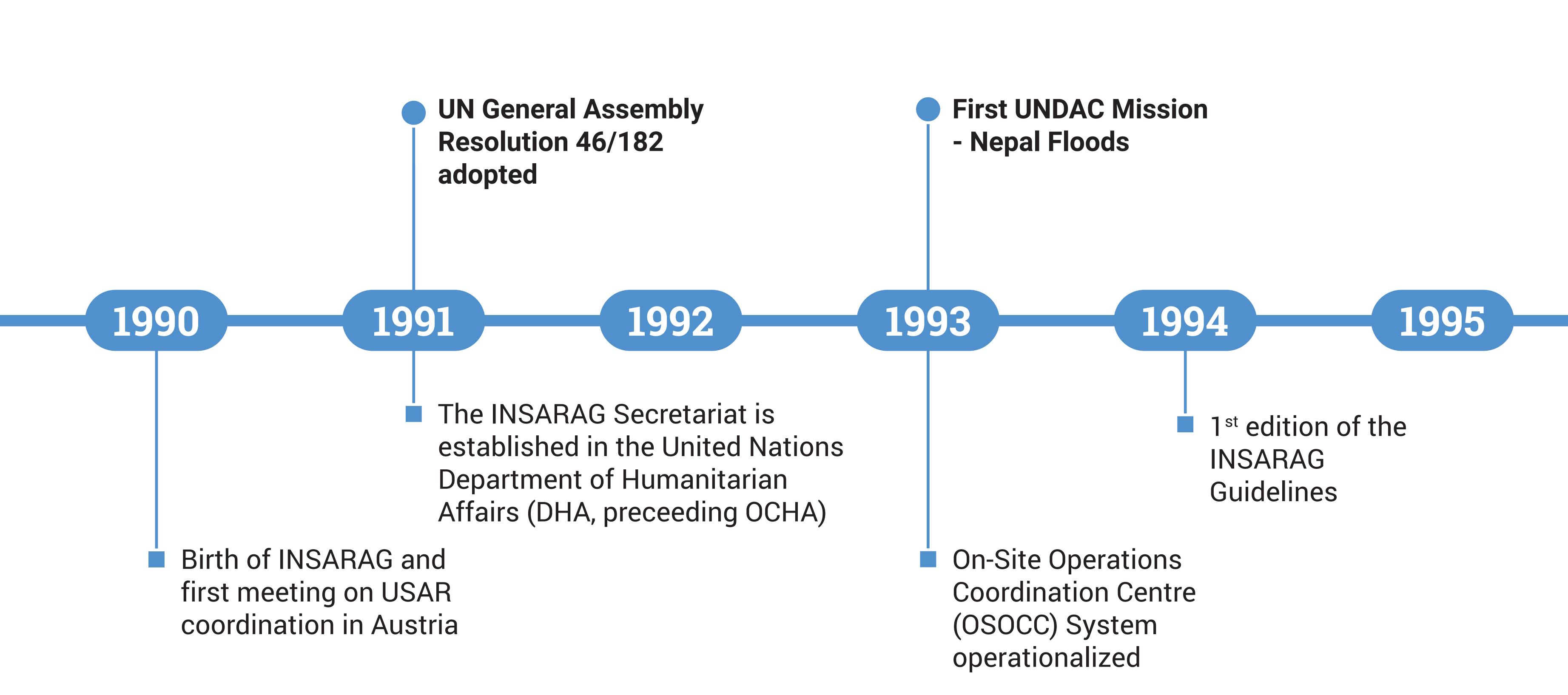


INSARAG 1000-1005

The establishment of INSARAG and the creation of global operational standards in the field of Search and Rescue





