

# BRIEF OVERVIEW OF SLOVENIAN RED CROSS



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## NOTE BY SLOVENIAN RED CROSS LEADERSHIP

Slovenian Red Cross is by recognition and positive reputation among general public leading agency among more than 90 humanitarian organizations in Slovenia.

We are certain, that the important factor of Slovenian Red Cross reputation is intact tradition of International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and consistent implementation of Fundamental Principles: *humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality*.

Moreover, we are convinced that for general recognition and respect of our National Society, key factor is lying in concrete results, which can not be achieved in such a large scope and reach by any other humanitarian organization in Slovenia.

Slovenian Red Cross irreplaceable contribution towards health and prosperity of Slovenians is vividly shown in implementation of public programs such as: Blood Donation; First Aid; Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Response and in strong Social Welfare activities.

Amazing figures might illustrated the role of SRC in society better: yearly, **more than 10% of population receives assistance by Slovenian Red Cross**; almost **100.000 Blood Donors** help in saving numerous lives; **more than 15.000 children spent healthy and worry free holidays** by the sea **in the Slovenian Red Cross Youth and Health Resort Debeli rtič**. All this is possible due to **19.000 Red Cross volunteers**, who yearly accomplish more than **400.000 hours of voluntary work**.

Each time in history is challenging Red Cross with specific tasks. Therefore in the **Annual plan of SRC for 2008** we have set **our priorities in additional social welfare care for the most jeopardize and vulnerable** (*children, youngsters, elderly, sick, handicapped, homeless, Roma and addicts*); stronger media activity in order to **raise general public's awareness for humanity and solidarity**; to **rejuvenate network of our members** and due to ever more worrying climate changes – **higher attention for environmental issues**.

Slovenian Red Cross is striving to found a Council of Humanitarian Organizations of Slovenia in order to achieve synergic results of volunteerism at home, while it will continue - as integral part of world wide Red Cross family - to spring to assistance to a sister NS in need – as we did so in recent years in case of Pakistan, Darfur and Sri Lanka – and show our compliance with principle of solidarity and at the same time generosity of Slovenian society.

Janez Pezelj  
Secretary General

Borut Miklavčič  
President

## I. SHORTLY ABOUT SLOVENIAN RED CROSS

### History

The origins of Slovenian Red Cross are based **more than 140 years ago**, in the year of **1866**, when 'Women Association for assistance to wounded and sick soldiers' was established in Ljubljana.

Ever since the Red Cross in Slovenia works uninterruptedly - in war as in peacetime.

Red Cross in Slovenia was for more than a century long organized as part of Austro-Hungarian Empire, Kingdom of SHS and of former Yugoslavia.

In nineties, after the independence of Republic of Slovenia, Slovenian Red Cross started to act as independent National Society and was on **25<sup>th</sup> August 1993 officially recognized by International Committee of Red Cross** and therefore admitted **as an equal National Society** into the worldwide Movement of Red Cross and Red Crescent.

### Structure

**The Slovenian Red Cross – Federation of Associations** is an independent humanitarian volunteer Federation of Red Cross Associations, which acts on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia on the principle of unity and in accordance with the Law on the Slovenian Red Cross, the Law on Societies, the Law on humanitarian organizations, the Geneva Conventions and two supplementary protocols, the Statute of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the SRC Statute.

SRC is composed out of **56 Local Branches**, covering one to three local municipalities with the network spread over **900 local organization**, that are run by our committed volunteers.

Under the Slovenian Red Cross Association there is also a **Slovenian Red Cross Youth and Health Resort Debeli rtič**, based on the Slovenian Coast.

### Decision – making structures

#### Governance

The **supreme body** of the SRC is the **General Assembly**, composed of local association representatives, who represent the interests of their local associations.

The **President** of the SRC, **Mr. Borut Miklavčič** (*since 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2007*), is leading the SRC, assuring legality and publicity of the work of the SRC bodies, as well as representing and presenting the SRC in legal relations, with an assistance of **Vice-President, Mr. Jernej Završnik**.

