

## **CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### *Article 1* Constitution

*The Dominica Red Cross was founded on 28 January 1958 as a branch of the British Red Cross Society and became independent of the British Red Cross Society on 7 March, 1983. Its constitution is based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949 (and their additional Protocols), to which Dominica is a party. The Dominica Red Cross Society shall be guided in its work by the principles of international humanitarian law and shall respect the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, which are set out below:*

#### **Humanity**

*The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all people.*

#### **Impartiality**

*It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religion beliefs, class, or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.*

#### **Neutrality**

*In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.*

#### **Independence**

*The movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.*

#### **Voluntary Service**

*It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.*

#### **Unity**

*There can be only one Red Cross and Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.*

#### **Universality**

*The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.*

**Article 2**  
**National legal status**

*The Dominica Red Cross Society is officially recognized by the Government, in the Dominica Red Cross Society Act 1983 as a voluntary society, auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field and acting for the benefit of the civilian population both for the purpose of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and as the sole National Red Cross Society which may carry out its activities in the Commonwealth of Dominica.*

*In relation to the public authorities the Dominica Red Cross Society maintains an autonomy, which allows it to act at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.*

*The public authorities shall at all times respect the adherence by the Dominica Red Cross Society to the Fundamental Principles.*

*The Dominica Red Cross Society is a body corporate having perpetual succession and a common seal. It possesses legal status. Its term of existence is unlimited. Its headquarters are located at Federation Drive, Goodwill, Commonwealth of Dominica.*

**Article 3**  
**Relations with other components of the Movement**

*The Dominica Red Cross Society, which was recognised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on 15 March 1989 is part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) on 7 April 1989.*

*The Dominica Red Cross Society shall fulfill the conditions laid down in Article 4 of the Statutes of the Movement and its relations with the other components of the Movement shall be in conformity with Article 3 of the Statutes of the Movement.*

*The Dominica Red Cross Society shall also be bound by the obligations laid down in Article 8 of the Constitution of the International Federation.*

**Article 4**  
**Agreements**

*Agreements conclude with other organisations or entities, in particular with the public authorities regarding the execution of a public service shall be in writing and shall not in any way constitute an obligation for the Society to act against the Fundamental Principles.*

**Article 5**  
**Emblem**

*The Dominica Red Cross Society has as its emblem the heraldic sign of the Red Cross on a white background. The Dominica Red Cross Society shall establish appropriate regulations in accordance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions (and the Additional Protocols), the Dominica Red Cross Society Act 1983, section 8 and the 1991 Regulations on the use of the Emblem whose provisions shall be binding upon the Dominica Red Cross Society.*

**CHAPTER II**  
**GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFIC TASKS**

**Article 6**  
**Object**

*The principal object of the Dominica Red Cross Society is to prevent and alleviate suffering with complete impartiality, making no discrimination as to nationality, race, sex, religious beliefs, language, class or political opinions.*

*For this purpose, its task is in particular;*

- 1- To act in case of armed conflict, and in peace prepares to act in all the fields covered by the Geneva Convention and in behalf of all war victims, both civilian and military;*
- 2- To contribute to the improvement of health, the prevention of disease and mitigations of suffering;*
- 3- To organise, within the scope of the national plan, emergency relief services for the victims of disasters, however caused;*
- 4- To educate the population on how to respond to disasters, however caused, and undertake in collaboration with local authorities and other agencies disaster preparedness activities and;*
- 5- To recruit, train and assign such personnel as are necessary for the discharge of its responsibilities;*
- 6- To promote the participation of children and young people in the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent;*
- 7- To promote the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and those of International Humanitarian Law in order to develop humanitarian ideals among the population, and in particular children and youth;*
- 8- To co-operate with the public authorities to ensure respect for International Humanitarian Law and to protect the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Crystal emblems.*
- 9- To act in case of loss of family contact as a result of conflict, natural disasters or other situations with a humanitarian impact, by providing Restoring Family Links services.*

**CHAPTER III  
MEMEBERS**

**Article 7  
Membership**

*Membership of the Dominica Red Cross Society is open to all without discrimination based on race, sex, religious beliefs, language, class or political opinion. Members may be active, subscribing or honorary members or patrons.*

