

Chairman's Summary

Overview

The 2019 INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting took place on 24-25 October in Palermo, Italy, and discussed on INSARAG strategic and operational issues for the region. The meeting was generously hosted by the Government of Italy, and co-organized by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The Regional Meeting was co-facilitated by the National Civil Protection Department and the National Fire and Rescue Service of Italy and OCHA's Emergency Response Section in its capacity as the INSARAG Secretariat. Mr. Fabio Dattilo, Head of Italian National Fire and Rescue Service attended the meeting. The presentations, resource materials and products from the meeting sessions are available on the INSARAG website: <http://insarag.org>. The meeting agenda adopted by the participants can be found in [Annex A](#).

The meeting brought together 73 senior heads and officials from diplomatic authorities and national disaster management agencies from 33 countries and organizations, plus UN INSARAG representatives (Please see Participants list at Annex B). In preparation for the upcoming INSARAG Global Meeting (4 - 9 October 2020 in Warsaw, Poland), Polish delegates promoted and shared global policy objectives, and considered the three strategic priorities from the 2019 Steering Group meeting; focusing on Quality Standards and Coordination, Flexible Response, and Enhancing Preparedness Activities and Bolstering Partnerships. The inputs will be consolidated along with those from the other two regional meetings and shared with the INSARAG Steering Group in 2020.

The meeting served as a platform to harness ideas on how to operationalize the key issues arising from the 2019 INSARAG Steering Group meeting. Particular areas of focus were: the INSARAG External Classification (IEC) System, with an emphasis on the International Assistance arrangements in sudden onset emergencies; institutionalization of the Ownership Model to the Regional Troikas; the INSARAG Global Meeting 2020; the INSARAG Guidelines Review 2020; the Training of IEC/R Mentors and Team Leaders; the implementation of new technologies (ESRI) and the First International Light Team Classification arrangements.

Under Italy's leadership, the meeting sought to advance INSARAG strategic and operational priorities in the region, taking into account broader humanitarian reform efforts, particularly protection and localisation.

Session 1 – Opening Statements, Adoption of Agenda, Introduction of Participants

Mr. Gerolamo Cangelosi, Mayor of Poggioreale, assisted by Mr. Calogelo Foti, Regional Director of Civil Protection, performed the Welcome to Country. The meeting was opened by Mr. Fabio Dattilo, Head of Italian National Fire and Rescue Service.

Mr. Luigi d'Angelo, INSARAG AEME Regional Chair, welcomed the meeting participants and expressed his appreciation to the INSARAG Secretariat, National Civil Protection Department and the National Fire and Rescue Service of Italy for organizing the meeting.

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa joined the delegates in welcoming participants and commended the Regional Troika for the strong leadership, exceptional support to the IEC/R System and activities to enhance the response capacities of both national and international responders. He noted priority themes for him in his new role are gender, localization and moving beyond the rubble.

On behalf of the INSARAG Secretariat, Mr. Martijn Viersma introduced the meeting agenda, which was formally adopted by the participants.

Session 2 – Best practices from Italy

Mr. Paolo Vaccari, National Civil Protection Department, briefed on Training, Exercise and Project on Assessment and Coordination in Poggioreale. The exercise site has been utilised for the sharing of best practices, new methodology and procedures in USAR operations and emergency management at the national and international level. INSARAG members were encouraged to consider conducting simulation exercises in Poggioreale.

Ms. Gabriella Proietti and Ms. Veronica Piacentini, both from the National Civil Protection Department, presented the Italian Civil Protection Model for Cultural Heritage emergencies, including safety countermeasures on immovable cultural heritage and rescuing movable cultural heritage.

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The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) is an intergovernmental organization working in service to its 136 Member States to promote the conservation of all forms of cultural heritage.

ICCROM has conducted field testing with INSARAG members through joint simulations with international search and rescue teams and EU Modex for better integration and enhancing coping capacities. It is also preparing operational guidelines (2020): Incorporating cultural heritage elements in the Virtual OSOCC and field notes; LEMA briefing; and post mission and beyond rubble stage.