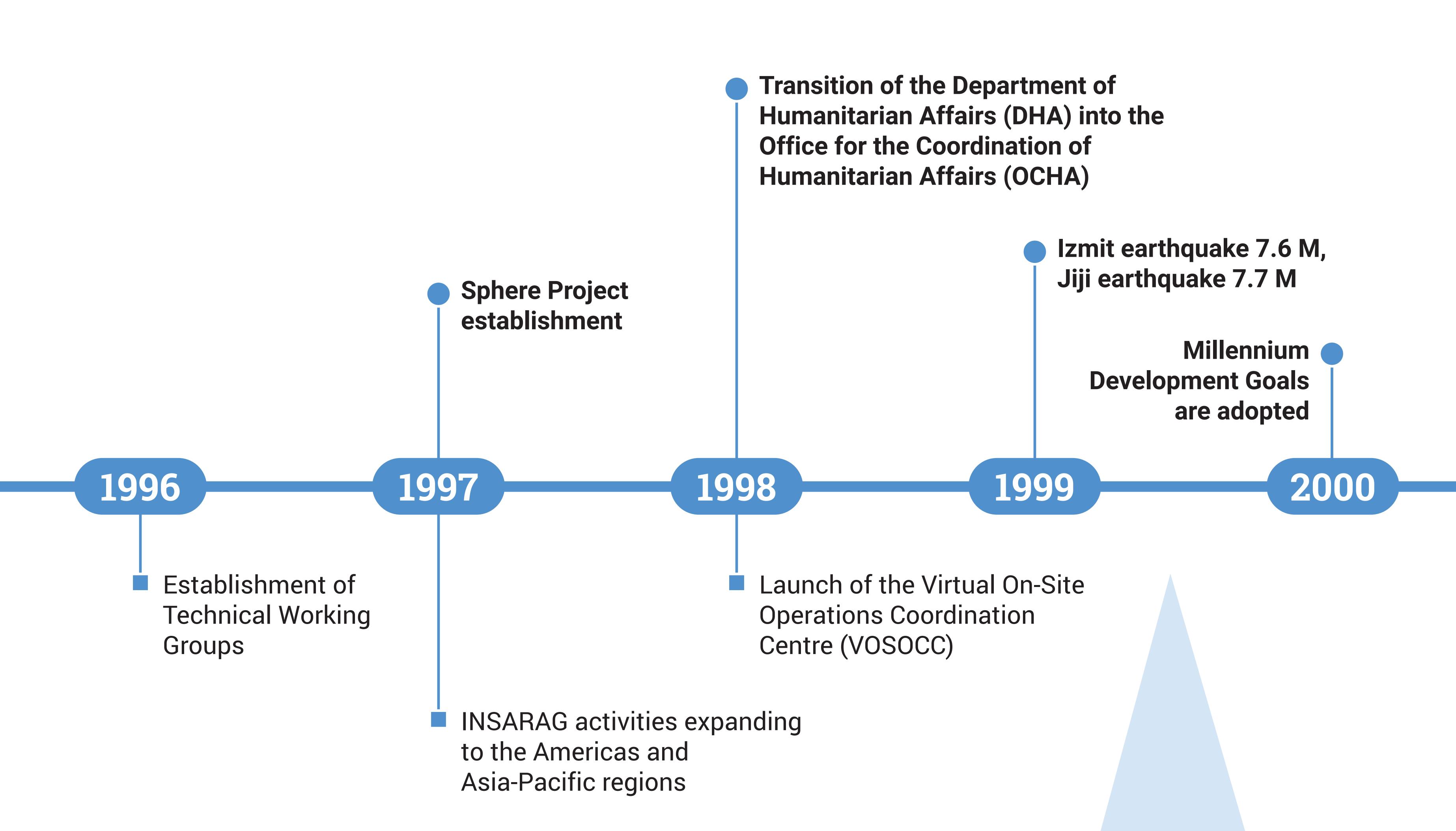
Early USAR coordination meeting in Austria, 1996. Credit: THW.

The devastation caused by the earthquakes in Mexico (1985) and Armenia (1988) highlighted the need for civil protection groups to have stronger coordination, preparedness and response capabilities. Thus, in 1991, 35 delegates from 15 countries and several organizations established the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) to discuss response methodology for international coordination in earthquake response action. Guidance material was developed, mostly based on FEMA's (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) standards.



INSARAG 1996-2000 30-YEAR TIMELINE

The consolidation of a global network





Izmit Earthquake, Turkey, 1999. Credit: Unknown.