**Article 8  
General Members**

*General members are those persons whom have agreed to give service to the Dominica Red Cross Society on a voluntary basis, are registered as such with the Society and who pay the annual contribution as determined by the General Assembly.*

**Article 9  
Subscribing Members and Corporate Members**

*Subscribing and Corporate members are those persons who pay the annual subscription determined by the General Assembly.*

**Article 10  
Honorary Members**

*Honorary members are those persons who have been so designated by the General Assembly on recommendation of the Governing Board in recognition of exceptional services to the Dominica Red Cross. Honorary Members may or may not pay annual subscriptions.*

**Patron**

*A Patron is a public figure designated by the General Assembly who permanently supports the National Society. The Patron has no right to vote, elect and to be elected.*

**Article 11  
Rights and duties of Members**

*Members have the following duties:*

- *To adhere to and disseminate the Fundamental Principles;*
- *To adhere to the International Federation Code of Conduct;*

- *To promote the work of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*
- *To recognize and obey the Constitution;*
- *To pay the annual subscription as set by the General Assembly;*
- *To participate actively in the work of the Dominica Red Cross Society*

*Members have the following rights:*

- *To vote and be elected to the governing bodies, with the exception of the Patron;*
- *To participate and vote in the meetings of the branch assembly and, if delegated, in the General Assembly of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*
- *To present proposals and raise issues with any authority in the Dominica Red Cross Society.*

#### ***Article 12*** ***Loss of the status member***

*Any member may give notice of resignation in writing at any time.*

*Subscribing membership expires automatically after twelve months, unless the subscription is renewed. The subscribing member shall receive a reminder of the need to renew the subscription one month before expiry.*

*Branch Committees may expel members for serious cause, of which the member shall be informed promptly in writing. Any member so expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Governing Board, whose decision shall be final and binding.*

*The Governing Board shall make regulations for the hearing of appeals so as to ensure that no member is unjustly treated, and the procedure is fair and in accordance with national law. It shall furthermore specify such grounds as may constitute serious cause.*

*Serious cause for the purpose of expulsion is defined as the display of character or morality incompatible with the seven Fundamental Principles or engagement in activities, which are detrimental to the reputation or activities of the Dominica Red Cross Society.*

**CHAPTER IV  
GOVERNING BODIES**

***General Assembly***

***Article***

***Composition of the General Assembly***

*The General Assembly represents the Dominica Red Cross Society as a whole. It is composed of:*

- A) The members of the Governing Board;*
- B) The chairmen (or their representatives) of the Branches;*

***Article 14***

***Powers of the General Assembly***

*Subject to the present Statutes, the General Assembly is the highest authority of the Dominica Red Cross Society.*

- A) It formulates the mission and policies that govern the Dominica Red Cross Society.*
- B) It approves the plans and budgets and the activities and financial reports of the National Society;*
- C) It determines the amount of subscriptions;*
- D) It ensures that the statutes are up to date, and monitor the compatibility of relevant national laws with the objectives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;*
- E) It elects the members of the Governing Board;*
- F) It elects the President of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*

***Article 16***

***Procedures for the General Assembly***

*The General Assembly meets every two years in ordinary session at time and place determined by the previous General Assembly and is presided over by the President of the Dominica Red Cross Society. Unless otherwise provided for in these Statutes, the General Assembly takes all its decisions with a quorum of one-half of its member and by a majority of those present and voting. If the required quorum of one-half of its members is not present, a new AGM is convened within one month with a quorum of one third of its members.*

*Each of its members whom have paid their annual subscription over the past two years has a single vote.*

*Voting shall take place by secret ballot.*

**Governing Board**

**Article 17**

**Composition of the Governing Board**

*The Governing Board is the body governing the Dominica Red Cross Society between sessions of the General assembly. It is composed of:*

- A) The President*
- B) 1 Vice President*
- C) The Treasurer;*
- D) The Director-General (CEO) and*
- E) Four members elected at the General Assembly for a period of two years, one of which will be the Chairman of the District Branches. Composition of these members may represent the following*
  - 1.) Youth*
  - 2.) Branch*
- F) Two outstanding individuals, chosen by the Governing Board for their specific competencies or because of their interest in the National Society.*

*In the event that a member of the Governing Board obtains a post as a high-ranking public officer, he or she shall withdraw from the Governing Board.*

