Letter to all National Society Presidents

Geneva, 13 December 2012

Dear Ms President,

Dear Mr President,

I am pleased to share with you a preliminary draft agenda for the General Assembly **(annex 1)**, drawn up by the Governing Board working group for statutory meetings under the chairmanship of Vice-President Mr. Paul Birech, and approved by the Governing Board at its last session in November 2012. The 19th Session of the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) will take place in Sydney, Australia, from 12 to 15 November 2013. The Australian Red Cross is already working hard to make this General Assembly a memorable event. The formal Convocation will be sent to you in June 2013.

As per our constitution and rules of procedures, I invite you all to provide to the board working group your comments and observations on the agenda. Please send your inputs no later than **8 May 2013** by email: general.assembly@ifrc.org or by post to my office. Your comments will be taken into account when the working group is reconvened before the next Governing Board session in May 2013.

The proposed preliminary agenda has the implementation and roll out of *Strategy 2020* as its main focus. The workshop sessions are part of the General Assembly agenda, and will provide time for in-depth discussions in smaller groups.

Key subjects proposed include “Functioning effectively as the International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies” and “The humanitarian ambitions of the 21st century”. Other important items are the adoption of our budget for 2014 to 2015, the discussion on the “Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief”, the accountability reports of the Board and the Secretary General including the outcomes of the decentralization and shelter evaluations, and the governance review our Governing Board has just embarked on. The following topics for workshops are also proposed: Delivering on the business of vulnerability and long term development, capacity building: institutional and community capacity building, National Societies implementing the IFRC youth strategy, IFRC position on the post MDGs, and the implementation of the IFRC gender strategy; Logistically, it is possible to organise eight workshops in total so we encourage National Societies to propose additional themes.

Another important item on the agenda is the election of the President, Vice-Presidents and Governing Board members as the term of the current board is coming to an end. Please note that you will receive a separate letter on this item from the Chair of the election committee.

Be assured that the Governing Board and the secretariat together with our host, the Australian Red Cross, are committed to ensuring that the General Assembly will reflect your needs and seek new ways of working collaboratively, leading up to and during the meeting. Your engagement in sharing your views will be crucial to ensuring that we make this General Assembly truly representative of the dialogue you wish to pursue!

Finally I take the opportunity to remind you that the Henry Davison Award, which recognizes the work carried out by individuals and National Societies working within the IFRC network, will be presented during the General Assembly. Nominations should be submitted **by 20 August 2013** using the attached form (**annex 2**).

I thank you for your continued support and guidance that enables us together to do more, do better and reach further.

Yours sincerely,

Bekele Geleta