

Message to the Croatian Red Cross on the occasion of the 130th

Anniversary of its foundation — ZAGABRIA 22/10/08

**Massimo Barra,
President of the Italian Red Cross and
Vice President of the Red Cross Red Crescent Standing Commission**

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends of the Croatian Red Cross,

It is always a big pleasure to come to Croatia, where every time I come I feel at home, because of the many friends I have here, since many years and because of the vicinity, the good feeling and the common understanding between our sister National Societies. But today, such a pleasure is even stronger, because we are here to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the Croatian Red Cross. That is why I am even happier, even prouder and even more honoured than usual, while conveying this message to such an important audience, in such an historical moment.

Occasions like this represent an ideal time to reflect on our great common mission and on the Fundamental Principles that characterize the work of our volunteers and our members worldwide, and that have never been modified since they were first adopted, back in 1965, meaning that they really are our common ground, our common language. It is also essential to remind ourselves, precisely in these moments, the responsibility towards them and towards the most vulnerable persons in the world.

The greatness of our Movement, the capillarity of its humanitarian actions, the universality, independence, unity of its intervention, its presence among the people in the midst of civil society and aside the most marginalized and stigmatized ones: today we can say that all this is reflected with admirable coherence and consistency by the Croatian Red Cross, through its activities, its departments and its intervention at home as well as in the international arena.

The Croatian Red Cross is today a leading National Society, and the results achieved by the many national and international projects reflect the stability and strength won by over the years. Its role within our International Movement is well represented by the leadership and commitment of Dr Javornik, who is the well known and respected chairman of the Development Commission, that I had the honour to chair just before him.

The Italian Red Cross has experienced, through a direct collaboration, the dedication, the professionalism and the humanity of the Croatian Red Cross people and then today, in this message, I personally want to send all our admiration, our respect and our sense of friendship to all who are present to celebrate this anniversary.

I do look forward, dear friends, to welcome the Youth, the volunteers and the staff of your National Society in Solferino, next year, for the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the birth of the idea that has changed the world. The idea of our Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. And I am sure that Nikola Jagic and Katjia Damianovic, who I

see here, and who I want to thank for their enthusiastic friendship, will do their best to have as many of you literally invading the plain between Castiglione and Solferino in June, next year.

The beauty of our Movement lies, first of all, in sharing: the sharing of an ideal and an idea lived every day. So, today, I have the privilege to live and share with you this day and this event, with joy and passion, in the hope of continuing to write the history of the Red Cross in the world together, with the same enthusiasm, the same respect, the same extraordinary commitment.

Happy anniversary, dear friends!