- Arts. 25-27, 30** POWs must be housed in clean, adequate shelter, and receive the food, clothing, and medical care necessary to maintain good health. They must not be held in combat areas where they are exposed to fire, nor can they be used to “shield” areas from military operations.
- Art. 23** They may be required to do non-military jobs under reasonable working conditions when paid at a fair rate.
- Art. 50,62** Prisoners are subject to the laws of their captors and can be tried by their captors’ courts. The captor shall ensure fairness, impartiality, and a competent advocate for the prisoner.
- Arts. 82-84, 105** Seriously ill POWs must be repatriated (returned home).
- Art. 109, 110** When the conflict ends, all POWs shall be released and, if they request, be sent home without delay.
- Art. 118** The ICRC is granted special rights to carry out humanitarian activities on behalf of prisoners of war. The ICRC or other impartial humanitarian relief organizations authorized by parties to the conflict must be permitted to visit with prisoners privately, examine conditions of confinement to ensure the Conventions’ standards are being met, and distribute relief supplies.

### Article 3 common to the four Conventions: Non-International Armed Conflicts

All four Geneva Conventions contain an identical article 3 extending general coverage to non-international conflicts. Under this article, those who have put down their arms or are out of the conflict due to injury or sickness must be treated humanely, without any adverse discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, social status, or wealth, or any other such criteria. Article 3 specifically prohibits:

- “Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;
- Taking of hostages;
- Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment;
- The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples.”

The wounded and sick are also to be collected and cared for. The ICRC or other impartial humanitarian body may offer its services.





## Activity Sheet 8 - page 5

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Fourth Geneva Convention

(Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of August 12, 1949)

Civilians in areas of armed conflict and occupied territories are protected by the 159 articles of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

#### Specific Provisions:

**Arts. 79-135** If security allows, civilians must be permitted to lead normal lives. They are not to be deported or interned except for imperative reasons of security. If internment is necessary, conditions should be at least comparable to those set forth for prisoners of war. Pillage, reprisals, indiscriminate destruction of property, and the taking of hostages are prohibited.

**Arts. 33-34** The safety, honor, family rights, religious practices, manners, and customs of civilians are to be respected.

**Art. 27** Civilians are to be protected from murder, torture, or brutality, and from discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, religion, or political opinion.

**Arts. 32, 13** They are not to be subjected to collective punishment or deportation.

**Arts. 33, 49** This Convention provides for the care of children who are orphaned or separated from their families. The ICRC's Central Tracing Agency is also authorized to transmit family news and assist with family reunifications, with the help of Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies.

**Arts. 24, 125** Hospital and safety zones may be established for the wounded, sick, and aged, children under 15, expectant mothers, and mothers of children under seven. Civilian hospitals and their staff are to be protected. Medical supplies and objects used for religious worship are to be allowed passage.

**Art. 14** Civilians cannot be forced to do military-related work for an occupying force. They are to be paid fairly for any assigned work. Public officials will be permitted to continue their duties. The penal laws of the occupied territory will remain in force unless they present a security threat.

**Art. 18** The occupying power is to provide food and medical supplies as necessary to the population and maintain medical and public health facilities. When that is not possible, the occupying power is to facilitate relief shipments by impartial humanitarian organizations such as the ICRC. Red Cross or other impartial humanitarian relief organizations authorized by the parties to the conflict are to be allowed to continue their activities.

**Art. 55, 58** Internees are to receive adequate food, clothing, and medical care, and be protected from the dangers of war. Information about internees is to be sent to the Central Information Agency. Internees have the right to send and receive mail and receive relief shipments. Children, pregnant women, mothers with infants and young children, the wounded and sick, and those who have been interned for a long time are to be released as soon as possible.

**Art. 59** Internees are to receive adequate food, clothing, and medical care, and be protected from the dangers of war.

**Art. 89-91** Information about internees is to be sent to the Central Information Agency.

**Art. 106** Internees have the right to send and receive mail and receive relief shipments. Children, pregnant women, mothers with infants and young children, the wounded and sick, and those who have been interned for a long time are to be released as soon as possible.

**Arts. 107, 108** Internees have the right to send and receive mail and receive relief shipments. Children, pregnant women, mothers with infants and young children, the wounded and sick, and those who have been interned for a long time are to be released as soon as possible.

**Art. 132** Internees are to receive adequate food, clothing, and medical care, and be protected from the dangers of war.