The establishment of the INSARAG network led to the development of field coordination methodologies, and in particular the concept of the On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC). International operational standards in the field of search and rescue were also developed in the first edition of the INSARAG Guidelines. Working groups were created at this time. The INSARAG Technical Working Group was created and led to the development of several courses and exercises.





INSARAG 2001-2005

UN GA Resolution 57/150 and the creation of the INSARAG External Classification system

Gujarat earthquake (India) 7.7 M

Bam earthquake (Iran) 6.6 M, Cyclone Zoe (Solomon Islands)

Indian Ocean
earthquake and
tsunami 9.1-9.3 M,
Global Disaster Alert
and Coordination
System (GDACS)
creation

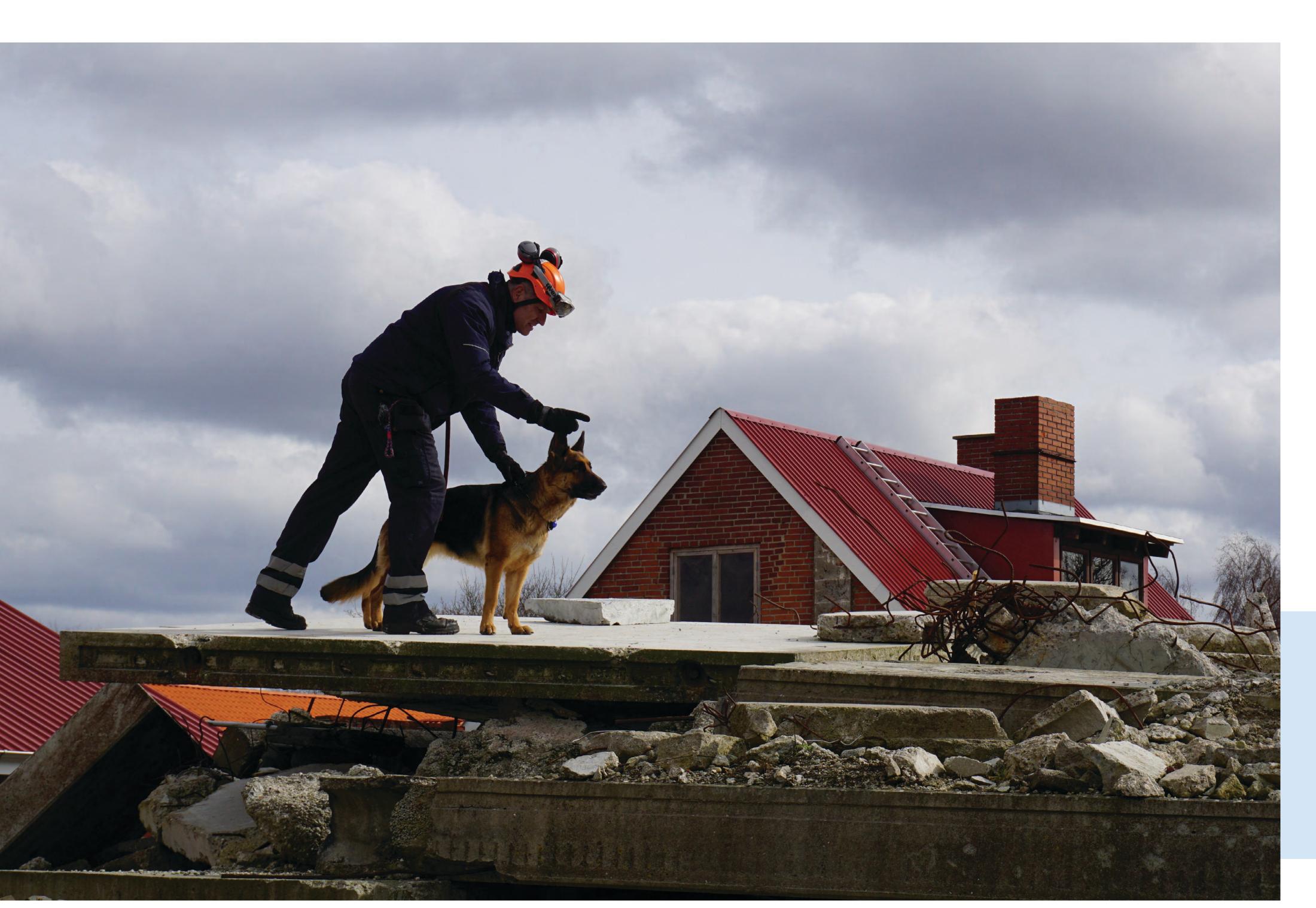
Nias-Simeulue
earthquake
(Indonesia) 8.6 M,
Kashmir
earthquake
(Pakistan) 7.8 M,
UN Cluster System
establishment

