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Geneva/Tehran (ICRC/Iranian Red Crescent) – Experts in **emergency health** and **disaster management** and **medical** **health** **coordination** from the **Red Cross** and **Red Crescent** and governments **will gather** in **Tehran** **from 12 to 14 February** to attend a workshop hosted by the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). They will seek to **identify measures** to **ensure** that **health-care personnel** gain **safer access** to **people requiring** **health care** in **armed conflict** and other **emergencies**

"The ICRC has decided to address this humanitarian challenge together with the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies all over the world in order to strengthen protection for the sick and the wounded and to improve the safe delivery of effective and impartial health care in armed conflict and other emergencies," said Pierre Ryter, head of the ICRC delegation in Tehran. "This meeting is part of a wider effort aiming to finding solutions to one of the most significant yet often overlooked humanitarian problems of today."

The workshop participants will be from the Red Cross or Red Crescent societies of Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Iraq, Côte d'Ivoire, Nepal, Norway, Palestine, Spain, Syria, Uganda, the United Kingdom and Iran, and from the International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies and the ICRC. Representatives from the health ministry of Iraq will also be on hand to share his experience.

"Danger is an integral part of the job of Red Cross and Red Crescent health workers, despite the impartial and neutral nature of their humanitarian work," said Mohammad Shahabeddin Mohammadi-Araghi, the under-secretary-general of the Iranian Red Crescent. "This workshop provides a good opportunity to exchange ideas on the obstacles to the delivery of health care that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are facing."

This week's event in Tehran is part of a series of 10 workshops taking place between 2012 and 2014 with the aim of devising practical measures to enhance the protection of health-care providers and beneficiaries in armed conflicts and other emergencies.

Recommendations reached by workshop participants are expected to assist the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the States party to the Geneva Conventions, when they convene in 2015 within the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, in formulating resolutions on measures to be taken to address this urgent humanitarian issue.

One in six violent incidents against health-care workers in conflict-affected countries reported in 2012 targeted or otherwise affected Red Cross or Red Crescent staff, services or patients. At least 10 members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement were killed on duty. As these figures are based on reported incidents only, the real extent of the problem of safe access to health care is probably much larger.