

## Chairman's Summary – INSARAG Steering Group Meeting 2017

### **Session 1 – Opening Statements, Adoption of Agenda, Report on Issues Arising from ISG 2016**

On 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2017, the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) meeting was opened by Ambassador Manuel Bessler, the INSARAG Global Chair, and Mr. Jesper Lund, Chief of Emergency Services Branch (ESB) and Field Coordination Support Section (FCSS) of OCHA. Ambassador Bessler summarized the key achievements of INSARAG in 2016, outlined the upcoming highlights for 2017, and reflected on issues to be discussed in the upcoming sessions. Ambassador Bessler appreciated the strong leadership and support from the Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs, and the Working Group members.

The Agenda of the ISG meeting 2017 can be found in [Annex A](#). The meeting was attended by 155 participants from 68 Member States and Organizations (see [Annex B1-Open session and B2-closed session](#)), including Regional Chairs and Vice-Chairs, Working Group Chairs, National Focal Points and representatives from the IEC (INSARAG External Classification)-classified teams. Representatives from OCHA's regional offices also attended. The meeting was facilitated by OCHA's FCSS in its capacity as INSARAG Secretariat. The PowerPoint files, documents and products for the respective sessions are available at the HNPW (Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week) 2017 website ([www.hnpw.org](http://www.hnpw.org)) and [Http://insarag.org](http://insarag.org).

Saudi Arabia presented the 300 UC flags to OCHA-FCSS. The IEC teams who attended the UC (USAR Coordination) course will receive the flag for the purpose of using it in future deployments.

### **Session 2 – Key Updates and Developments in INSARAG in 2016**

Mr. Lund reflected on the activities undertaken in 2016, and the INSARAG Working Group Chairs: Mr. Dewey Perks (USA; Training Working Group: TWG), Dr. Antony Macintyre (USA; Medical Working Group: MWG), Mr. Arjan Stam (Netherlands; International Light Teams Working Group: LTWG), and Mr. Carlos Ivan Marquez Perez (Colombia; National Accreditation Working Group) provided the participants with the technical updates.

The MWG introduced the collaborative work with WHO (World Health Organization) such as the recognition of USAR medicine. Other important topics such as UC, National Accreditation and the recognition of International Light Teams, were further discussed in Session 5.

The Steering group welcomed and endorsed the continuous work of all working groups in 2017 and into 2018, and proposed that a KoBo Working Group be established.

### **Session 3 – INSARAG Regional Work Plan Report 2016/17**

The Regional Chairs spoke of INSARAG achievements in each of the three regions in 2016 and presented respective regional priorities and plans for 2017:

Mr. Abd Rahim Abd Aziz (Malaysia), on behalf of the Asia-Pacific (AP) Region, introduced the achievements of the AP group in 2016, including the AP Regional Exercise in Jogjakarta, Indonesia, where more than 300 participants attended, and the Team Leaders Meeting in Tokyo, Japan. During the AP Meeting in Xi'an, China, the group discussed the IER (INSARAG External Reclassification) revision and the Strategic Capacity Building Plan in the region. The result of the discussion on IER revision was conveyed to the Team Leaders Meeting, and Mr. Aziz introduced the concept of the long-term Capacity Building Strategic Plan 2016-2020. The INSARAG network further welcomes the initiatives of the AP member states who translated the INSARAG Guidelines into Chinese, Japanese and Korean (translation into Indonesian, Mongolian and Thai is also on-going). The AP Regional Meeting and Exercise 2017 will be held in Malaysia in 11-15 September, and Indonesia (BASARNAS) will host the Team Leaders Meeting in the week of 16-20 October 2017.

Mr Fatih Ozer (AFAD Turkey), Chair of Africa, Europe and Middle-East (AEME) Region, spoke of the achievements of the region in 2016 such as the AEME regional exercise in Turkey in May and 8 IEC/Rs in the region. The AEME region successfully took the lead on the discussion of the Beyond the Rubble and the International Light Teams. The summary of the discussion was presented at the regional meetings and the ISG 2017. The AEME Regional Meeting was held in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and the meeting gathered a total of 70 participants from 30 countries and organisations. The year 2017 will be again a very busy year with 12 IEC/Rs, one UC training course in France and the planned IEC Team Leaders/Mentor course. The AEME Regional Meeting 2017 will be held in Turkey.

Mr. Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez, (UNGRD Colombia), Chair of the Americas Region in 2016, presented the regional accomplishments of 2016, including the development of the National Accreditation process. The Americas Regional Meeting, the UNDAC consultation meeting and the Regional Exercise was hosted by Colombia, with the simulation exercise involving a total of 744 participants from 25 countries. The countries of the region undertook several workshops for focal points and USAR teams, held two regional OSOCC operations courses in Costa Rica, and a national simulation exercise in Argentina. Mr. Jorge Martinez (SGR Ecuador) presented the plans for 2017 where the Region is planning to initiate the INSARAG External Support and Recognition process for national USAR team accreditation processes, update the regional capacity assessment for national USAR teams, and strengthen communications between members of the region. The region further mentioned the need to include the private sector in future engagements. The priority for the coming year is to focus on awareness raising at the political level jointly

with training at technical-operational level. The Regional Meeting will be held in Ecuador in November 2017.

#### **Session 4 – Lessons from Earthquakes in 2016, and National Capacity Strengthening**

The distinguished panel was comprised of following representatives, and they shared their experiences and lessons from the recent earthquakes in Ecuador and Italy. The International Federation of the Red Cross Society (IFRC) reiterated the importance of the community-level disaster response, highlighting the strong partnership with INSARAG such as the implementation of the First Responders Training Package by IFRC.

- Moderator – Ambassador Manuel Bessler, INSARAG Global Chair
- Ms. Lourdes Guerrero, Risk Management Secretariat, Ecuador
- Mr. Fabrizio Curcio, Head Italian Civil Protection, Italy
- Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, ASG Partnerships, IFRC

#### Afternoon session: Closed Meeting for ISG Members only:

The afternoon session was open to the ISG member states, with other participants as observers.

#### **Session 5 – Topics arising from ISG 2016: Recommendation and Way Forward**

Following 7 topics were discussed among the member states:

##### 1. INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020

Mr. Winston Chang, OCHA-FCSS and the INSARAG Secretariat, introduced the draft INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020 and thanked the member states for their feedback and the regional chairs for compiling them.

**The ISG endorsed the Strategy 2017-2020**, and requested each regional group to develop their regional work plan based on the Strategy. The next Strategy (2020-2025) will be discussed as part of the lead-up to the 2020, planned Global Meeting. The INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020 is available in [Annex C](#).

##### 2. IER Ownership

Mr. Winston Chang, the INSARAG Secretariat, presented the new IER Ownership model, which has been implemented since January 2017. It was clarified that only the administrative processes are lighter, not the IER itself (e.g. IER is requested every 5 years). The quality needs to be maintained, and not be risked by changes. **The ISG welcomes and supports the new approach** and the INSARAG Secretariat will continue to be the custodian and adopt flexibility in managing future IERs to ensure the smooth running of the system. The IER process of “pre-greening” will be further discussed by the TWG in 2017, in

consultations and feedback from IER teams, classifiers and mentors. The Guidance Note for Teams Preparing for IER is available at [Annex D](#).

3. USAR Coordination (UC)

Mr. Dewey Perks, the Chair of the TWG, introduced the UC concept and the UC training courses held in UK and Singapore in 2016. **The ISG endorsed the UC Manual**, and agreed that it be a part of the Guidelines from 1 January 2018. It was agreed that it is mandatory for all the current 47 classified teams to participate in the UC training, and this will be a IEC/R checklist item from 1 January 2018. Teams are further expected to contribute trained personnel to the RDC (Reception Departure Centre) and UC in operations whether its USAR teams deploys or not. Member States are encouraged to translate the UC Manual for internal use, and consider hosting future UC courses. The UC training will be held in France and the USA in 2017. The INSARAG Secretariat is looking for member countries interested in hosting future UC training.

4. KoBo

Mr. Peter Wolff, Germany, introduced the progress of KoBo implementation in the INSARAG activities. **The ISG endorsed the use of KoBo**, and agreed that all IEC-classified teams should use KoBo in the field and in their IERs. KoBo will be a checklist item for IEC/Rs after 1 January 2018 for all the IEC-classified teams. The INSARAG Guidelines Volume II-C (IEC/R Manual) will be revised to accommodate this change. The ISG agreed to set up a KoBo Working Group (KWG) in 2017 and welcomed Mr. Wolff to take the lead on this. KWG will develop a manual including the information management at the UC level. The Secretariat, in consultations with Mr. Wolff, will approach some potential members of the KWG.

5. Beyond the Rubble

Mr. David Sochor, Switzerland, introduced the guidance document on Beyond the Rubble. **The ISG endorsed the document developed by the AEME Group**, and recommended that it be shared on the INSARAG website and added into the Guidelines. The proliferation and further refinement of the document should be handed over to the Guidelines Review Group (GRG) which will be established in 2018. Teams deploying with such capability can voluntarily indicate this in the VO (Virtual OSOCC) prior to deployment. The Guidance document is attached as [Annex E](#).

6. National Accreditation Process

Mr. William Hernandez, Costa Rica (member of the Working Group), introduced the guidance document on National Accreditation developed by the Working Group on National Accreditation. **The ISG endorsed**

the framework of the National Accreditation process, the tools (e.g. guidance document) and agreed that it be part of the INSARAG Guidelines 2020. The ISG also supported the idea to establish a Technical Support Group at regional level that will constitute the roster of experts that countries will be able to call upon to help them design and establish their national accreditation process. The INSARAG Secretariat, on the basis of the recommendation from the Technical Support Group, will issue a certificate to the national system on the achievement of minimum standards in their national USAR team accreditation process based on the INSARAG methodology. The ISG stressed that countries will take ownership of their national accreditation arrangements and tailor the approach, taking reference to the guidance provided. The INSARAG Americas Group will provide updates on the implementation of the process at the ISG 2018.

#### 7. International Light Teams

Mr. Arjan Stam, Chair of the LTWG and Netherlands, introduced the standards for the International Light teams, developed by the LTWG, which were endorsed by the ISG. **The ISG endorsed the definition, operations and tactical concept for “International Light Teams”.** The ISG agreed the need of further discussions on the process of recognition and possible linkages with National Accreditation. In this connection, the ISG recommended that the representatives of the LTWG and the existing WG (e.g. TWG) or a new working group to be tasked to look into this and discuss with the regional groups and the Team Leaders meeting in 2017. Arjan Stam the chair of the LTWG will be requested to lead this team and feedback from Members states have been well noted and will be taken into consideration in discussions during the team leaders- and regional meetings in 2017.

#### ***Session 6 – Briefing on the Professional Dialogue between Disaster Managers from Israel, Jordan and Palestine***

Mr. Martijn Viersma, OCHA-FCSS; Mr. Jacov Wimisberg, Director, Strategic Cooperation Department of Israel's National Emergency Management Agency; Brigadier Marwan Bader Alsmei'at, Jordan Civil Defence; and Major General Yousef Nassar, Director General of Palestine Civil Defence, briefed on the Professional Dialogue between senior disaster managers of Israel, Jordan and Palestine.

The overarching objective of the Professional Dialogue is to enhance national and regional emergency response preparedness levels, thereby leading to more resilient societies. The Project is using disaster management as a platform for dialogue among its partners. Specifically, it focuses on strengthening the interoperability and collaboration among the authorities in disaster response and preparedness, and further improving the level of preparedness of the humanitarian actors on the ground. The Project activities and regional collaboration form a

holistic path towards improved regional preparedness and effective response mechanisms that enable the saving of lives of the affected populations.

To date the Project has succeeded in building cooperative and collaborative working relationships with Israel, Jordan and Palestine. This has culminated in six professional dialogue meetings during which delegations discussed gaps in the regional response framework, guidelines for information ex-change, challenges bringing humanitarian assistance into the region – preparedness, coordination and access – as well as common events/training courses. Proposals for a regional earthquake early warning system and an operational regional flood alert system have been prepared. The participants also discussed the joint forest fire simulation exercise (EU MEFF, facilitated and supported by the Ministry of the Interior of France), which is scheduled to be held from 22 to 25 October 2017 in the region.

### ***Session 7 – Summary of Key Decisions and Directions for 2017***

1. Ambassador Bessler summarised the **7 key decisions in the ISG 2017** as reflected in Session 5.
2. The Steering group welcomed and endorsed the continuous work of all working groups in 2017 and into 2018, and proposed that a KoBo Working Group be established.
3. The Steering Group concluded the session by welcoming the launch of OCHA's Leading Edge Programme and expressing support for the initiative of fostering year-round collaboration between networks and technical experts in crisis preparedness. The INSARAG network continuously contribute to such exchange by annual regional and Working Group meetings, the Steering Group Meeting itself and multiple earthquake, re-/classification and USAR coordination exercises. Additionally, the importance of welcoming greater partnerships through the HNPW platform was highlighted throughout the meeting. The ISG encouraged the network to explore new and mutually beneficial partnerships, and that relations within the INSARAG network be further maintained and nurtured. The HNPW was acknowledged as a good platform to do so, and all were encouraged to engage with and further build existing and new partnerships and connections.

### **Announcements and Contributions from Member States:**

1. Mexico introduced the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancun in 22-26 May 2017, and welcomed participation from the member states. Registration can be done online.
2. UAE introduced the Strategic Plan for Search and Rescue Teams for the GCC countries and Jordan.
3. BASARNAS of Indonesia, announced that Indonesia would host the annual INSARAG Team Leaders Meeting in Bali, Indonesia in 16-20 October 2017.

4. Mr. Calro Post, Netherlands and the AEME Regional Vice-Chair, proposed that all the Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs be encouraged to attend other Regional Meetings to better understand the complementary strengths amongst the regions. He also proposed that, from next year, the Regional Troika meet one day before the ISG and share their experiences.

#### Concluding Remarks:

Mr. Rudi Muller, Director of OCHA-Geneva, thanked the member states for their kind support to the INSARAG activities and active contribution to the discussion.

Mr. Lund, on behalf of the Secretariat, appreciated the achievements in the ISG 2017, and thanked member states for their contribution.

Ambassador Bessler thanked the Secretariat for organising the ISG 2017, and closed the meeting.

#### Annexes

- A: Agenda INSARAG Steering Group Meeting 2017
- B1: Participants List Open Session
- B2: Participants List Closed Session
- C: INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020
- D: Guidance Note for Teams Preparing for IER
- E: Beyond the Rubble Concept Paper