

Chairman's Summary – INSARAG Steering Group Meeting 2016

On 3 February 2016, the INSARAG Steering Group meeting was opened by Ambassador Manuel Bessler, Global Chairman of INSARAG and Mr. Rudolf Müller, Director a.i. of OCHA Geneva. The Global Chair summarised the key achievements of INSARAG in 2015, outlined the upcoming highlights for 2016 and reflected on issues to be further discussed in the upcoming sessions.

The INSARAG Steering Group Meeting 2016 Agenda is in [Annex A](#).

The meeting was attended by 156 participants from 66 Member States and Organizations (see [Annex B](#)), including Regional Chairs and Vice-Chairs, Working Group Chairs, National Focal Points and representatives from classified teams, and participants from the Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week (HNPW). Representatives from OCHA's Regional Offices and OCHA's Emergency Services Branch (ESB) also attended. The meeting was facilitated by OCHA's Field Coordination Support Section in its capacity as INSARAG Secretariat.

The Global Chair and Mr. Jesper Lund, Chief of the INSARAG Secretariat, gave an overview of the activities in 2015. Statements were also made by Mr. Gary Conille-Under-Secretary General (Programme and Operations) of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Dr. Ian Norton, Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) Coordinator-of the World Health Organisation, Mr. Charles-Antoine Hoffmann-World Humanitarian Summit Secretariat, and INSARAG Working Group Chairs: Mr. Dewey Perks (Training), Dr Antony Macintyre (Medical), and Mr. David Sochor (Guidelines).

Regional Chairs/Troika from the three regions briefed on INSARAG achievements in each region in 2015 and their respective regional priorities and plans for 2016:

- Mr. Zhao Ming (China), Chair of Asia-Pacific (AP) Region
- Mr Carlo HWM Post (Netherlands) –Chair of Africa, Europe and Middle-East (AEME) Region
- Dr. Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez (Colombia) – Regional Chair of Americas (A) Region 2016

The key issues raised from the regions are as follows:

- AP – to revisit the IER system and proposing new approaches and models
- AEME – approaches to International Light Teams; Capacity Building; and Beyond the Rubble
- A – support to the national USAR team accreditation system

Following updates from the Regional Chairs, participants were divided into five rotating groups to discuss the five key issues for INSARAG, on the basis of the discussion papers that had been previously shared. The breakout discussions rotated throughout the afternoon to ensure that all participants had the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback. The key discussion points and recommendations for the breakout sessions are listed in the respective concept notes in [Annex C1-5](#).

The Steering Group:

1. Appreciated the valuable contributions from Member States and donors in printing and translating the INSARAG Guidelines and strongly encouraged other member countries to translate the guidelines into their respective languages for wider outreach and adoption, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 57/150.
2. Supported INSARAG's application for a side event in the World Humanitarian Summit, in Istanbul from 23-24 May 2016, and encouraged INSARAG Member States and organisations to contribute actively to the event. In partnership with the WHO, INSARAG will propose an event with the theme on standards setting and quality assurance in disaster response. (More information is available at: <https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/>)
3. Agreed to align and enhance the current INSARAG Strategy 2014-17, and incorporate additional points from the outcomes from the Abu Dhabi Declaration into the INSARAG Strategy 2017 – 2020 (draft) ([Annex C](#)) which will be discussed at the upcoming Regional Meetings and the Team Leaders Meeting in 2016, and presented for decision at the ISG 2017, with the goal of transforming INSARAG to be "*Fit for the Future*".
4. Acknowledged the commitment and valued contributions of the INSARAG Working groups and supported the continuation of the Working Groups in 2016.
5. Endorsed the Regional Groups work plans for 2016.
6. Following discussions from the breakout sessions, the following decisions were made. With the support of the INSARAG Secretariat, these matters will be further progressed throughout 2016:
 - **IER System Revision:** The ISG commended the work of the Secretariat in managing the IER system and directed that this continue in the current framework of a five years cycle coordinated by the Secretariat. The INSARAG Secretariat will however adopt flexibility in managing future IERs to ensure the smooth running of the system and adopt practices such as: a smaller team of suitably represented IER classifiers, team commitment and experience on missions.
 - **Light Teams:** Given the varied and dynamic views from the participants, the ISG welcomed wider consultations and directed the Secretariat to initiate the establishment of an INSARAG light teams working group (LTWG), with a clear terms of reference, and to request INSARAG regional groups to nominate suitable members. Relevant members from existing working groups could be co-opted. The LTWG will take the lead and, following consultations with the regional groups in 2016, present the recommendations to the ISG 2017 for a decision, where after the working group will be dissolved.