2005

2001 2002 2003 2004

1st INSARAG External Classification (Hungary)

United Nations General
Assembly Resolution 57/150
is adopted by 50 Member
States



The Danish USAR team (DEMA) undergoing the INSARAG External Re-classification (IER) process.

The period between 2001 and 2005 was essential in consolidating the INSARAG mission.

First, General Assembly
Resolution 57/150 endorsed the
INSARAG Guidelines as the
principal reference for experts in
the field of international USAR
response. Second, the INSARAG
External Classification (IEC)
was established to ensure that
USAR teams have the required
skills, equipment and resources
for effective assistance. These
two developments made the
INSARAG a point of reference in
the field of crisis response.





INSARAG 2006-2010 30-YEAR TIMELINE

The first Global Meeting and further technical developments

United Nations General Assembly establishes the **Human Rights** Council, Yogyakarta earthquake (Indonesia) 6.3 M

Solomon Islands earthquake 8.1 M

1st INSARAG

the Americas

Region (USA)

External

Sichuan earthquake (China) 7.9 M

2009

L'Aquila earthquake (Italy) 6.3 M, Samoa earthquake 8.1 M and tsunami, First **World Humanitarian** Day

Haiti earthquake 7.0 M - 200th, Chile earthquake 8.8 M, Pakistan floods

2006

2007

Classification in

2008

10th INSARAG External Classification (Switzerland)

1st INSARAG Global Meeting (Hyogo), IASC Transformative

Agenda

2010

1st INSARAG External Reclassification (UK), 1st Medium INSARAG External Classification (Iceland)



The INSARAG External Classification System was implemented in the three INSARAG regions (Africa-Europe-Middle East (AEME), Americas, Asia-Pacific) leading to better response preparedness at the regional level. In 2010, the first INSARAG Global Meeting was held in Kobe, Japan. This major event brought 188 participants from 77 countries and organizations together to discuss regional and global priorities in the field of earthquake response. The conference led to the Hyogo Declaration, that recommended the "recognition and strengthening of international urban search and rescue."

