



Delegation of the International Federation of Red Cross  
and Red Crescent Societies to the United Nations

**STATEMENT BY MR. DERK SEGAAR  
ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES**

Preparatory meeting for the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the  
Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable  
Development” 2018-2028

New York, 25 October 2022

Mr/Madam Chair,

On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), I thank the President of the General Assembly and the co-hosts of the UN Water Conference, the governments of the Netherlands and Tajikistan, for organizing this informative preparatory meeting and for providing us the opportunity to participate in today’s meeting.

As the largest humanitarian network, the IFRC and our 192 National Societies, including my own Netherlands Red Cross, are witnessing firsthand how the climate crisis is disrupting the water cycle. The increase in the frequency and intensity of disasters and water-related risks reduces food and water security, impacts health and livelihoods, exacerbates conflict, and hinders efforts to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

Given this backdrop, the IFRC looks at the Water Conference as a real opportunity to have an inclusive, integrated, and action-oriented discussion. It’s also our hope that governments, in partnership with relevant civil society and local actors, will make ambitious commitments that leverage water for improved food security, health, and safe and sustainable livelihoods – connecting global systems and policies to locally led implementation.

Mr/Madam Chair,

The IFRC supports the proposal for the five themes of the interactive dialogues. First, the theme “Water for Health,” is particularly important, given that 2.1 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and 4.5 billion people lack safely managed sanitation services (WHO/UNICEF 2017). Based on our experience, IFRC knows that public health risks associated with water contamination and scarcity cannot be addressed without increased commitments to, and investments in, effective and sustainable water and waste management systems.

Second, the theme “Water for Climate, Resilience, and Environment” is highly important, since climate, disasters, and water-risks are intertwined and 90% of disasters are water-related (UNISDR). It is important to ensure that policies and systems anticipate, prepare for, and comprehensively manage disasters and their water-related risks, by prioritizing anticipatory actions, locally led adaptation, and long-term solutions for resilience building and development. Approximately 20% of disasters can be predicted

starting with floods and droughts. Investing in early warning systems that lead to early actions – saves lives.

Mr/Madam Chair,

As we look ahead to the Water Conference in March 2023, the engagement of the humanitarian sector is essential, since humanitarian organizations are key stakeholders that respond to the climate crisis that is already happening. It is critical to ensure their inclusive and meaningful participation alongside with governments and not on separate days or in separate processes. We share the realities that are happening on the ground and remind us all to prioritize those that are most vulnerable, to ensure that we truly leave no one behind.

Thank you.