The **Governing Board** (*Main Committee*) has – within decisions, general guidelines and work programme of the SRC adopted by the General Assembly – all powers required to fulfil the tasks and set objectives of the SRC. Governing Board (*Main Committee*) has an operational executive body – **Executive Committee**.

Permanent supervision of financial-material management of the SRC and monitoring of how the bodies and officials work, as well as to control the compliance of their work with the provisions of the Statute, accounting standards and other applicable regulations in this field is a function performed by the **Supervisory Committee**.

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### Management

The **Secretary General** of the SRC, **Mr. Janez Pezelj** (*since 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2007*), is the executive official of the SRC and is responsible for the implementation of guidelines and decisions of the Assembly, the Main Committee, the Executive Committee and the Supervisory Committee of the SRC. In order to fulfill all the objectives set by General Assembly there are **professional services set at headquarters** (*program managers and supporting functions*) and **at SRC Youth and Health Resort**, supported by **at least one employee** in each out of 56 Local Branches.

### RC Legislation

SRC is acting in compliance with **Law on the Slovenian Red Cross**, adopted in 1993, the **Law on Societies**, adopted in 2006, the **Law on humanitarian organizations** adopted in 2003 and with **SRC Statute**.

The renewed Statute was adopted on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2006 and amended on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2007.

Statutory Commission at SRC is currently discussing on proposals for amendments to Statute.

In 2007 SRC submitted a proposal of a new Law on the Slovenian Red Cross to the Ministry of Defence, with a proposal for a separate law for RC Emblem protection.

## II. SLOVENIAN RED CROSS ACTIVITIES

### 2.1. PUBLIC AUTHORIZATION ACTIVITIES

On the basis of the Law on the Slovenian Red Cross (*Article 9*) the task in the following fields are carried out as a public authorization:

- **tracing service**
- **first aid**
- **blood donation**
- **disaster preparedness and disaster response**

#### 2.1.1. TRACING SERVICE (TS)

When SRC Tracing Service just began its independent steps, **in June 1991**, it has been immediately confronted with big challenges. With war bursting out in Slovenia, followed by the war on Balkans (*Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina*), **SRC TS established centralized register of all refugees** within Slovenia, where **in 1992 more than 51. 000 refugees** were recorded. In the same year SRC TS **transmitted to and from conflict areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina 105.809 Red Cross messages**.

Today, in peace time, the SRC TS is issuing certificates on the basis of its own records and archives, renders accessible documents from the International TS in Arolsen, inquires on the whereabouts of missing persons in emergency situations in other countries, cooperates in reunification of families separated by armed conflicts through the Central Tracing Agencies, it collects and distributes RC messages from and to affected areas, keeps records of refugees and internally displaced persons. Besides above mentioned tasks one of the SRC priorities has always been to train and qualify personnel in order to carry out TS activities.

#### 2.1.2. FIRST AID (FA)

SRC is striving to implement **various programs targeted at different focus groups** (*students, young drivers, doctors, FA teams, maskers, companies, water rescues...*), on the **highest quality level and in accordance to the doctrine**, developed by the Expert Center for FA acting at SRC.

One of the important goals for SRC is also to reaffirm the FA knowledge as obligatory for elementary school pupils and therefore special courses for teachers are being organized, as well as Annual National Competition for Elementary Schools First Aid Teams.

SRC priority is and will continue to be to constantly raise **awareness of the importance of accurate first aid knowledge among general public in Slovenia**. Despite the 26.000 individuals, who completed different courses in last year, there is still a need for more various programs, as well as for numerous actions all around Slovenia in order to fulfill our goal – **fast, efficient and quality First Aid in any emergency it might occur**.

SRC also started with **formation of RC FA teams in each out of 56 Local Branches**, thus ensuring an important segment in case of natural or man-made disasters, which might occur.

