



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

**IFRC PRESIDENT, TADATERU KONOÉ**

**Remarks to the High-Level Roundtable**

**Women and Girls: Catalyzing Action to Achieve Gender Equality**

**World Humanitarian Summit**

**Istanbul, Turkey, 24 May 2016**

Your excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Like all gathered here, the IFRC recognizes that humanitarian action cannot be successful if it does not respond to the particular circumstances of women and girls, and men and boys. Humanitarian crises accentuate gender inequalities and too often increase the incidence of sexual gender-based violence. Gender is indeed one of the determining social factors that shapes the extent to which people are affected.

In recent years, we have made real efforts to embed and improve gender- and diversity-responsive approach across all of our activities and at all levels. We are better than we were, but we are still not good enough.

So we will continue to work, and today I am happy to pledge the following:

- We pledge to address gender, age, disability and diversity throughout our operational response by fully implementing our *Minimum Standard Commitments on Gender and Diversity in Emergency Programming*, which provide four key areas of focus: dignity, access, participation and “doing no harm”;
- We pledge to support states to integrate effective approaches to gender in their disaster risk management laws and policies. We are also undertaking a major new comparative research project on global best practice to that effect;



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- And, as per Resolution 3 of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we pledge to adopt and enforce our own zero-tolerance policies towards sexual exploitation and abuse by our staff and volunteers.

We will also ensure that the leadership and work of women and girls within our own ranks is acknowledged and supported. Of the 17 million Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers world-wide, *nearly 9.2 million, are women and girls*. That is 9.2 million female first responders who are part of the very communities that are affected by crises. We will empower them, and by so doing, empower their communities

We have an opportunity to shape humanitarian systems and approaches that are truly inclusive. We have the opportunity to promote everyone's distinct agency and capacities; to acknowledge and act determinedly on the specific risks of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict, disasters and other emergencies; to preserve the hard-won gender- and diversity-responsive gains made before crises hit; and to put national and local actors representing women, girls, boys and men, as well as individuals and groups with distinct needs, at the heart of our collective efforts.

The opportunity is there, we must seize it, and we will!

Thank you.