Statement of the International Committee of the Red Cross

At the 7th Asian Pacific Population Conference

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) recognizes the intricate nexus between climate change, conflict, and migration, presenting a multifaceted humanitarian landscape. Climate-related disruptions, such as extreme weather events and resource scarcity, amplify existing vulnerabilities, exacerbating tensions and contributing to the displacement of populations. In conflict zones, these environmental stressors often compound existing challenges, intensifying the suffering of communities already grappling with the consequences of violence. Forced migration, driven by a combination of conflict and environmental factors, places immense strain on individuals and communities, testing their resilience and disrupting social fabrics.

Broadly speaking, there is a need to re-balance misleading politicised narratives about migrants and ensure more solidarity and support for host countries, especially fragile countries with protracted refugee situations. Where migrants, including refugees, are caught in armed conflict, parties to the conflict must respect and protect them as part of the civilian population. Migrants who find themselves in situations of armed conflict are protected by international humanitarian law (IHL) as part of the civilian population, and sites hosting them are entitled to protection as civilian objects under the rules governing the conduct of hostilities.

States and parties to the conflict need to preserve and enable unimpeded and principled humanitarian action for migrants in distress, irrespective of their status. States must ensure that the measures that they adopt to regulate migration on their territory comply with their obligations under international law, including the principle of non-refoulement, and respect and protect human dignity, life and security of person. In response to this complex intersection, the ICRC is dedicated to not only delivering immediate humanitarian assistance but also fostering long-term resilience.
This involves engaging with communities to build adaptive capacities, promoting sustainable practices, and advocating for policies that address the interconnected issues of climate change, conflict, and migration. Collaboration is paramount, and the ICRC actively seeks partnerships with governments, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders to enhance the collective response to these challenges.

By understanding and addressing the interplay between these factors, the ICRC aims to contribute to a more comprehensive and effective approach to humanitarian action in the face of evolving global dynamics.

Thank you.