Position Specification

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Secretary General

June 2019

Private and Confidential
Position Specification

Ref: Secretary General
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Introduction

This specification should be read in conjunction with information available on IFRC’s website at: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc

The IFRC is seeking candidates for the post of Secretary General/CEO, based at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The Secretary General will provide strategic leadership and prepare the IFRC Secretariat and its member National Societies for the challenges ahead in a rapidly changing world. S/he will have the overall responsibility for directing and managing the IFRC Secretariat and its activities, and for ensuring effectiveness and high performance of the IFRC Secretariat team.

Qualified candidates will be energetic, results-oriented and mission-driven. They will be gifted communicators and partnership builders and will bring an excellent track record in leading one or more highly complex and diverse organizations. They will demonstrate commitment to the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Candidates will have an understanding of the humanitarian sector, complemented by a motivating and effective leadership style that builds and develops a diverse team. Experience with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will be an asset. Fluency in English is mandatory and a good knowledge of another IFRC working language would be an advantage.

Overview

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world’s largest humanitarian network, present in nearly every country through its 190-member National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 13.7 million community-based volunteers. IFRC has its headquarters in Geneva, five Regional Offices and more than 60 strategically located sub-offices. It supports National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to strengthen their capacity to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable people in their countries, including people affected by disasters and other crises. The IFRC network reaches tens of millions of people every year, through its disaster response and early recovery operations and its long-term services and development programmes.

IFRC coordinates the humanitarian efforts of its member National Societies, including during disasters and other crises. The IFRC, together with National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is guided by seven Fundamental Principles of Humanity; Impartiality; Neutrality; Independence; Voluntary Service; Unity; and Universality.

National Societies

The IFRC is a global network of local humanitarian actors. Its strength comes from the permanent community presence of its 190-member National Societies and their 13.7 million Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers.

National Society volunteers are often the first on the scene when a disaster strikes and remain active within affected communities long after everyone else has come and gone. This unparalleled network of community-based volunteers and staff also plays a vital role in ensuring that care, prevention and preparedness programmes are carried out on a day-to-day basis – from visiting chronically-ill HIV
patients in Africa to organizing early warning drills in hurricane-prone areas of the Americas. This local presence and community-based approach, coupled with the IFRC’s global outreach, resources and know-how, give the Red Cross and Red Crescent a distinct advantage when it comes to dealing with today’s complex humanitarian challenges.

The Secretariat

The IFRC, an international organization, is the global secretariat for 190 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The IFRC has its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, along with five regional offices and more than 60 strategically located country and country-cluster offices. It has approximately 1,759 staff of which around 588 are international staff. The IFRC acts within the framework of policies, objectives and programmes defined by the International Governing Bodies and Movement statutory bodies as per the organization’s Constitution.

The role of the IFRC in Geneva is to coordinate and mobilize relief assistance for international emergencies, promote cooperation between National Societies and represent these National Societies in the international field. The role of regional, country and country-cluster offices is to assist and advise National Societies with relief operations and development programmes, and encourage regional cooperation.

Governance

While the Secretary General is responsible for the day-to-day running of the IFRC, the decisions on its direction and policy are made by the governing bodies. These bodies define a framework of purpose, policies, goals and programmes, and provide a mechanism for accountability and compliance.

The General Assembly is the highest decision-making body of the IFRC. It meets every two years and comprises representatives from all member National Societies. The Governing Board acts between general assemblies, meeting twice a year with the authority to make certain decisions. For more information about IFRC governance visit

The Governing Board is responsible for appointing the Secretary General.