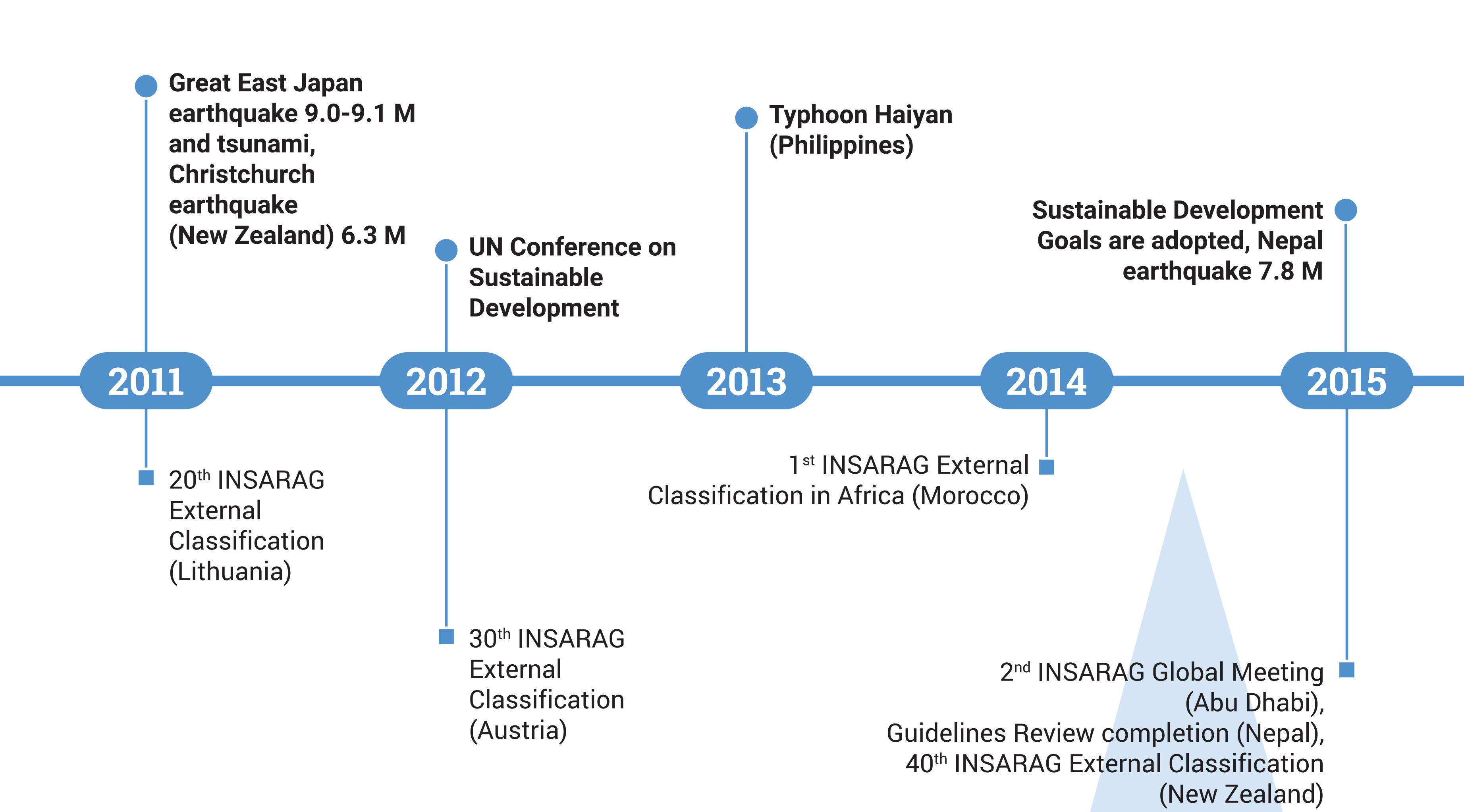
INSARAG Classfied Polish Team in Nepal, 2015. Credit: USAR Poland.





INSARAG 2011-2015 30-YEAR TIMELINE

A growing network of classified teams





INSARAG External Classification of Japan, 2010. Credit: Japan Disaster Relief Team.

The period from 2011 to 2015 saw a great number of new USAR teams joining the small group of internationally certified teams. In only five years, INSARAG recorded an increase from 19 to 44 classified teams and conducted the first reclassification of the teams, which is required every five years.

At this time, a group of INSARAG experts started compiling the lessons the network had learned in the 25 years of its existence. This led to the distribution of an updated version of the INSARAG Guidelines. At the second Global Meeting in 2015 in the United Arab Emitates, the Abu Dhabi Declaration was signed, endorsing the new version of the INARAG Guidelines and the INSARAG Strategy 2015-2020.





INSARAG 2016-2020 30-YEAR TIMELINE 2016-2020

Capacity building, localisation and flexible response

Sulawesi earthquake 7.5 M and tsunami (Indonesia)

Ecuador earthquake 7.8 M, First World **Humanitarian Summit held in Turkey, Launch** of the WHO Emergency Medical Teams Classification system

Cyclone Idai (Mozambique), Albania earthquake 6.4 M

Response to **COVID-19 pandemic** - Series of virtual conferences on the non-clinical aspects of the pandemic response held

2020

2019 2016 2018 2017

Launch of the First Responders' Training package with IFRC

50th INSARAG External Classification and 1st in Latin America (Chile), creation of First Information Management Working Group, partnerships with UNESCO, ICROOM, Interpol and ICDO