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### 2.1.3. BLOOD DONATION

In Slovenia merely **SRC is performing fundamental tasks such as motivating, recruiting and retaining blood donors and organizing blood donor's actions** – since 1953.

In line with the fact that in Slovenia Blood Donation is a non-remunerated activity and that in accordance to statistics every 5 minutes somebody in Slovenia is in need of blood, **SRC in average organizes more than 1.100 blood donors' actions yearly** and motivates more than **96.000 regular Blood Donors**, thus ensuring a sufficient blood supply.

Based on the data and experiences it is safe to claim that **Blood Donation is the biggest act of solidarity in Slovenia.**

Today SRC priority is to motivate younger population to become blood donors and to raise, on national level, the number of blood donors for 10%.

Despite public authorization given to SRC there is constant and close cooperation established with Ministry of Health, Blood Transfusion Centre of Slovenia and various other institutions and companies.

### 2.1.4. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS and DISASTER RESPONSE

**SRC is an integral part of National Protection System** and is therefore in close cooperation with Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief at Ministry of Defense responsible for implementation of health measures for affected population in case of natural or other disasters; for admission, accommodation and supplying the affected population; for coordination and shipment of humanitarian aid and nevertheless to train volunteers in order to fulfill the tasks stated in GC.

In order to fulfill the task of admission, accommodation and supplying the affected population in cases of disaster, **SRC has four mobile units**, equally covering territory of Slovenia; **each of them with capacity to accept 100 people.**

**Last September Slovenia was affected by heavy rains, thus causing floods in major part of the country. SRC has immediately reacted** and started with the humanitarian action on national scope level, in which **almost 1 million EUR was raised in one month. Funds were**, according to the DM rules and procedures and based on needs prioritization, **distributed to 450 families**, while **1.360 families received in-kind donations.**

## 2.2. HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS

### 2.2.1. HEALTH PROGRAM

Every year **SRC organizes over 100 lectures, quizzes, round tables** and other **different activities with topics of health life-style**, thus emphasizing the importance of care for our health. Activities are set in a way to target as large population as possible, with a special focus on youngsters. Therefore **thousands of health education materials are distributed each year** tackling topics such as: fight against tobacco, drugs, alcohol; HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, etc.

**SRC has an active part in different international platforms**, where it is substantially contributes to development of policies, awareness campaigns and various partnerships.

One of the very successful and firm partnerships was established in the framework of **EU Road Safety campaign**, that will be implemented in Slovenia already the forth year in a row.

### 2.2.2. CARE FOR ELDERLY

Care for Elderly is one of SRC priorities, while **Slovenia is one of the countries with the fastest growing old population**.

SRC organizes numerous activities for elderly and is also providing free holiday-making for socially threatened elderly at SRC Resort Debeli rtič. SRC also started with education of volunteers, who will lead **Intergenerational self-help groups**, organized throughout of Slovenia.

SRC also established the Working Group on elderly in order to even better met the needs of elderly with the task of needs assessment and drafting NS Strategy in this field.

### 2.2.3. SOCIAL WELFARE

Deriving from RC mandate SRCs' priority is certainly **care and assistance to less privileged individuals and families** more over to socially threatened individuals and families with **special attention to children, elderly ; sick and lonely people; to homeless; Roma and addicts**.

Last year **material assistance from national level was provided to more than 118.000 socially threatened individuals**, through **1.778 tons of different kind of food** (flavor, pasta, milk, sugar, corn meal...) and **75 tons of washing powder**, while Local Branches have provided extra assistance from their own incomes as well. SRC is also offering assistance in form of clothes, shoes and furniture.

SRC also organizes **free holiday-making for 4.500 children yearly from socially deprived families in SRC Youth and Health Resort Debeli rtič**, in which yearly 15.000 children all together spent part of their holidays.

According to RC static's and amount of given assistance, needs are raising form year to year and therefore in 2008 we expect 10% increase among beneficiaries. Therefore SRC is faced with another challenge - **to act as public conscience and raise a sense of solidarity among people**.

