

## The Italian Red Cross brings IDRL to its volunteers

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In mid-September, the Italian Red Cross convened more than 200 volunteer International Humanitarian Law (IHL) instructors in Gaeta (Italy) for its 9<sup>th</sup> National Conference on IHL. This conference is organized with the assistance of senior scholars from a number of universities and other institutions to inform Red Cross instructors about the latest developments in international law.

For the first time, this year's conference focused on international norms and issues related to the response to natural disasters. According to Dr. Flavia Zorzi Giustiniani, Senior Researcher at the Università Telematica Internazionale Uninettuno and co-organizer of the event, the theme was inspired both by the IFRC's work through its IDRL programme and by recent experience in Italy.

"The leading role played by the International Federation to foster better regulation of natural disasters requires the full involvement of all components of the Movement, and in particular National Societies," affirmed Giustiniani, "This conference was designed to contribute to an awareness of Italian instructors on a subject that has been neglected in their training, but whose current importance was underlined just last year when the earthquake struck the Abruzzo region. Despite being disaster-prone, Italy also lacks a legal framework for international disaster assistance."

Scholars from UTIU and other academic institutions joined speakers from the IFRC's IDRL programme and UNHCR to address a number of topics related to legal frameworks for disaster response, including the IDRL Guidelines, developments at the International Law Commission, the developing international law on the duty to prevent disasters, climate change and the sharing of satellite data, and the regulation of climate change-induced migration.

"We are aware that other National Societies have informed their volunteers about IDRL, but this is the largest and most formal training event we have seen so far," said David Fisher, IFRC IDRL Programme Coordinator, "we hope others will follow the Italian Red Cross' example."



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies