

INSARAG

Americas Regional Chairmanship Group

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I Vice-Chair MEXICO:

II Vice-Chair ARGENTINA:

Ing. Enrique Ponce, Undersecretary for Preparedness and Response

Lic. Ricardo de la Cruz Musalem, General Director of Civil Protection

Ambassador Alejandro Daneri, President of the White Helmets Commission

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Bulletin 2017/03

Message from the Chair

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Ecuador extends a cordial welcome to participate in the XVI Annual Meeting of the INSARAG Regional Group in the Americas and the IV Consultation Meeting about the UNDAC mechanism. These events will take place in Guayaquil from 29 November to 1 December 2017.

It is important to note that for the Risk Management Secretariat it is an honor to receive Focal Points from all regions. We have no doubts that this meeting will allow us to adopt the Regional Work Plan for 2018, as well as the commitment of all countries in the region to fulfil it, so that each country in the region can develop and strengthen efficient and adequate mechanisms for response in their respective territories.

Ecuador, through the Risk Management Secretariat, has spared no expense and prioritized this great event in terms of human and logistical resources so as to provide you with the opportunity for a productive and pleasant stay.

Kind regards,
Ing. Enrique Ponce Chiriboga
Undersecretary for Preparedness and Response
Risk Management Secretariat

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

II Vice-Chairmanship of the Americas Regional Group

We take this opportunity to remind you that, should your country have the interest and availability to take up the function of the II Vice-Chair of the Regional Group, a formal letter should be sent to the INSARAG Secretariat (eidimtaite@un.org) **as soon as possible**.

USAR Coordination Course in Fairfax, EEUU

You are invited to present candidates for this course, which will take place from 26 February to 2 March 2018 in Fairfax, United States. The target audience for this course are leaders/trainers of classified USAR teams and UNDAC members specializing in USAR coordination. The course language is English. The deadline for applications is **2 February 2018**. More information is available on the Virtual OSOCC [here](#).

Contributions to the regional Work Plan 2017

We would like to invite you to present inputs on your country's contributions to the implementation of this year's regional work plan. You can do it by filling out [this brief survey](#). Your inputs will serve as a baseline for the dedicated session during the INSARAG regional group meeting in Guayaquil. Kindly submit your answers and comments **by 24 November 2017**.



7.1M EQ IN MEXICO



On 19 September at 13:14, the Mexican National Seismological Service (SSN) reported a 7.1M earthquake the border between the States of Puebla and Morelos, 12 km south-east of Axochiapan, Morelos and 120 km from Mexico City, with the depth of 57 km. The earthquake caused 369 deaths in Mexico City, as well as the States of Mexico, Guerrero, Morelos, Oaxaca and Puebla.

The National Emergencies Committee was activated and consisted of representatives of 20 departments of the National Civil Protection System. The Plan MX was activated, deploying 94,823 responders from 15 departments. The Command Post was also set up, receiving five national USAR teams (Bomberos de Guadalajara, Bomberos de Tijuana, Coordinación Estatal de Protección Civil de Guanajuato, Unidad Estatal de Protección Civil and Bomberos Jalisco y Cruz Roja Mexicana), as well as bilateral support of nine international USAR teams (Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Panama, Spain and the US), consisting of 238 national and 427 international

team members working in collaboration with the USAR teams from the affected States.

International assistance through structural engineers, information managers and in-kind relief was sent by Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Italy, Germany, Peru, Russia, Turkey, Uruguay, Switzerland and Venezuela. A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team supported in a capacity as observers and in the Command Post for the demobilization of USAR teams. This assistance consisted of 45 people, as well as donations of tents, hygiene kits and non-food items which were also used to assist the people affected by the 8.1M earthquake of 7 September, which affected the States of Chiapas and Oaxaca. For more information, please see [this link](#).

In addition to this came the solidarity of 18 private companies and 14 social organizations and universities, as well as the Mexican population in general, which provided assistance through supplies, machinery, tools, transport, food preparation and psycho-social support among others.

The country is currently in the reconstruction phase, and over 10,000,000,000 pesos are budgeted for the affected states, including Mexico City. This is based on the first assessments, and the phase is expected to conclude by the end of December this year.



Colombia: We support and respect Mexico in line with INSARAG standards, aiming to save lives

Colombia, applying assistance protocols, humanitarian attention and the links of cooperation between the two countries, offered support to the Government of Mexico to respond to the emergency caused by the 19 September earthquake of 7.1M which affected the Mexican capital and left 369 people dead in the country. When the Mexican Government accepted Colombia's offer of a USAR team, the latter was activated in line with the INSARAG Guidelines and following all relevant operational protocols. This team is currently preparing for the INSARAG External Classification, which will take place in March 2018 in Colombia.

Logistical operations received support from the Colombian Air Force and an inter-disciplinary team of 31 people deployed to Mexico. The team was coordinated by the National Risk Management Unit (UNGRD), led by its Director-General and bringing a direct message from the President of the Country, Dr. Juan Manuel Santos to the Government of Mexico. The team deployed as soon as the arrangements were coordinated and started working together with other countries responding to the emergency.

We would like to emphasize that for us as a country, it is an honour to provide humanitarian assistance following the procedures and respecting the host country. We have evaluated our participation within the framework of the Guidelines and can say that the preparedness structure of alignment, of response and of mobilization are an example of what can be done. That is why we maintain the discipline to work in accordance with these protocols and procedures. This allows us to see that all the work that has been done in terms of organization, preparation and consultations with the United Nations System, as well as internal consultations and strengthening are worthwhile, because in the necessary moments Colombia was there.

The operations in Mexico have allowed us not only to support a country, but also to strengthen our own links of friendship, cooperation and have proven that it is worth continuing to work and advance from a humanitarian perspective.

Carlos Iván Márquez Pérez
Director-General National Risk Management Unit and INSARAG Policy focal point in Colombia



Panama adopts INSARAG Guidelines

Through the Executive Decree 179 of 30 August 2017, Panama adopted the INSARAG Guidelines for the establishment, formalization and

functioning of its USAR Team. The National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC) will have the mandate to organize and train the team. Mr. José Donderis, Director of SINAPROC, highlighted that it is an important step in the country's history. More information is available in Spanish [here](#).

REGIONAL CALENDAR

13-17 November	IEC Bomberos de Chile (Santiago)
21-23 November	Argentina National SIMEX (Bariloche)
28 November-1 December	Regional INSARAG Meeting and UNDAC Consultation (Guayaquil)
4-8 December	USAR Coordination Course (San José)
23 February-2 March	USAR Coordination Course (Fairfax)

REGIONAL GROUP DISTRIBUTION

With the aim to maintain a closer contact with all countries and organizations of the Regional Group, we have divided the countries and organizations as follows amongst ourselves:

Ecuador	Peru, Colombia, Chile, Bolivia, Canada, USA
México	Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba
Argentina	Paraguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Antigua & Barbuda, the French Antillies
Secretariat/OCHA	CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, OPS, FICR

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