



Civil Protection Guidance

for National Societies and
Federation Secretariat relations
with European Union actors

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and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2013**

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Cover photo: visit of Francesco Rocca, Extraordinary Commissioner of the Italian Red Cross, to the "Red Zone" of Finale Emilia (Modena) and other towns affected by the recent earthquakes that struck Emilia Romagna in May 2012. Nicolas Bandini/Italian Red Cross.

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Secretariat relations with European Union actors***

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Civil Protection Guidance for National Societies and Federation Secretariat relations with European Union actors

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through our 187 member National Societies. Together, we act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

Guided by *Strategy 2020* – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development

challenges of this decade – we are committed to 'saving lives and changing minds'.

Our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise and our independence and neutrality. We work to improve humanitarian standards, as partners in development and in response to disasters. We persuade decision-makers to act at all times in the interests of vulnerable people. The result: we enable healthy and safe communities, reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world.

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Introduction

1. The purpose of this document is to propose guidance for National Societies (NS) and the Federation Secretariat that supports a principled and constructive engagement with the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (the Mechanism), and European Union (EU) Member States and their civil protection (CP) actors.
2. Such guidance is relevant to Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) in the light of the changes brought about by the implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon, 2009, and the publication of the Commission Communication on disaster response and the related Council conclusions of 14 December 2011.
3. The document is structured in three parts. The first part is an introduction, which outlines the main issues and the particular context of the European Union. The second part presents general guidance that National Societies should apply in their relations with Civil Protection actors. The third part considers specific features of the European Union context and highlights specific considerations for National Societies and the Federation Secretariat.
4. The overarching goal of this guidance is to support National Societies and their Federation to save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises through building strong National Societies, preventing and reducing vulnerability through humanitarian diplomacy and functioning effectively as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.
5. National Red Cross Societies of the Member States of the European Union (EUNS) have agreed, through their disaster management working group, to review the guidance during 2014 and to consider a more binding agreement for National Society and Federation Secretariat relations with EU civil protection actors.

The changing humanitarian landscape

6. The complexity of the emergency response operations at national level has grown in line with increasingly sophisticated national infrastructures serving an increasingly urbanised population. Many public authorities are developing highly integrated emergency management structures to manage the consequences of emergencies in their own countries.
7. Many regional organisations are developing emergency management, disaster response and crisis response arrangements in recognition of the increased interdependency of nations and the transnational effects of di-

sasters. They apply planning and co-ordination approaches that have been developed at the national level and call on member states' resources to respond to international emergencies.

8. National Societies and the Federation Secretariat recognise these developments as part of a more general trend towards the multiplication of actors in international humanitarian response, with the attendant risks to principled humanitarian action and Movement coordination mechanisms.
9. National Societies must position themselves in this context and manage the opportunities and risks that present themselves in this evolution. This guidance is written with the understanding that the relationship between the National Society and its public authorities in each country is specific and distinct.

The development of a Civil Protection Approach in the EU

10. The EU does not have a legal text defining "Civil Protection" or "Civil Protection actor"; in practice, however, the term is widely used in the EU to describe delivery of civil protection assistance during the immediate phase of a disaster, and in case of third countries the assistance which is usually delivered parallel with or hands over to humanitarian aid.
11. The scope of action for civil protection is wide, with EU member states adopting an 'all hazards', integrated emergency management approach to contingency planning for events that can range from natural (earthquake, severe weather), technological (toxic spills, transportation accidents) and social events (mass gatherings, sporting events, riots) to man-made/intentional events (terrorism, arson); and cover the scale of magnitude from minor incident to a disaster on a catastrophic scale.
12. The current scope of the EU CP coordination mechanism covers disasters, excluding armed conflict and their direct results and other situations of violence.
13. The EU is promoting the "Civil Protection" approach to international disaster and crises response, both within and outside of the borders of the European Union. It is working to develop common standards and increased co-operation between the public authorities of the EU member states and with the states neighbouring the EU. It also promotes the coordinated deployment of EU member states' civil protection assets. Any country affected by a major disaster, whether within or outside the EU, can launch a request for assistance through the Emergency Response Centre (ERC). The ERC links with a range of EU early warning systems, crisis management co-ordination cells and field offices.
14. The recent growth in the use of civil protection assets for international deployment for disaster and crises has been highly visible within the EU. The Community Civil Protection Mechanism was established in 2001 to facilitate EU member states civil protection assistance interventions in the event of major emergencies or disasters inside and outside the EU. The Mechanism has been deployed often alongside UN or EU military assets involved in international humanitarian response operations. The Mechanism is based in the European Commission in the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection - DG ECHO.
15. Information about the Community Civil Protection Mechanism, its purpose, tools and most recent developments is provided in Annex 2.