First INSARAG National Accreditation Process and endorsement of the Light Teams' **INSARAG External** Classification

Flexible response demonstrated during Cyclone Idai response in Mozambique and floods in Albania

Explosion at the port of Beirut - First **INSARAG Coordination and Management System** (ICMS) operationalised and Damage Assessment **Coordination Centre** (DACC) established in support of local authorities

Launch of INSARAG

Guidelines

2016 to 2020 marked the beginning of a new era for INSARAG. New mechanisms were developed to reflect the aspirations of regional members of small Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams and to manage the increasing number of team reclassifications. Some of the new developments included standards for the national accreditation of USAR teams, a classification system for light teams, "beyond the rubble" activities to maximise the potential of USAR teams through flexible response and the use of advanced information management and mapping systems.

Following the 2016 Humanitarian Summit, capacity building and local empowerment became an essential element of the INSARAG strategy and and led to the establishment of the INSARAG National Accreditation Process, which focuses on strengthening national and local capacity building.



USAR Switzerland in Beirut. Credit: Swiss Rescue

In 2020, the INSARAG network faced perhaps the greatest challenge in its 30-year history: the COVID-19 pandemic. The network continued to work in a virtual environment, providing a series of online conferences on the non-clinical aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic response and focusing on strengthening localization and supporting disaster response remotely. The response to the Beirut port explosion demonstrated the solidarity that binds member states together and the added value of national responders in a large-scale emergency. From the outset, the INSARAG Secretariat, the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, the OCHA country office, OCHA headquarters and the EU operated in close collaboration. The INSARAG Coordination and Management System (ICMS) was operationalised for the first time.





New strategic objectives

- Endorsement of the Strategic
 Objectives 2021-2026:
 Quality Standards, Localisation,
 Flexible Response,
 Partnerships
- Joint statement between the Medical Working Group of the INSARAG and the Emergency Medical Team (EMT) Initiative by the World Health Organization (WHO)
- INSARAG Global Meeting (hosted virtually by Poland), Guidelines Review Completion

2021

- Establishment of a Flexible
 Response Working Group, with
 three Sub-Working Groups:
 Flexible Response Global Position,
 Damage Assessment and
 Coordination Centre, INSARAG's
 Role in the Preservation of
 Cultural Heritage
- Online ERSIMEX and SIMEX: the network and the regional focal points organised several online trainings

2021 was a challenging year for the INSARAG community. The network used this time to reflect on and to recalibrate its work and to focus on the endorsement of the Strategic Objectives 2021-2026: Quality Standards, Localisation, Flexible Response and Partnerships, which were adopted during the New Year Teleconference on 27 January. Due to the ongoing restrictions caused by the pandemic, the INSARAG **External Classifications and** Reclassification have been postponed with an extension of 2 years. The network and the regional focal points also organized several online trainings. In June, the VIII INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise in the Americas region (SIMEX Peru 2021) took place virtually, counting more than 500 participants and 18 USAR teams.



Mozambique, 2019, Cyclone Idai. The China Search and Rescue Team donated rubber boats and food, and provided medical services to prevent the outbreak of infectious diseases for the people affected by the cyclone. Credits: The Ministry of Emergency Management of the People's Republic of China (MEM)

During the pandemic, the role of INSARAG became crucial in supporting countries'

responses to COVID-19 and helping vulnerable communities. To achieve this, the Joint Statement between the INSARAG Medical Working Group and the Emergency Medical Team (EMT) Initiative was endorsed.

"Strengthen Quality, Predictability, Speed, and Flexibility in Support of National and Local Capacities."

On 06 October 2021, the Government of Poland will virtually host the 3rd INSARAG Global Meeting (IGM), with guidance and support from the Global, Regional, and Working Group Chairs and the INSARAG Secretariat. This year's meeting will commemorate three decades of life-saving urban search and rescue activities by INSARAG. The INSARAG community will discuss the network's achievements over the last 30 years, share good practices adopted to remain flexible in face of the pandemic and outline the way forward to improve its operational standards, concepts and methodologies to save lives.