- **Beyond the Rubble:** The ISG welcomed the discussion paper and was in general agreement that the AEME region with support from the DACHL (a regional network of German speaking European teams from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Luxemburg), could take the lead following consultations with the other regional groups in 2016 and the Team Leaders Meeting, present the recommendations to the ISG 2017.
- **National Accreditation System:** The ISG welcomed the discussion paper and was in general agreement that the Americas region takes the lead and, following consultations with the other regional groups in 2016, present the recommendations to the ISG 2017.
- **Capacity Development:** The ISG welcomed the discussion paper and was in general agreement that the A-P region takes the lead and, following consultations with the other regional groups in 2016, presents the recommendations to the ISG 2017.

Announcements and Contributions from Member States:

1. Saudi Arabia, France, Turkey, Peru and Korea announced the translation of the INSARAG Guidelines into Arabic, French, Turkish, Spanish and Korean respectively, and presented the translated versions to the Secretariat for dissemination. Upcoming translations include China-(Mandarin), Japan (Japanese), Russia and Belarus (Russian).
2. Armenia announced a national simulation exercise in June 2016 and welcomed the INSARAG network to participate.
3. Japan welcomed INSARAG to the annual Team Leaders Meeting in Tokyo from 7 - 9 September 2016; and will share the Japanese version of the INSARAG Guidelines shortly.
4. Colombia announced the hosting of the INSARAG Regional Earthquake Response Exercise from 26-30 September 2016 in Bogota, and the Americas Regional Group meeting, to be held jointly with an UNDAC regional consultation from 16-18 November 2016 in Bogota. Colombia stated it will reach out to the Pan-American Health Organisation to consider the holding of a regional EMT meeting at the same time. Colombia also announced the hosting of a workshop on the proposal for a support mechanism on national accreditation processes in May as well as the hosting by the USA of the UCC Course in June (20-24 June, to be confirmed). Colombia will make the printed Guidelines in Spanish available shortly.
5. Australia highlighted the importance of INSARAG's mandate on capacity building and the work in the Pacific and its relevance with the WHS.
6. Indonesia announced the INSARAG Asia Pacific Earthquake Exercise in Jogjakarta from 25-29 July 2016 and welcomes participants from all regions to participate.
7. China, as the Chair for the AP region, announced the holding of the INSARAG AP Regional Meeting in Xi'an Province from 25-26 August, and will share the Chinese version of the Guidelines shortly.
8. Malaysia announced their date for IEC is confirmed in 30 May – 4 June and welcomed observers from the INSARAG network.
9. Israel announced their IEC planned for 2017 and thanked France for leading a European Commission endorsed joint forest fire exercise in the region next year. Israel reaffirmed their support to INSARAG and emphasised the importance of Light USAR Teams like ZAKA.
10. The ISG welcomes the format and approach of the HNPW week and recommends that for the ISG 2017, a half day be set aside for a closed meeting of the ISG members only.

Wednesday, 3 February

08:00 – 8:50	Arrival and Registration
09:00 – 9:30	Session 1 – Opening Statements, Adoption of Agenda, Report on Issues Arising from ISG 2015 Chairman's Summary - <i>Ambassador Manuel Bessler-INSARAG Global Chair and Senior OCHA Representative, INSARAG Secretariat</i>
9:30 – 10:30	Session 2 – Key Developments in INSARAG in 2015/16, Global Meeting Report, UAE Declaration – Way Forward - <i>INSARAG Global Chair, Training, Medical and Guidelines Working Group Chairs, WHO-EMTs, HNPW Sec, Host for Global Meeting – UAE and INSARAG Secretariat</i>
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Tea/Coffee Break</i>
11:00-11:30	Session 3 – INSARAG Regional Work Plans, Strategies and Report 2015/16 - <i>INSARAG Global Chair, Regional Chairs and INSARAG Secretariat</i>
11:30-12:30	Session 4a – Discussion Topics for ISG 2016 – Overview and Start of Discussions - <i>INSARAG Global Chair, Regional Chairs and Facilitators and INSARAG Secretariat</i>
12:30-13:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
13:30–15:40	Session 4b – Breakout Discussions (continued) - <i>INSARAG Global Chair, Regional Chairs, INSARAG Chairman and INSARAG Secretariat</i>
15:40-16:00	<i>Tea/Coffee Break</i>
16:00-16:30	Session 4c – Summary of key points from discussion - <i>INSARAG Global Chair, Session Facilitators and INSARAG Secretariat</i>
16:30-17:30	Session 5 – Chairman's Summary of Key Decisions, Announcements from Member States, Closing Remarks - <i>INSARAG Global Chair, Senior OCHA Representative, INSARAG Secretariat</i>