Beat: News

ICRC applauds UN Security Council's Adoption of a Resolution

Protecting Humanitarian Activities

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New York (ICRC) - Today is an important day in the history of humanitarian action. The Security Council adopted a legally binding resolution on Friday that protects humanitarian activities from all current and future financial prohibitions established by United Nations sanctions regimes. While UN sanctions are not intended to negatively impact the delivery of humanitarian assistance, recent history shows that in practice they have negatively impacted our ability to support those most in need.

Once implemented, this resolution should significantly assist humanitarian action in many parts of the world. This resolution helps reconcile UN sanctions regimes with key obligations of international humanitarian law (IHL), notably those governing humanitarian activities, and will help ensure that future sanctions regimes are designed and implemented in conformity with IHL.

UN sanctions apply in nine of the ICRC's top ten operations, and the tenth is significantly affected by national and regional sanctions. And we are only one of many humanitarian organizations whose ability to assist those in need is affected.

One important humanitarian exemption particularly linked to counter-terrorism-related UN sanctions (the "1267" regime), is not permanent under this resolution, but will need to be renewed in two years. It is extremely important that this happens so that persons affected by armed conflict and living in areas impacted by those measures are not left behind.

This resolution is also an example to be considered by states when reforming their own national and regional sanctions regimes, and we would urge them to consider adopting similar humanitarian carve-outs.

We congratulate the members of the Security Council on the adoption of this important resolution and trust that it will have a positive impact on the lives of those most in need.

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ARAC International is a member of UN OCHA Humanitarian Response

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