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## 2.2.4. YOUTH PROGRAM

SRC has numerous activities targeted at youngsters, one of the most spread and recognized being RC School Circles.

**Youth is engaged in activities of Local Branches in all areas of our work**, while they represent a backbone of a very successful awareness and fundraising campaign 'Hunger day'. In the campaign they are **raising the awareness of poor malnutrition and poverty among the people of their age** (*school mates, friends...*) and are at the same time raising funds for a warm meal for socially threatened pupils attending their school.

## 2.2.5. PROGRAMS in COOPERATION WITH ICRC

### 2.2.5.1. Dissemination

**Dissemination activities on RC/RC Movement** (*history; fundamental principles; components of the Movement; Emblem and International Humanitarian Law*) **are run on local and national level.**

Yearly **SRC** organizes **more than 200 seminars/workshops/lectures** for disseminators, with more than **3.000 participants**. At least once per year an induction course for new volunteers and RC professionals (*LB Secretaries*) is also organized.

There is a **very fruitful cooperation** established **with CIMIC and Police Forces** as well, who are participating in Operations in Support to Peace.

SRC will in 2008 offer Dissemination lectures for our partners at Ministries and Mayors in the local communities and strive to achieve the acceptance of a separate Law on Emblem.

### 2.2.5.2. Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL)

For the **past four year SRC is highly involved in implementing the 'Exploring Humanitarian Law'** into Slovenian Elementary and High Schools.

There were significant milestones set in regard to EHL. **Strong cooperation was established between Ministry of Education and Sports, ICRC and SRC**, resulting in signed trilateral Memorandum of Understanding.

Last year the schools for testing phase were selected and teachers training were concluded. Monitoring and mid-term evaluation shows, that EHL program is well accepted by Slovenian pupils and therefore it is estimated, that **by the end of summer this year political decision** shall be taken **ensuring that EHL program will become an integral part of curriculum.**

SRC and representatives of National Educational Institute of the Slovenia are very active in participation to regional meetings, conferences and teachers training in order to share the experiences and actively work on the Slovenian strategy for EHL Implementation, currently covering period of 2005 – 2010.

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## 2.3 INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

### 2.3.1. Tsunami in South East Asia – Renovation of Elementary School in Sri Lanka (2004 – 2008)

Immediately after Tsunami hit SE Asia SRC published an Appeal and with the generosity of Slovenians gathered 345.000 EUR. Half of the funds have been transferred to IFRC, while half of them are being used for a **joint project – renovation of Elementary School in Sri Lanka** - of UNICEF Slovenia, Karitas Slovenia, Foundation Together and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed by Slovenian Red Cross. The Elementary School, based in the poorest area of Colombo, is attended by 740 pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> up to 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

It is planned that **the project will be concluded in April this year** with the support of Finish Red Cross, who assured the missing funds for complete school renovation.

### 2.3.2. Pakistan Earthquake – Assistance to affected population (2005 – 2006)

In order to assist the earthquake victims in Pakistan, SRC made a special fundraising campaign, where donators had a possibility to sponsor a sleeping bag for Pakistanis. Altogether **170.000 EUR were raised**, equal to **10.000 sleeping bags** sent to the affected area.

### 2.3.3. World for Darfur (2006)

On the initiative of Dr. Janez Drnovšek, former President of Slovenia, the biggest humanitarian organization is Slovenia, made a joint humanitarian action for families in Darfur, affected by armed conflict.

**The main goal of the public campaign was to raise public awareness** of one of the biggest man-made catastrophes of these times, due to which **3.5 million of refugees and internally displaced people are struggling for their survival**.

In one of the biggest campaigns in Slovenia humanitarian organizations together raised 870.000 EUR, that were send to their international components present in Darfur. SRC transferred the raised money to the ICRC. ICRC through out campaign offered a substantial support by providing relevant information from the field.

### 2.3.4. Bangladesh Cylon (2007)

SRC has through IFRC transferred 20.000 EUR to affected population in Bangladesh.