Guidance for National Societies and the Federation Secretariat

16. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for National Societies (NS) and the Federation Secretariat on their relationships with the European Union (EU) Civil Protection Mechanism (the Mechanism) and European Union Member States in order to position themselves and manage the opportunities and risks.
17. This guidance was prepared in consultation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
18. The guidance is relevant to the disaster management continuum, from disaster preparedness and risk assessment to disaster relief and early recovery, and focuses on international assistance in response to disasters and crises. It refers to relations between a National Society and its public authorities regarding domestic civil protection activities when relevant.

General policy framework

19. The EUNS and the Federation Secretariat promote effective assistance to, and protection of, individuals affected by disasters, according to the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Their relationships with external actors are governed by existing rules and resolutions that have been adopted in the statutory meetings by the components of the Movement. The list of relevant documents is attached at Annex 1.
20. It is a primary responsibility of EU member states and their respective public authorities to provide assistance to people affected by disasters in their countries. The complexity of emergency response operations has grown in line with increasingly sophisticated national capacities. Also the international role that European countries are playing in the provision of civil protection assistance is growing and EU institutions and EU member states are working together to pool resources for the provision of civil protection assistance.

21. The NS are auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. According to this auxiliary role the National Society enjoys a specific and distinctive partnership at all levels, entailing mutual responsibilities and benefits, and based on international and national laws, in which the State and the National Society agree on the areas in which the latter supplements or substitutes for public humanitarian services. National Societies, in the fulfilment of their auxiliary role, may provide valuable support to their respective public authorities, including in the implementation of their obligations under international law (in particular, international humanitarian law), and by cooperation in related tasks, such as health and social services, disaster management and restoring family links. (Resolution 2, IC 2007).
22. In terms of the civil protection activities and services undertaken by the NS, there are differences in each country according to the national context and the civil protection mandate the NS holds. Typically, NS have a core response role to undertake emergency management services and deliver a wide range of humanitarian activities on a national level. These often include first aid, ambulance services, psychosocial support, food and non-food relief item distribution, search and rescue and the establishment and management of evacuation shelters.
23. National Societies continuously seek to strengthen or maintain their auxiliary role to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, including through establishing clear roles and mandates as set out in applicable legislation, policies and plans. They support and encourage relevant public authorities to develop effective legislation, policies and plans for disaster management and assist relevant public authorities to use the *Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance* (IDRL Guidelines).
24. National Societies support each other in their humanitarian activities and contribute to each other's development to maximize their collective capacities and operational reach. Those NS with historical relationships with each other, or located geographically close to each other, often have operational collaboration and established mechanisms to share their disaster response assets, such as personnel, vehicles or relief stock according to pre-agreements. Within the Movement, the National Societies have a statutory responsibility when giving international assistance to victims of disasters and other emergencies, to channel such assistance through the components of the Movement (Statutes of the Movement, article 3, par. 3.1.).
25. The trend towards an increasing number of actors in international humanitarian response poses challenges to principled humanitarian action and further complicates coordination mechanisms. The components of the Movement must manage their external relationships in a way that Movement's identity as a neutral and impartial provider of assistance is maintained.
26. This guidance is intended to reaffirm the full and continued application of the coordination rules and mechanisms agreed within the Movement, as well as the statutory responsibilities and core competencies of the respective components of the Movement as defined in the latter's relevant policies and rules. Close coordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has to take place in all contexts in which the latter has a statutory responsibility to act and in regard to all operations and areas that fall within the ICRC's core competencies and responsibilities, such as conflict

preparedness, the Restoring of Family Links (RFL) and actions or activities to limit the consequences of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

In their relationships with external actors, the Federation Secretariat and the EUNS, in common with all the components of the Movement, ensure that they promote effective assistance for and protection of the victims of conflict and vulnerable people, and that they respect the Fundamental Principles. The relations are governed by existing rules and resolutions that have been adopted by the Movements Statutory meetings.

Guidance

27. The following guidance is provided to the National Societies as they engage with the Emergency Response Centre (ERC) and EU member states in civil protection initiatives internationally:
28. National Societies may engage with civil protection actors where the proposed activities:
 - are within the competency of the National Society;
 - meet an identified need not being otherwise met and thereby enhances effective assistance to and protection of the victims of disasters and crisis;
 - are structured to ensure continued respect for the Fundamental Principles, in particular preserving the:
 - operational independence in decision-making and action of the NS
 - neutrality of the NS
 - ensure continued respect for the relevant rules and policies adopted by the Movement and the Federation, in particular the rules on co-operation and established co-ordination mechanisms and the rules on the use of the emblem;
 - consider the safety and security issues of beneficiaries and humanitarian personnel, including the potential consequences for other components and the positioning of the Movement as a whole;
 - preserve the NS capacity to act in the longer term; and
 - preserve the reputation of the Movement and meets recognised minimum standards of quality and accountability in humanitarian action.
29. The red cross, red crescent and red crystal emblems or the National Society's name or logo shall only be used in deployments with civil protection actors on the basis of the emblem regulations in force and if:
 - The National Society retains the management control over such assets and resources;
 - Such use is agreed by the National Society in the disaster-affected country and the International Federation;
 - In the case of the International Federation's logo, the International Federation agrees; and
 - The use of the emblems is not considered a risk to the perceived independence and neutrality of the Red Cross Red Crescent response, nor a potential threat to safety, security or access of any staff or volunteers.
30. Assets or resources may be loaned or deployed to civil protection operations, without any red cross and red crescent emblems or logos, if such deployment would not weaken the Movement's capacity to respond.
31. In recognition that civil protection actors are often deployed with or alongside military actors, any National Society interactions with military forces must also be considered in light of the Fundamental Principles and the po-

tential impact on other components of the Movement that might be operating either in the country or region. Therefore:

- National Societies providing international assistance should take special care in terms of any interactions with their own military present in the disaster or crisis affected country, to preserve their actual and perceived independence and neutrality; and
 - National Societies and the International Federation may not use armed protection, escorts or military transport except as set forth by the Council of Delegates.
32. Considering the deployment of any logistics capabilities in conjunction with the Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) concepts, either through EU mechanisms or directly through EUNS, further guidance can be found from “Oslo Guidelines” (*The Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief*, revised 2007) and MDCA guidelines (*Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies*, March 2003).

Specific considerations for National Societies and the Federation Secretariat

Relationships with the European Commission Emergency Response Centre

33. The EC Emergency Response Centre (ERC), until May 2013 known as Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC), is positioned within ECHO as an operational facility functioning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The ERC publishes daily bulletins on its website. The Red Cross EU Office, as part of the Federation Secretariat and on behalf of the Movement liaises with the ERC. The ERC exchanges information on needs assessments, appeals for assistance, crisis and situation reports by email with EU member states. The Red Cross EU Office disseminates this information through the RCEU Disaster Management Emergency Contacts Network (RCEU DM EC Network) and the Heads of International Operations to ensure that EUNS are aware of communication between the ERC and EU member states. The RC EU Office together with the Federation Secretariat also works to effectively link the ERC and RCRC partners and humanitarian activities. The Federation Secretariat encourages and facilitates the engagement of National Societies in field coordination mechanisms. In addition, EUNS receive information through their public authorities and their EU member state contacts.
34. Timely coordination with the ICRC shall be ensured in all contexts in which the ICRC has a statutory responsibility and in operations falling within the ICRC's scope of action and core competencies.

Risk mapping and contingency planning

35. The EC and the EU member states develop contingency plans at EU level, as well as for domestic and regional (sub-regional) use. These plans and scenarios aim to improve coordination and increase the predictability of the EU response.
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36. EUNS engage in national level risk mapping and contingency planning initiatives in order to improve recognition of RCRC capacities, capabilities and operational modalities leading to better understanding and consideration of NS role in their national disaster response system.
37. EUNS may engage in risk mapping and contingency planning initiatives across state and country borders, in order to share information about RCRC capacities and capabilities and which may contribute to more effective preparation and response. Where a EUNS has the opportunity to be involved in such risk mapping and contingency planning across state and country borders, this information should be shared with the RCEU Office and the NS of that country.

Civil Protection Training

38. The aim of the Civil Protection Mechanism training programme is to reinforce and facilitate European co-operation in civil protection assistance interventions. Experts who have trained together can interact better out in the field; in addition, they will be more knowledgeable about the particular requirements of a European civil protection mission, such as coordination and assessment.
39. The Civil Protection Mechanism undertakes a significant volume of structured training. The EU promotes the creation of standards and certification procedures for civil protection assets that may deploy internationally. The current training programme includes basic courses introducing the Mechanism as well as specialist courses for particular aspects of missions such as international coordination, all the way up to high-level courses for future mission leaders. The Federation Secretariat and EUNS support initiatives that improve performance in responding to emergencies and disasters according to internationally recognised standards.
40. EUNS and the Federation Secretariat, with the support of the ICRC, may offer or be requested to provide presentations at EU and EU member states civil protection training courses and events, to promote and disseminate the role, the Fundamental Principles, and practices of the Movement. Presentations and a diary of training courses and events are available online through the RCEU Office.
41. EUNS and the Federation Secretariat may participate or seek opportunities to bid for funding to develop and deliver multi-agency humanitarian training, where benefits could include raising RCRC profile, information sharing and funding.
42. EUNS and the Federation Secretariat may support personnel attending Civil Protection training, where their attendance is of benefit to the organisation and is relevant to the participant.

Civil Protection Exercises

43. The EU and EU member states invest significant resources into Civil Protection exercises. Civil Protection exercises organised at EU level are designed primarily as field tests aiming to establish a common understanding of co-operation in civil protection assistance interventions and to accelerate the response to major emergencies. These exercises provide a learning opportunity for all actors involved in operations under the Mechanism and enhance operational co-operation between them. One of the main objectives of these

⁵ <https://fednet.ifrc.org/en/our-federation/secretariat-offices/asia-pacific/what-we-do/disaster-management/disaster-management-planning/contingency-planning/>

Civil Protection exercises is to enhance international cooperation. Contingency planning, decision-making procedures, provision of information to the public and the media can also be tested and rehearsed during these events, so as to be better prepared for similar real-life situations. Moreover, exercises can help supervisors identify further training needs for their staff involved in operations, while lessons-learned workshops organised in parallel can serve as a forum to identify operational gaps to be improved.

44. Exercises at EU-level are organised by the participant states with co-financing from the European Commission. A call for proposals for exercises is published each year.
45. EUNS and the Federation Secretariat, with the support of the ICRC, may participate in EU Civil Protection exercises to promote the role, the Principles, and practices of the Movement, in addition to exercising Movement protocols. A diary of EU Civil Protection exercise events is maintained in the RCEU Office.
46. EUNS and the Federation Secretariat may consider seeking opportunities to bid for funding to develop and deliver multi-agency humanitarian exercises where benefits could include: raising RCRC profile, information sharing and funding.
47. EUNS and the Federation Secretariat may consider offering their services as technical experts where benefits could include: raising RCRC profile, sharing experience and learning.

Logistics

48. The Federation Global Logistics Service (GLS) is engaged with its counterparts in ECHO for both thematic and operational issues. Activities include mapping of logistics resources, developing logistics capacities of EUNS, pre-positioning of relief stocks, optimising the supply chain processes and further expansion of current stock-holding locations, as outlined in the Federation Global Logistics Strategic Plan.
49. GLS, in co-ordination with the Federation Secretariat, continues to develop potential collaboration with EU deployed materials and logistics assets, through the RCRC network.
50. As noted above, EUNS logistics assets or resources, when deployed in an international context and in association with the EU response mechanisms, may be loaned or deployed, without any red cross and red crescent emblems or logos, if such deployment would not weaken the Movement's capacity to respond.

Consular Support Services

51. EU member states are increasingly forming rapid response teams for deployment to support consulates and embassies in disaster affected areas. These rapid response teams support consular services in assisting citizens and their evacuation, when necessary. These teams are also deployed in response to crisis situations. The EU and its member states are improving coordination in crisis situations.
52. A EUNS may be invited, by its public authority, to participate in their government rapid response teams, in some capacity. Typically a EUNS may be

- invited to provide training services e.g. first aid, or trained volunteers, to deploy with the consular teams to provide basic assistance, medical care and psychosocial support during an evacuation.
53. When RCRC personnel are deployed as part of a government rapid response team, they use equipment provided by their governments and are considered to be deployed as a government asset. They are under government's operational control and contractual obligations and liability rest with the government throughout the deployment.
 54. The deployment of RCRC personnel with a government rapid response team can be done without any red cross and red crescent emblems or logos, if such deployment would not weaken the Movement's capacity to respond. RCRC personnel should not wear RCRC uniform nor display the RCRC emblem in any manner.
 55. EUNS, deployed with a government rapid response team, should inform the NS in the affected country of their part in their government deployment and the Federation Secretariat and, where appropriate, the ICRC. The EUNS may promote their involvement in such government rapid response teams, in their national context.
 56. RCRC personnel may use the red cross and red crescent emblems or the National Society's name or logo only in deployments where the National Society retains the management control over the assets and resources, the use is agreed by the National Society in the disaster-affected country and the use of the emblems is not considered a risk to the perceived independence and neutrality of the Red Cross Red Crescent response, nor a potential threat to safety, security or access of any staff or volunteers.

International Disaster Response Laws

57. The Federation Secretariat and National Societies recognise the value of governments adopting legislation and procedures that address adequately the issues raised in the *Guidelines on the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance*, (also known as the "IDRL Guidelines") as adopted at the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2007. The EU also formally "subscribed" to the IDRL Guidelines in the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid in 2007. National Societies encourage and assist the relevant public authorities to use the *IDRL Guidelines* to strengthen their overall legal, policy and/or institutional frameworks to both regulate and facilitate disaster assistance.
58. The Federation and NS welcome the EU Council Conclusion on Host Nation Support (2-3 December 2010) and EU Host Nation Support Guidelines (EC Working Document June 2012) and recall the recommendations of the "Analysis of Law in the EU and a Selection of Member States pertaining to Cross-Border Disaster Relief" (IFRC 2010).
59. EU institutions and EU member states are encouraged to capitalise on the recent discussions concerning 'Host Nation Support' to develop processes and share information about good practice relating to the regulation of international disaster assistance.

EU Aid Volunteers

60. The European Commission is developing a global initiative called the EU Aid Volunteers / European Volunteer Humanitarian Aid Corps (EAV/EVHAC) to create opportunities for approximately 10,000 people between 2014 and 2020 to volunteer worldwide in humanitarian operations. The 2014-2020 budget for EAV is € 130 million.
61. The EUNS and the Federation Secretariat welcome the efforts of the EU to promote a culture of solidarity with people in need and appreciate that compliance with humanitarian principles guides the future actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.
62. The EUNS and the Federation Secretariat advise that deployment of the EU Aid Volunteers should:
 - respond to existing humanitarian needs at local level and should not only take place primarily for visibility purposes;
 - focus on pre-disaster preparedness and post-disaster recovery activities rather than the direct involvement of volunteers in emergency situations and disaster response;
 - contribute to the capacity building of local actors and volunteers; and
 - maintain a clear distinction between humanitarian aid and civil protection volunteering activities due to the differences between the mandates of civil protection and humanitarian aid actors.
63. The EUNS and the Federation Secretariat strongly encourage that the proposed mechanism to manage the EU Aid Volunteers is clarified and simplified. This would be coherent with the efforts to simplify the administrative burden related to the management of humanitarian activities funded by the European Commission.

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Further information

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European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

RCEU Office

<http://www.redcross.eu/en/Disaster-Management/Civil-Protection/Relations-with-EU-Civil-Protection/>

<http://www.redcross.eu/en/Disaster-Management/Humanitarian-Aid/European-Voluntary-Humanitarian-Aid-Corps/>

Disaster Law

<https://fednet.ifrc.org/en/resources/idrl/>

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Annex 1

Regulatory framework

Relations between the Federation Secretariat and the European Union National Societies (EUNS) with EU institutions and national authorities of the Member States are governed by the following statutory texts, resolutions and policies:

Statutory texts:

- The Statutes and Rules of procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (IC 1986, amended 1995, 2006)
- Constitution of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (GA 1987, amended 1991, revised and adopted 1999 and 2007)
- The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (IC 1965, revised and adopted 1986)

Resolutions and policies:

- Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Seville Agreement) (CoD 1997)
- Armed protection of humanitarian assistance (CoD 1995, Resolution 9)
- Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief (1994)
- Furthering the auxiliary role: Partnership for stronger National Societies and volunteering development (IC Resolution 4, 2011)
- Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance (IDRL Guidelines) (IC 2007)
- Implementation of the Seville Agreement. Supplementary measures to enhance the implementation of the Seville Agreement (Supplementary Measures) (CoD 2005, Resolution 8, Annex)
- International humanitarian law (IHL), including the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols
- Minimum Elements to be included in operational agreements between Movement components and their external operational partner (2003);
- Movement component's relations with external humanitarian actors (CoD 2011, Resolution & Background report)
- Movement policy for Corporate Sector Partnerships (CoD 2005, Resolution 5)
- Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief (IC 1969, revised 1973, 1977, 1981, 1986, 1995)
- Regulations on the use of emblem of the Red Cross or the Red Crescent (IC 1965, revised CoD 1991)
- Relations between the components of the Movement and military bodies (CoD 2005, Resolution 7, annex);

- The specific nature of the Red Cross Movement in action and partnerships and the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field (IC Resolution 2, 2007)

The following documents produced by the International Federation and/or the ICRC, provide also relevant guidance:

- National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field: Conclusions from the study undertaken by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2003);
- National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. Study on situations of armed conflict, ICRC, 2005;
- Minimum elements to be included in the legislation between Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and their public authorities;
- Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law: Guiding Principles.

Annex 2

The Civil Protection Mechanism

What is the EU Civil Protection Mechanism?

The EU Civil Protection (CP) Mechanism was created in 2001 to facilitate civil protection assistance interventions in the event of major emergencies (natural and man-made disasters) inside and outside the EU. It is based in the European Commission (Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO)). Despite the fact that the CP Mechanism was mainly created to respond to disasters inside the EU, it is actively involved in responding to disasters in third countries. Outside the EU, the Mechanism supports the central coordination role of UN OCHA.

32 States (28 EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) participate in the Mechanism. The Mechanism is open to all EU candidate countries. For the period 2007-2013 the CP Mechanism has a budget of € 189 million. For the period 2014-2020 the budget for EU CP activities is € 326,5 million.

The Civil Protection Mechanism Tools

The CP Mechanism involves the European states which pool their civil protection resources that can be made available to disaster-stricken countries.

- **The Emergency Response Centre (ERC)**, formerly Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC), is based in the European Commission (DG ECHO) and accessible 24 hours a day. It offers countries a platform of civil protection means available amongst the participating states. Any country inside or outside the EU can request for assistance through the ERC. It acts as a communication hub among the participating states, the affected country and the field experts. The ERC also coordinates offers of assistance put forward by participating states on the basis of the needs of the affected country. In addition, the ERC provides regular information on the ongoing emergency activities.
- **The Common Emergency and Information System (CECIS)** is a web-based alert and notification application which aims at facilitating emergency communication among the participating states.
- **A training programme** has been developed to improve the co-ordination of civil protection assistance interventions by ensuring compatibility and complementarily between the intervention teams from the participating states. It also enhances the skills of experts involved in civil protection assistance operations through the sharing of best practices. Training courses, joint exercises and exchange of experts of the participating states take place regularly.

- **Civil protection modules** are made up of national resources from one or more Member States on a voluntary basis. They constitute a contribution to the civil protection rapid response capability. Modules have been developed in areas such as, water purification, high capacity pumping, urban search and rescue, firefighting, field hospitals, evacuations of disaster victims, emergency temporary shelter, and flood containment.

Emergencies

Since its creation, the CP Mechanism has facilitated the delivery of civil protection assistance in a variety of natural and man-made disasters. In 2010 the CP Mechanism was activated 28 times (11 times within and 17 times outside the EU) to respond to emergencies such as floods in Pakistan, Albania, Poland, Colombia, earthquake in Haiti and Chile, forest fires in France and Portugal. Examples of past operations also include facilitation of the delivery of coordinated Europe's civil protection assistance to the victims of the Van earthquake in Turkey (2011) and assistance to the victims of Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (2011).

Enhancing EU Disaster Response Capacity

In 2005, after the Tsunami in South East Asia, the European Union (EU) initiated a process of further develop its emergency response capacity. EU institutions started to identify possible measures that could be developed to deal with disasters both inside and outside the EU. In this process, a number of decisions have been taken in relation to the CP Mechanism:

- Improvement of its legal basis in 2007;
- New Article in the Treaty (196 TFEU) which confers on the EU a competence to carry out actions to support and coordinate the actions of the Member State, and to promote consistency in international CP activities (December 2009);
- Integration of the CP Mechanism into DG ECHO in order to enhance the coherence of the EU humanitarian aid and CP response (January 2010);
- Appointment of one Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, Ms Georgieva (January 2010)
- Adoption of the European Commission Communication "*Towards a stronger European disaster response: the role of civil protection and humanitarian assistance*" (October 2010). It aims at strengthening EU response tools; and
- 2. Ensuring consistency between CP and humanitarian aid.
- European Commission proposal for the revision of the civil protection legislation was presented on 20 December 2011. The Commission wishes to move away from an ad hoc system to a pre-planned one with scenarios and voluntary pool of standby assets. The creation of an Emergency Response Centre, which will link both CP and Humanitarian Aid authorities of participating states, reinforcement of the coordination with the UN coordination and the affected country are some of the elements of the legislative proposal.
- Host Nation Support Guidelines adopted by the EU Member States and the Commission in January 2012.

The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

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