

SUMMARY OF FORMATION, RECOGNITION AND ADMITTANCE OF A RED CROSS NATIONAL SOCIETY INTO THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT (17 September 2018)

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Where does a National Society fit within the International Movement?

“The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is composed of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies recognized [by] the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies” (Article 1, Statutes of the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement).

“The States Parties to the Geneva Conventions cooperate with the components of the Movement in accordance with these Conventions, the present Statutes and the resolutions of the International Conference ... Each State shall promote the establishment on its territory of a National Society and encourage its development” (Article 2, Statutes of the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement).

What are the conditions for recognition as a National Society?

As specified in Article 4 of the Statutes of the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement (<https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/statutes-en-a5.pdf>) the following conditions must be satisfied by a potential national society:

1. Be constituted on the territory of an independent State where the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field is in force.
2. Be the only National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society of the said State and be directed by a central body which shall alone be competent to represent it in its dealings with other components of the Movement.
3. Be duly recognized by the legal government of its country on the basis of the Geneva Conventions and of the national legislation as a voluntary aid society, auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.
4. Have an autonomous status which allows it to operate in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.
5. Use a name and distinctive emblem in conformity with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.
6. Be so organized as to be able to fulfil the tasks defined in its own statutes, including the preparation in peace time for its statutory tasks in case of armed conflict.
7. Extend its activities to the entire territory of the State.
8. Recruit its voluntary members and its staff without consideration of race, sex, class, religion or political opinions.
9. Adhere to the present Statutes, share in the fellowship which unites the components of the Movement and cooperate with them.
10. Respect the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and be guided in its work by the principles of international humanitarian law.

The role of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) includes “recogniz[ing] any newly established or reconstituted National Society, which fulfils the conditions for recognition set out in Article 4, and [notifies] other National Societies of such recognition” (Article 5).

The role of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies includes acting as “the official representative of the member societies in the international field” (Article 6).

How does a National Society, once formed and recognized, join the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies?

According to Section II, Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the International Federation (last revised in 2007: http://www.ifrc.org/global/governance/statutory/rop_revised-en.pdf), a National Society must submit the following attachments along with its application to the President of the International Federation:

- a) the statutes of the applicant National Society;
- b) an account of the applicant National Society's activities during the two years preceding the application;
- c) written evidence of the circumstances which brought about the formal recognition of the applicant National Society by the government of its country;
- d) a written statement in which the applicant National Society acknowledges having reviewed the Constitution and agrees to respect its provisions; and
- e) a written statement in which the applicant National Society commits itself to pay its financial contribution to the International Federation.

The application is then reviewed by the Joint International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes (set up by the ICRC and the International Federation in 1969).

The Committee's recommendation is reviewed by the Secretary-General of the International Federation, whose recommendation report, together with the comments of the Joint Statutes Commission, is sent to the Governing Board, which then decides upon the provisional admission of the National Society at its next session.

If admitted on a provisional basis, the application of that National Society is considered by the General Assembly at its next session for admittance into the International Federation.