## Activity Sheet 8 - page 6

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### The 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949

In 1977, two Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions were adopted by an international diplomatic conference to give greater protection to victims of both international and non-international armed conflicts.

Over 100 nations have ratified one or both Protocols, and they are under consideration by many others. Any nation that has ratified the Geneva Conventions but not the Protocols is still bound by all provisions of the Conventions.

#### Protocol I (102 articles)

(Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, of June 8, 1977)

Protocol I expands protection for the civilian population as well as military and civilian medical workers in international armed conflicts.

#### Specific Provisions:

**Arts. 51, 54** It prohibits indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations and destruction of food, water, and other materials needed for survival.

**Arts. 53, 56** Cultural objects and places of worship must not be attacked, nor dams, dikes and nuclear generating stations.

**Arts. 76-77, 15 Art. 79** Special protections are provided for women, children, and civilian medical personnel. Measures of protection for journalists are also specified.

**Art. 77** Recruitment of children under age 15 into the armed forces is forbidden.



**Arts. 43-44** Protocol I seeks to clarify the military status of members of guerrilla forces in the following manner. It includes provisions granting combatant and prisoner of war status to members of dissident forces when under the command of a central authority. Such combatants cannot conceal their allegiance; they must be recognizable as combatants while preparing for or during an attack.

**Art. 35** Use of weapons that “cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering,” as well as means of warfare that “cause widespread, long-term, and severe damage to the natural environment,” are prohibited.

**Art. 85** It is a war crime to use one of the protective emblems recognized by the Geneva Conventions to deceive the opposing forces or to use other forms of treachery.

**Arts. 17, 81** The ICRC, national societies, or other impartial humanitarian organizations authorized by parties to the conflict must be permitted to provide assistance.

#### Protocol II (28 articles)

(Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts of June 8, 1977)

Protocol II elaborates on protections for victims caught up in high-intensity internal conflicts such as civil wars. It does not apply to such internal disturbances as riots, demonstrations, and isolated acts of violence. Protocol II expands and complements the non-international protections contained in Article 3 common to all four Geneva Conventions of 1949.



## Activity Sheet 8 - page 7

# A Summary of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Specific Provisions:

- Art. 4** It stipulates that persons who do not take a direct part or who have ceased to take part in hostilities, are entitled to respect. In all circumstances they are to be treated humanely. Protocol II specifically prohibits violence to the life, health, and physical or mental well-being of people. In particular, it prohibits acts of murder and cruel treatment, terrorism, hostage-taking, slavery, outrages on personal dignity, collective punishment, and pillage. These protections are considered fundamental guarantees for all persons.
- Art. 4** Children are to be evacuated to safe areas when possible, and reunited with their families.
- Art. 5** Persons interned or detained during internal conflicts are assured of the same humane treatment as specified by the Geneva Conventions.
- Arts. 7, 9** It strengthens protection of the wounded, sick, and shipwrecked as well as medical and religious personnel.
- Arts. 13-14, 16** Attacks are forbidden on civilians and on “objects indispensable to civilian survival” such as crops, irrigation systems or drinking water sources, cultural objects, and places of worship.
- Art. 18** Impartial humanitarian relief organizations—such as the ICRC—are to be permitted to continue their humanitarian services.

### Protective Emblems Under International Humanitarian Law

Those drafting the Geneva Convention of 1864 foresaw the need for a universal symbol of protection easily recognizable on the battlefield. In honor of the origin of this initiative, the symbol of a red cross on a white background (the reverse of the Swiss flag) was identified as a protective emblem in conflict areas. The red crescent and red lion and sun emblems were later recognized by nations at a diplomatic conference in 1929 as additional emblems of humanitarian relief. Of these additional emblems, only the red crescent is currently in use. Although not in the Geneva Conventions, the red shield of David, used by Israel, is also a respected emblem.

These emblems are used to identify and protect medical and relief workers, military and civilian medical facilities, mobile units, and hospital ships. They are also used to identify the programs and activities of Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies, and those of the Magen David Adom (Red Shield of David) humanitarian society in Israel.

Widespread understanding and acceptance of these humanitarian emblems is crucial to save lives and alleviate suffering.



# The Fundamental Principles of The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

## **Humanity**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

## **Impartiality**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

## **Neutrality**

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

## **Independence**

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

## **Voluntary Service**

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

## **Unity**

There can only be one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

## **Universality**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

The Fundamental Principles were proclaimed by the XX<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross, Vienna, 1965. This is the revised text contained in the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, adopted by the XXV<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross, Geneva, 1986.