*All members of the Governing Board as well as those elected to positions within the National Society will sign and abide by the Code of Conduct as provided in the Rules and Procedures.*

**Article 18**

**Powers of the Governing Board**

*The Governing Board is vested with the following powers or whatever powers are delegated to it by the General Assembly. In particular:*

- A) It provides for the setting up of branches particularly in areas of emerging humanitarian need, and for the dissolution of Local Committees which fail to comply with decisions taken at the central level of the Society or for actions taken which are not in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.*
- B) It monitors membership and sets dues*
- C) It sets policies on staff and volunteers;*
- D) It ensure long-term viability and makes decisions about priorities;*
- E) It sets goals;*
- F) It establishes a structure and promotes a culture to achieve defined goals;*
- G) It determines criteria for beneficiaries, clients and vulnerable groups;*
- H) It draws up, approves or amends all regulations, which are necessary in order to give effect to the present Statues;*
- I) It sets up the committees or commissions, which it deems desirable or necessary for carrying out these tasks;*

- J) *Approves the assignation of any award, prize, honorary title or medal on behalf of the NS;*
- K) *It manages and controls all funds and property held by the Dominica Red Cross Society and reviews the financial records of the Branches annually. The Governing Board may delegate this function to the Treasurer;*
- L) *Intervene and decide in any internal conflict or crisis at any territorial level that may jeopardize the integrity and image of the NS as a whole;;*
- M) *It appoints the chairman and members of the Finance Commission;*
- N) *It appoints the Director-General (CEO) and dismisses him or her if necessary.*

#### ***Article 19***

#### **Sessions of the Governing Board**

*The Governing Board meets in ordinary session every two months. Extraordinary sessions of the Governing Board are held on the initiative of the President or at the request of one-third of its members. The CEO may request the President to convene an extraordinary session.*

#### ***Article 20***

#### **Procedures for the Governing Board**

*The Governing Board is presided over by the President of the National Society. It takes all its decisions with a quorum of one-half of its members and by a majority of those present and voting. If the required quorum is not present, a new Governing Board meeting is convened two weeks later with a quorum of one third of its members. Each of its members has a single vote. In the event of a tie, the President has a second casting vote.*

#### ***Article 21***

#### **President**

*The President is the highest office bearer of the Dominica Red Cross Society. The President is responsible to the General Assembly for ensuring that the Dominica Red Cross Society pursues objects and exercises its functions as defined in Article 22 of these Statutes. The President acts under the authority of the General Assembly and the Governing Board to guide the affairs of the National Society in conformity with their decisions and to ensure the smooth functioning of the Dominica Red Cross Society.*

**Article 22**  
**Functions of the President**

*The functions of the President are:*

- A) To convoke and preside over the sessions of the General Assembly and the Governing Board;*
- B) To present to the General Assembly a review of the state of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*
- C) To co-ordinate the work of the bodies of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*
- D) To represent the Dominica Red Cross Society, nationally, regionally and internationally;*
- E) To carry out any other function entrusted by the General Assembly and the Governing Board.*

*The President may, in writing, delegate part of the functions under his article to the Vice-President or to the Director-General (CEO).*

*In the event of a vacancy arising in the office of the President, or should the President be unable to carry out his/her functions, the Governing Board shall at its next ordinary session designate the Vice-President who shall serve as Acting President until the next session of the General Assembly. At this session the General Assembly shall elect a President to fill the vacancy for the remaining period of the current term of office. Until the designation of the Vice-President as Acting President by the Governing Board, the ex-officio Vice-President will fulfill this function.*

*At the extraordinary session the General Assembly shall elect the President to fulfill the vacancy for the remaining period of the current term of office.*

**Article 23**  
**Finance Commission**

*The Finance Commission is an advisory commission to the Governing Board and shall be composed of a chairman and two members, appointed by the Governing Board for a term of two years.*

**Functions:**

*The functions of the Finance Commission:*

- a) To give advice on all financial questions affecting the National Society;*
- b) To comment on the financial report and on the budget drawn up by the CEO;*
- c) To comment on the handling and investment of the available funds and to make recommendations to the General Assembly and to the Governing Board on any financial measures which it deems appropriate;*
- d) To review periodically the formula for fixing the subscription fee of members;*
- e) To assist the Governing Board in applying and implementing the decisions of the General Assembly on the financial management of the National Society;*
- f) To report on its work to each session of the Governing Board.*

**CHAPTER V  
MANAGEMENT**

**Article 24  
Director General**

*The Director-General (CEO) shall be appointed by the Governing Board on the recommendation of the President under the conditions previously laid down by the Governing Board. The contract of appointment between the Dominica Red Cross Society and the Director-General (CEO) shall be drawn up by the Governing Board, in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Rules of Procedure.*

**Article 25  
Functions of the Director-General**

*The Director-General (CEO) is the full-time senior manager of the Dominica Red Cross Society. The Director-General (CEO), who will carry out his/her functions under the authority of the Governing Board and the President, has the following functions:*

- A) To implement the decisions and policies of the General Assembly and the Governing Board and the mandates assigned to her/him by other bodies of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*
- B) To direct the Secretariat and be responsible for the execution of the work entrusted to it;*
- C) To draft the budgets and financial reports in consultation with the Treasurer;*
- D) To be accountable for the use of resources and finances and the NS's performance*
- E) To organise the different services of the Secretariat in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly and of the Governing Board, appoint competent staff to the Secretariat, and when necessary terminate the appointment of such staff;*
- F) To be authorized representative of the Dominica Red Cross Society in relation to third parties and courts of law for all transactions whatsoever, including transactions executed in notarial form relating to the acquisition, administration and expenditure of the resources of the Dominica Red Cross Society;*
- G) To direct the actions decided upon by the General Assembly or the Governing Board. In exceptional or urgent circumstances, the Director-General (CEO) shall take all appropriate measures;*
- H) To manage and make daily decisions about the use of the NS's staff, assets, facilities, and resources to implement the plans and GA/Board decisions;*
- I) To sign checks or payment orders together with the Treasurer in accordance with financial procedures;*
- J) To carry out any other function assigned to her/him by the present statutes or by the Governing Board or the President;*
- K) To report on the activities of the Dominica Red Cross Society to the General Assembly and to the Governing Board.*

*In carrying out her/his functions the Director-General (CEO) shall keep the President closely informed. The Director General (CEO) shall ex officio be Secretary of the General Assembly and the Governing Board. The Director-General (CEO) may delegate these functions to other officials of the Secretariat. The Director-General (CEO) shall participate in the sessions of the General Assembly and the Governing Board in an advisory capacity. The Director-General (CEO) shall establish the structure of the Secretariat, the general outline of which shall be subject to the approval of the Governing Board. The Secretariat assists the Director-General (CEO) in the implementation of his/her executive task. The Director General shall not be a voting member of the Board.*

**CHAPTER VI**  
**BRANCH STRUCTURE**

**Article 26**  
**Branches**

*With the object of ensuring that the Dominica Red Cross Society's activities are extended throughout the whole of the country the Governing Board shall establish Local Branches governed by a local Committee, defining the territory allotted to each and delegating such responsibility as it thinks fit for the organization of the Dominica Red Cross Society and its activities in that area.*

*Each Branch Committee shall be responsible to the Governing Board through a Branch Representative who shall be elected by the Branch Committees.*

*The Governing Board shall lay down regulations for the organization of local branches and the conduct of their meetings.*

**Article 27**  
**Branch Assemblies**

*The branches shall each convene, not less than once a year, an assembly at which all members shall have the opportunity of meeting to discuss the business of the Dominica Red Cross Society and electing the Branch Committee (board) for the following two years. The Assembly also elects its representative (delegate) to the General Assembly.*

**Article 28**  
**Branch Committee and composition**

*Each branch assembly shall elect every two years a branch Committee, with the following Officers: a Chairman, a vice Chairman, a Treasurer, and a Secretary and may elect such other officers as it deems necessary for the proper discharge of its functions.*

*Branches may only establish formal cooperation agreements with other organizations for specific projects after the approval of the Governing Board has been obtained.*

**Article 29**  
**Branch Management**

*The branch assembly appoints a Branch Chairman who shall report to their branch committees (boards) as well as to the Branch Representative, except on activities of national relevance, for which they shall report directly to the CEO at Headquarters.*

