

Strengthening Preparedness and Response Standards of National and International Urban Search and Rescue Operations

The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) reaffirms its commitment to United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution 57/150 of 2002 on 'Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance' from 2015 to 2020.

INSARAG's objectives were agreed during the INSARAG Global Meeting 2015 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, attended by 300 participants from over 90 countries and organizations. The objectives are constituted to complement and enhance the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, and to advance the progress made since the agreement of the INSARAG Hyogo Declaration in 2010 by 188 participants from 77 countries and organizations.

INSARAG appreciates the support expressed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in its capacity as the INSARAG secretariat, by the United Nations Economic and Social Council and by the UN General Assembly in their endorsement of and encouragement to INSARAG and its activities. INSARAG expresses its gratitude to the Government of United Arab Emirates for hosting this second INSARAG Global Meeting.

In light of the progress INSARAG has made in the past 25 years to create and cultivate a coordinated professional USAR network that aims to ensure rapid search-and-rescue preparedness and response in support of affected people and Governments in sudden-onset disasters, the INSARAG 2015 Global Meeting hereby resolves the following:

1. *Urges* the Member States of the United Nations to continue to fully support the implementation of the provisions of **UN General Assembly resolution 57/150** of 16 December 2002 on '*Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance*' and the activities of INSARAG, including the priorities and objectives as laid out by the **INSARAG Strategy**, and refined by the Regional Groups to cover the period from **2015 to 2020**.
2. *Reaffirms* full support for **disaster-affected countries** in executing their **sovereign role** to initiate, coordinate and organize international humanitarian assistance on their territories within the framework of the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and to facilitate the access and operations of international USAR teams as long as requested.
3. *Endorses* the revised and updated **INSARAG Guidelines 2015** as a set of detailed documents that use the lessons learned since INSARAG's inception and comprehensively detail the preparedness and response methodologies of INSARAG, and encourages Member States to **adopt** the Guidelines in their disaster response plans.
4. *Calls* upon all USAR teams and their respective institutions responding internationally to earthquakes to make full use of and adhere to the **field coordination** procedures established by OCHA and the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team (UNDAC), as described in the INSARAG Guidelines, including coordination of on-site work with the Reception Departure Centre (**RDC**) and the On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (**OSOCC**) established in the disaster area.
5. *Urges* all Member States possessing USAR teams with international deployment mandates to ensure that their teams adhere to the **internationally agreed standards** through their participation in the INSARAG External Classification (**IEC**) and Reclassification (**IER**), supported by mentors from Member States that have IEC teams, while adhering to humanitarian principles and fostering mutual respect.

6. *Commits*, at all levels i.e. global, regional and national, to **inclusivity**, and to renew efforts to strengthen and consolidate further **cooperation** between the three INSARAG Regional Groups, and with regional and sub-regional organizations, especially in the areas of preparedness, capacity-building, operations and training, as well as among Member States in each region.
7. *Encourages* the INSARAG Regional Groups to fully support and promote the development of **national USAR capacities** and building of greater engagement with Light teams, and urges all Member States to ensure **ownership** of the process to strengthen national capacity; a shift that is reflected in humanitarian and development policies more broadly as a means to manage risk and make best use of local capacities and experiences.
8. *Recognizes* the work undertaken by INSARAG to develop **innovations** in and recommendations for operational and organizational guidelines for the capacity-building of national USAR teams, and encourages Member States to support such efforts, fully recognizing that **international response is a complement to national capacity**.
9. *Ascertains* the **increasing and expanding role of international USAR teams** i.e. 'beyond the rubble', in response to major disasters—as demonstrated following the earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan in 2011, following Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013, and the Nepal earthquake in 2015, where international USAR teams provided services beyond the usual suite of USAR services—calls upon INSARAG to continue to facilitate and encourage the development and deployment of such adaptable and flexible support.
10. *Acknowledges* the determination of INSARAG members to **strengthen their collaboration** with OCHA, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the World Health Organization (WHO), relevant UN agencies and Regional Organizations in order to stimulate concerted action during preparedness and response.
11. *Aims* to reduce vulnerability as an underlying risk factor by developing in-country USAR capacity through the **First Responders Training Programme**, developed in collaboration with IFRC, and to build back better following a disaster to contribute to seamless recovery, giving due consideration to the influence of the processes and outcomes of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in 2016.
12. *Expresses* satisfaction with the outcome of the second INSARAG Global Meeting and affirms our intent to hold the **next** INSARAG Global Meeting in **2020**.