

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT  
SOCIETIES DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS. NEW YORK

Madame President,

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, representing as it does all the richness and diversity of the world's communities, under the roof of one set of Fundamental Principles, recognises that globalisation makes migration an inevitable fact of life for all countries.

Our position is developed from our grass roots membership and our first message in this dialogue is:

- More attention should be paid to the vulnerabilities and needs of migrants regardless of their status, and the dignity and the rights of the migrants should be at the centre of States' action and policy reforms.

It is important for States to acknowledge that migrants whether regular or irregular are entitled to their universal human rights.

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies assist migrants in a multitude of ways based on their needs and vulnerability. This brings forward our second key message:

- States need to rethink migration policies and regulations controlling entry and exit to and from their territories with the recognition that the labour movement is a part of a global economy.

The IFRC argues for action by governments at the national level, but urges that this action needs to be within agreed international standards. An important tool in this respect is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Our third message is born out of this context:

- It is important that all States— especially in countries with a major influx of migrants — ratify and promote the implementation of this convention.

Our experience in the IFRC leads us to conclude that governments should share our deep concern about the exclusion and stigmatization many migrants face in their host countries. Therefore in our fourth message,

- We encourage governments to support ways of fighting discrimination. Integration and non-discrimination are factors that can enable migrant populations to maximise their contributions to the host country, and reduce the risk of disaffection and turbulence.

This highlights our last key message,

- Governments must form alliances with civil society, the private sector, opinion leaders and their respective Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to force these issues to the top of their national agendas, and to work hard for real results.

Time does not allow me an exhaustive examination of what the international community and the UN itself could usefully do to support these processes. We are pleased that this issue of migration bear such important significance in the UN General Assembly, for it will assuredly be a major issue at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which all governments and National Societies are expected to attend in November 2007, in Geneva.

We also recommend that the issue should be taken up by ECOSOC, and should be informed by discussions at the regional level led by the regional Economic and Social Commissions. The aim should be to return to the General Assembly in two years time with a program that supports the development of coherent policy approaches to migration by all governments.

Thank you, Madame President.