

INSARAG Global Meeting: Abu Dhabi Declaration

18-19 October 2015, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Draft 13 March 2015



OCHA

‘Strengthening Preparedness and Response of National and International Urban Search and Rescue Operational Standards’

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 USAR Assistance*’ from 2015 through 2020.

In this context, INSARAG’s objectives, agreed at the occasion of the INSARAG Global Meeting 2015 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates – with XXX participants from XX countries and X organisations – are constituted to complement and enhance the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, and to further advance the progress made since the agreement of the INSARAG Hyogo Declaration in 2010 by 188 participants from 77 countries and organisations.

INSARAG notes with appreciation the support expressed by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in its capacity as the INSARAG Secretariat, by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and 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, and their leading role in developing regional mechanisms for INSARAG.

In light of the progress made by INSARAG in the past 25 years in creating and cultivating a professional USAR network that aims to ensure rapid search and rescue response and coordination 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 Dec 2002 on ‘*Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance*’ and the activities of INSARAG, including the priorities and objectives as laid out by the INSARAG Steering Group Strategy for 2014-2017.
2. *Reaffirms* full support for disaster-affected countries in executing their sovereign role to initiate, coordinate and organise international humanitarian assistance on their territories, and functions within the framework of the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and facilitate the access and operations of international USAR teams when requested.
3. *Expresses* satisfaction with the revised and updated INSARAG Guidelines 2015, as a set of detailed documents that use the lessons learnt since INSARAG’s inception, and comprehensively detail the preparedness and response methodologies of INSARAG.
4. *Calls* upon all USAR teams responding internationally to earthquakes to make full use of and adhere to the field coordination procedures established by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), as described in the INSARAG Guidelines, including by coordinating on-site work with the Reception and Departure Centre (RDC) and the On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) established in the disaster area by the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team.

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The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

Coordination Saves Lives

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5. Further *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) processes.
6. *Commits*, at the regional level, to inclusivity, and to renew efforts to strengthen and consolidate further cooperation between the three Regional INSARAG Groups, and with regional and sub-regional organisations, especially in the areas of preparedness, capacity building, operations and training, as well as amongst Member States in each region.
7. *Encourages* the INSARAG Regional Groups to fully support and promote the building of national USAR capacities, in acknowledgement of the increasing focus that INSARAG is placing on national-level capacity development – a shift that is also reflected in humanitarian and development policies more broadly as a means to manage risk
8. *Recognises* the work undertaken by INSARAG in developing innovations in and recommendations for operational and organisational guidelines for capacity building of national USAR teams, encourages Member States to support such efforts, fully recognising that international response is a compliment to national capacity.
9. *Recognising* the increasing and expanded role played by international USAR teams in response to major disasters, as demonstrated in the earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan in 2011, and in the Philippines (Typhoon Haiyan) in 2013, where international USAR teams provided services beyond the usual suite of USAR services, calls upon on INSARAG to continue to further facilitate and encourage the development and deployment of such adaptable and flexible teams.
10. *Acknowledges* the determination of INSARAG members to strengthen their collaboration with OCHA, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (ISDR), relevant UN Agencies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and the World Health Organization (WHO)
11. *Considering* the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the up-coming World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), encourages the INSARAG network to continue to play an important role, by reducing vulnerability as an underlying risk factor by developing in-country USAR capacity through the First Responders Programme developed in collaboration with the IFRC.
12. *Expresses* satisfaction with the outcome of the second INSARAG Global Meeting and deep appreciation to Ambassador Toni Frisch and recognising his 25 years of contributions to INSARAG as the INSARAG Global Chairman, and welcoming the next global chair, Ambassador XXX to provide global leadership for INSARAG. And affirm our intent to hold the next INSARAG Global Meeting in 2020.