



IFRC | President Konoé: Inclusion and tolerance are at the heart of Red Cross work with migrants in Germany

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Geneva/Berlin: Thousands of volunteers from the German Red Cross are playing a crucial role in helping refugees as they start to rebuild their lives in Germany.

The President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Tadateru Konoé, paid tribute to the commitment of German Red Cross volunteers and staff during a meeting in Berlin with German Red Cross President, Dr. Rudolf Seiters, Vice-President Dr. Volkmar Schön; Secretary General Christian Reuters, and Vice-Secretary General Dr. Johannes Richert.

Mr Konoé said: “The challenges for people fleeing violence and conflict do not end when they reach their destination – inclusion, tolerance, and integration are crucial for communities in order for us to provide a peaceful and supportive environment for everyone to live in.

“The dedication of German Red Cross volunteers and staff to welcome and support refugees and migrants, and to help them begin their new lives in Germany, is a source of pride and inspiration for all of us.”

The German Red Cross’s migration operation is its biggest since the Second World War. The Red Cross works across more than 300 asylum centres nationwide and is also running psychological support programmes for asylum seekers and refugees suffering from trauma. It is also reconnecting thousands of families separated along the journey to Europe.

The number of people arriving in Germany has dropped dramatically since the advent of the EU-Turkey agreement and the closure of the Western Balkan Route six months ago, which places the focus on inclusion rather than emergency response.

President Konoé said: “Germany and its people set an example to the world with their compassion and tolerance towards people who were escaping incredible violence and suffering in countries such as Syria, Iraq and Eritrea. We all have a role to play in making sure they are treated with respect, with dignity, and are equipped with the skills and support they need to become part of the fabric of our societies.”

The German Red Cross is playing its part by piloting a volunteer programme for asylum seekers and refugees and has a range of projects aimed at helping people integrate and become part of their community, including language classes.

During his mission to Germany, Mr Konoé visited a refugee shelter and a Red Cross water rescue team. He also held a meeting with the Federal Minister of Health, Hermann Gröhe, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Interior, Dr Emily Haber and Rüdiger König, Director of Humanitarian Assistance at the Federal Foreign Office.