*Article 30*

**Local Committees/ Youth Groups**

*With the object of ensuring that the Dominica Red Cross Society's activities extend throughout the whole territory, the branches are authorized to establish Youth Groups with a defined territory. The branch committee shall delegate such responsibilities as it sees fit for the organization and activities of the group. It shall lay down regulations for the organization of such groups and the conduct at their meetings.*

**CHAPTER VII**  
**FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 31**  
**Financial resources**

*Within the limits laid down by its objects the Dominica Red Cross Society acquires, owns, alienates and administers any property as may deem fit.*

*It may accept unrestricted contributions and assistance in any form from individuals, from the public authorities and from private bodies.*

*It shall not accept donations directly stemming from revenues of activities contrary to the Fundamental Principles.*

*It may accept as agent or trustee funds or property in trust or earmarked for particular use, provided that such use is within the general scope of its objectives and does not violate the Fundamental Principles.*

*It may accept any conveyance of real estate to its issue or benefit.*

*It may constitute and administer any reserve, insurance or other funds for its staff or any of its activities.*

**Article 32**  
**Financial year/External audits**

*The financial year begins on January 1<sup>st</sup> and closes December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.*

*At the close of each financial year, and not later than April 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year the accounts of said year:*

- 1. Are made the subject of a report by the Treasurer*
- 2. Are audited and reported on by a company of Chartered Accountants*

**Article 33**  
**Treasurer**

- A) The Treasure is an elected member of the Governing Board of the Dominica Red Cross Society. The Treasure acts under the authority of the Governing Board in conformity with their decisions. In order to carry out his/her function the Treasurer should liaise with the Treasurers of the branches.*

**Article 34**  
**Functions of the Treasurer**

*The functions of the Treasurer are:*

- B) To have care and custody of/ to manage the and control all funds and property held by the Dominica Red Cross Society delegated by the Governing Board;*
- C) To sign the checks or payment orders together with the Director General in accordance with financial procedures;*

- D) Carry out decisions taken by the Governing Board as to the handling and investments of available funds;*
- E) To present updated statements of the accounts to the Dominica Red Cross Society at each Governing Board meeting;*
- F) To submit the annual financial report and statements of the accounts, drafted with the Director-General, to the Governing Board.*

***Article 35***

***Composition of the Finance Commission***

*The Finance Commission is an advisory commission to the Governing Board and shall be composed of a minimum of three members, appointed by the Governing Board for a term of two years at the first session after their election.*

***Article 36***

***Procedure and Session of the Finance Commission***

*The procedure and sessions of the Finance Commission shall be laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the Dominica Red Cross Society.*

**CHAPTER VIII  
PROCEDURES**

**Article 37  
Election/rotation**

*The members elected for the following posts may not be eligible to stand for election for the same post again after having served two consecutive terms (maximum four years) in that post until a period of two years has elapsed:*

- A) *President*
- B) *Vice President*
- C) *Members of the Governing Board*
- D) *Chairmen of the local branch Committees (board)*

**Article 38  
Profiles**

*The curricula vitae of the candidates should be circulated before the elections for the above-mentioned posts take place.*

*The candidates are selected based on the following criteria:*

- A) *Level of education*
- B) *Relevant experience*
- C) *No conflicting interest between candidates professions/or close family relations and his/her freedom to execute his/her tasks in compliance with the Fundamental Principles;*
- D) *A profile that adds to the diversity of the group (professional and personal background).*
- E) *Commitment to abide by the Code of Conduct.*

**Article 39  
Rules and Regulations**

*The Governing Board draws up and amends all such Rules and Regulations as are necessary for the implementation of these Statutes.*

**Article 40  
Amendment of Statutes**

1. *Any proposed amendment to the present statutes shall be submitted for approval to the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission for National Society Statutes;*
2. *A decision for such amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds majority of fifty percent of the membership present or represented and voting at the General Assembly;*
3. *If at this General Assembly the required quorum is not present, a new AGM is convened within one month during such meeting decisions can be taken by a one-thirds majority regardless of the number of members present.*

*Article 41*  
*Dissolution*

*The Dominica Red Cross Society can only be dissolved by law or by decision of the General Assembly taken with a quorum of half of its members and by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.*

*17 September, 2010*