Strategy 2030

IFRC is in the final stages of developing Strategy 2030, which will guide the work of IFRC and the Red Cross and Red Crescent network over the coming decade. Strategy 2030 identifies major humanitarian challenges that the global network will need to address, including most prominently, climate change and migration. It then sets out the transformations that the IFRC – its secretariat and its members – will need to embrace to remain relevant and effective in the years ahead. It proposes incremental shifts that build on the mandate and substantial strengths of National Societies, alongside major transformations. Strategy 2030 seeks to guide National Societies and their secretariat to build on what has worked in the past to become more connected, agile and dynamic, and better able to rise to the challenges of the next decade and beyond, to ensure that those most vulnerable are not left behind and that the benefits of a prosperous and sustainable world are felt by all.
The Role

The Secretary General is the Chief Executive Officer of the IFRC. S/he is appointed by the Governing Board for a period of up to four years, renewable. The Secretary General implements the decisions of the General Assembly and the Governing Board, directs the Secretariat and the execution of the work entrusted to it, and is responsible for the administration of the approved budget in accordance with Article 37.6 of the Constitution.

Job duties and responsibilities

- Organises the different services of the Secretariat in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly and of the Governing Board;
- Appoints the staff of the Secretariat, keeping in mind the principles of gender equality and geographical distribution, and when necessary terminates staff;
- Appoints Under Secretaries General and Regional Directors after obtaining the Governing Board’s approval of the candidates selected by her/him;
- In the absence of the President or as otherwise agreed or appropriate, represents the IFRC in its relations with other components of the Movement and with other international organisations and institutions;
- Is the authorised representative of the IFRC 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 IFRC;
- Assures the execution of the functions set out in Article 5 of the Constitution, including direct relief actions or other actions decided upon by the General Assembly of the Governing Board. In exceptional or urgent circumstances, the Secretary General shall take all appropriate measures after consultation with the National Society concerned to the extent possible;
- Reports on the activities of the IFRC to the General Assembly and to the Governing Board;
- Keeps the President and Vice-Presidents closely informed in carrying out his/her functions;
- Establishes relations with those National Societies or organisations recognised as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field who accept and respect in their action the Fundamental Principles, even where they are not components of the Movement or members of the International Federation;
- Acts as ex officio Secretary of the General Assembly and the Governing Board; and
- Establishes the structure of the IFRC Secretariat, the general outline of which shall be subject to the approval of the Governing Board.

Duties applicable to all staff

- Actively works towards the achievement of the IFRC’s goals.
- Abides by and works in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.
- Carries out any other function assigned to him/her by the Constitution or entrusted to him by the General Assembly or the Governing Board.
Candidate Profile

Required
- Advanced university qualification (Master’s degree or equivalent)
- Post-graduate qualifications in humanitarian work (or equivalent experience)
- Extensive professional and management experience in a not-for profit humanitarian international organisation or National Society
- Senior international executive experience, including experience with financial management, human resources and legal documents in complex organisations and understanding of the complementary roles of management and governance
- Strong leadership skills
- Strong negotiating skills
- Able to initiate and lead change processes
- Excellent communication skills
- Team builder
- Excellent decision-making skills
- Able to listen and to accommodate ideas from others
- Able to inspire the Organisation and the Movement
- Fluent written and spoken English

Preferred
- Experience with voluntary agencies and/or voluntary organisations in the humanitarian field
- Senior management experience in the RCRC Movement
- Proficiency in at least one additional IFRC language (French, Spanish or Arabic)
- Fluency in other languages

Personal Attributes

The Secretary General will possess:
- Engaging personality; strong moral integrity; culturally sensitive; energetic; creative, stress resistant; diplomatic
- Understanding of the philosophy of the IFRC and the strengthening of the capacities of its members
- Willingness and ability to travel extensively
- Committed to the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- Committed to gender and diversity issues

Location
The Secretary General will be based in Geneva, Switzerland.
How to Apply

To apply, please send a full CV together with a supporting statement, briefly highlighting your experience and skills against the requirements of the role, to responses@russellreynolds.com. Please quote the role title and assignment code 1906-032L in the subject heading of the email. All applications will be acknowledged.

The closing date for applications is 19 July 2019.

For an informal discussion about the position, please contact a member of the Russell Reynolds team at responses@russellreynolds.com.

The IFRC are committed to promoting diversity in their workforce. They do not discriminate on any grounds. As a membership organization, the IFRC aim to achieve a broad representation of nationals from member countries and to enhance gender balance. Qualified women and men from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

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