

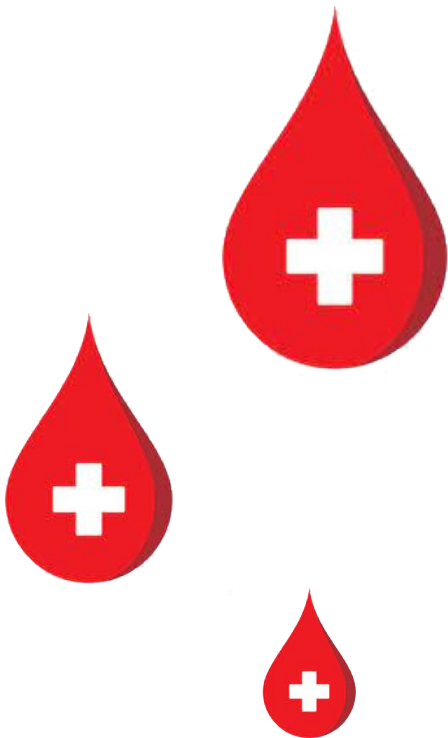
# Holding Innocent People: Has The Red Cross Crossed The Line?

## Facilitator Guide

**What are the humanitarian principles that humanitarian aid organizations are required to abide by? Are they fulfilling their obligations towards the hostages from October 7th according to their own statutes?**

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Why have the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other humanitarian agencies been unable to fulfill their own charters to take care of the Israeli hostages of October 7? Why does the ICRC continue its presence in Gaza while ignoring its continued impotence regarding the Israeli hostages? How does this embody neutrality, impartiality and independence? How can it justify its historic lack of neutrality and partiality? Where is the accountability for the ICRC and other EU-recognized organizations for their inability/inaction in helping the hostages and yet helping all other peoples?



### Info For Facilitator

Humanitarian organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross must abide by the humanitarian principles as laid out by the European Commission. The humanitarian principles are: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

The humanitarian principles are endorsed by two United Nations General Assembly resolutions ([46/182](#) and [58/114](#)). They guide the work of all actors working in the humanitarian sphere, defining what humanitarian aid is: delivering life-saving assistance to those in need, without any adverse distinction.

The International Committee of the Red Cross' own statutes require all members of the movement to abide by humanitarian principles.

The ICRC has an unfortunate history of impotence in the face of Jewish suffering, for example, in failing to discover "any trace of installations for exterminating civilian prisoners" during a visit to the concentration camp at Auschwitz in November, 1944. This places a special moral imperative on the ICRC to live up to its own charter.



#### Target Audience:

Middle School, High School, Young Adults, Adults



#### Length Of Program

One hour learning and organizing plus protest(s)



#### Materials & Prep:

- List of local Red Cross office, blood donation centers, Washington DC Headquarters
- Red Cross blood drop symbols
- Paper and writing implements
- Poster boards
- Poster Markers (thick, chiseled-cut) and/or black paint
- Red paint
- Red ribbons
- Printed copies of or digital access to the Resource Sheet for all participants
- Prints or links to legal charters and documents of ICRC
- Smartphones

## FRAMING THE ISSUE

The ideals of the ICRC are expressed in their mottoes: *"Inter Arma Caritas"* ("In war, Charity") and *"Per Humanitatem ad Pacem"* ("With humanity, towards peace"). Both are contained in the Preamble to the Statutes (constitution) of the movement. However, the ICRC has failed to show either charity or humanity toward the hostages taken on October 7. In so doing, the ICRC has not only not furthered the cause of peace, but passively condoned violence, inhumanity and war on Israelis.

According to Amnesty International, denying detainees access to humanitarian organizations like the ICRC can leave them vulnerable to human rights abuses such as torture or ill-treatment (Amnesty International Report 2017/18). In addition, according to World Health Organization reports, prolonged captivity can have severe physical and psychological effects on detainees. These are basic human rights.

According to the EU, humanitarian aid is not to be influenced by any political, strategic, military, or economic objective. The ICRC claims to be committed to ensuring that "aid can be delivered to people affected by crisis in complex political and security environments," however, they have not fulfilled these principles. No signs of life have been received from the hostages, no visits have taken place, and no accounting of where the hostages are or how many were taken has been performed by the ICRC. No medical assessment has taken place and no aid has reached the hostages. The EU's humanitarian response claims to abide by the principle to 'do no harm', which involves not causing further damage to the affected populations and the environment, however ongoing harm has come to the hostages through torture, subhuman conditions, starvation and murder and they have done nothing

## LET'S EXPLORE

- *Facilitator opens with elements from the framing above.*
- *Facilitator divides the participants into four smaller working groups.*
- *Each group receives a poster board with one of the following four humanitarian principles: Humanity, Neutrality, Impartiality and Independence.*
- *Ask the group to write their own definition of the humanitarian principle they received, and add what they think it would require of the agencies which claim to adhere to these principles to do for the Israeli hostages.*
- *Facilitator brings the group back together and has the smaller groups share their definitions and requirements.*
- *Provide the participants with the definitions according to the EU humanitarian principles (on the resource sheet). Open up a discussion comparing the stated definitions and the ones created by the groups.*
- *Add the information below about US funding for the ICRC:*

The United States is a major benefactor of the ICRC through government grants, which typically range into the hundreds of millions of dollars annually. According to Department of Defense budgetary documents, the ICRC received approximately \$25 million in grants in FY2023. In FY2020, the ICRC and its affiliated Red Cross organizations received over \$600 million in U.S. funding, including over \$410 million in State Department funds and an additional \$95 million for emergency COVID-19 relief efforts.

- *Ask the group: What might be the actions we should demand of the humanitarian agencies in order to adhere to their very own principles?*

Some examples might include:

- "Congress should demand that the ICRC fulfill its mission to meet with and care for the hostages"
- "Future U.S. grants to the ICRC should be contingent on the organization upholding its mission"
- "The Red Cross must visit the Israeli hostages and provide them with urgent medicines and health care"

Once you have defined your demands, log in to: [oneminaday.org](https://oneminaday.org), call your elected officials and share your action requests with them. In addition, [write to the White House to communicate your demands](#).

# TAKE ACTION!

## ■ Prepare and organize a protest:

Using the Red Cross symbols of blood drops, demonstrate at the Red Cross headquarters in Washington, DC, your local Red Cross headquarters or local blood donation centers. Create posters with actions that the ICRC and other humanitarian organizations should be taking with regard to the hostages, such as: "VISIT HOSTAGES NOW!", "MEDICATIONS TO HOSTAGES NOW!". Use red paint to connect the symbols of the Red Cross with the fate of the hostages: i.e. blood on hands, red handprints.

## ■ Ask all participants to sign the Change.org petition and to encourage others to do so:

[www.change.org/p/demand-for-red-cross-to-visit-israeli-hostages](http://www.change.org/p/demand-for-red-cross-to-visit-israeli-hostages)

## CLOSING INTENTION

The Red Cross has been derelict in its obligations toward the hostages of October 7. They are Jewish, Christian, Muslim, have multiple citizenships and the Red Cross has abandoned them. Demand that the ICRC right a historic wrong against the Jewish people, fulfill their own charter and mission to provide the hostages with medical, psychological and moral support. Demand signs of life and medical support.