Session 3 – Review of Action Points from INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting 2018 and INSARAG Global Updates

Mr. Luigi d'Angelo facilitated the session to review the action points from the 2018 meeting, summarising progress on the 2018 Work Plan, and how it has been operationalized for 2019. *GOAL 1: Promote and support the building of effective national USAR response, "Think Global, Act Local". Objective 1.1: INSARAG Survey; NAP: France, Turkey since 2017. Objective 1.2: EU Modex Tinglev (DK), Merseyside (UK), Poggioreale (I), Forquetoire (PT); ERE Yerevan (Armenia); SIMEX Lucerne (Switzerland). Objective 1.3: International Workshop on Ponte Morandi and large USAR operations; two Light USAR NAP French West Indies involved in Americas Region meetings. Objective 1.4: Belice project: France, Germany, Italy; Use of results from Survey to focus on specific countries. Objective 1.5: IER supported by EU; EU mission to Georgia. Objective 1.6: INSARAG Survey; ICCROM. GOAL 2: Improve the quality and coordination of international USAR response, "Strengthening Effectiveness: As Local As Possible, As International As Necessary". Objective 2.1: RDC/UCC course Italy/Russian Federation/Switzerland; Structural engineer THW Italy; Basic data collection Hungary; ToT course Russian Federation; UCC France. Objective 2.2: Cultural Heritage in USAR exercise experience in Poggioreale. Objective 2.3: Support from 16 different members (Austria, France, UK, Switzerland, Estonia, Norway, Italy Finland, Germany, Czech Republic, Jordan, Armenia, Belgium, Lithuania, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain) to USAR team of Ukraine, France and Czech Republic for their IER and Georgia and Israel, Pakistan, Russia for their IEC. Planning of Modex in Turkey. Objective 2.4: EU Project on medical training for USAR (France). Objective 2.5: Participation in DRR Global Meeting 2019 in Switzerland. Objective 2.6: In 2019 seven reclassifications – the Netherlands, UAE, France 2, France 3, Poland, Romania, and Ukraine; In 2020 there will be 10 reclassifications - Iceland, Morocco, Czech Republic, Belgium, Switzerland, France 1, Estonia, Armenia, Denmark, Saudi Arabia. Three classification Germany (light) Russian Federation (medium), Azerbaijan (medium). Mr. D'Angelo encouraged AEME member to reflect on coordinating efforts, make the best use of resources, increase synergies, and be more effective. The region will need to address these points during discussions in preparation for the IGM 2020. Mr D'Angelo underlined the need for AEME region, as leading area of the global network, to be ready to address to new disasters connected to the climate change, to align effort to Humanitarian SDG's, to support prone countries in a more coordinated and effective way.*

Mr. Martijn Viersma presented INSARAG Global Updates, highlighting various regional priorities and global events in 2019. Chairman Summaries of the INSARAG Steering Group Meeting and other regional meetings are available on the INSARAG website.

Session 4 – INSARAG Working Group Updates

The INSARAG Working Group Chairs and representatives provided an update on their ongoing work to make INSARAG fit for the future. The work of the INSARAG working groups are available for review on the INSARAG website.

- Mr. David Sochor and Mr. Martin Evers represented the *Guidelines Review Group* (GRG) and encouraged Africa-Europe-Middle East wide consultations on the INSARAG guidelines to share useful feedback to the GRG. Mr. Sochor informed the participants that a progress update report and draft Volumes and Manuals are available on the INSARAG website.
- Mr. Rob Norman represented the *Information Working Group* and provided an update on development of a concrete implementation and training plan for Information Management applications prior to its inclusion to the IEC/R checklist.
- Mr. Johannes Gust provided an update on the behalf of the *Light Team Quality Assurance Working Group*, providing an overview of how light teams will integrate with medium and heavy teams, noting the classification of German NGO @Fire in 2020.
- Mr. Peter Goxharaj presented on behalf of the *Training Working Group*, highlighting development of separate checklists for the IER and the need for teams undergoing IER to demonstrate a higher level of maturity beyond minimum standards.

The Africa-Europe-Middle East network appreciates the strong commitment and dedication of the working group members in the development of quality work outcomes.

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Session 5 – European Union DG-ECHO

Ms. Stefania Fiore, Capacities and Operational Support, Unit A2, Directorate A - Emergency Management, DG ECHO, presented on the European Union as a Key Partner of INSARAG, how to consolidate synergies? Ms. Fiore reflected on the following areas of common interest: Networking exchange/awareness between INSARAG and EU; Better integration of classification/certification (information exchange, mentor); Better integration on certification criteria; Better awareness on adaptation grants; Future inclusion of Light –USAR teams in the ECPP; Joint analysis of USAR capacity gaps; Better integration of IER in MODEX (planning meeting); Integration of UCC training in the EUCPM training and exercises; and a Joint strategy for protection of cultural heritage.

Session 6 – Summary Global and Regional Africa-Europe-Middle East Strategy and Breakout Sessions

Mr. Luigi d'Angelo, INSARAG AEME Regional Chair, provided a brief introduction to the session, highlighting the need to ensure INSARAG remains relevant, by embedding principles of the broader humanitarian system into INSARAG strategic objectives.

Participants were encouraged to consider how the three strategic objectives for the INSARAG third Global Meeting can be enhanced by mainstreaming protection, recognizing the capacity of local and national actors and strengthening coordination and engagement with regional actors.

Participants were divided into three discussion groups around the objectives: Strengthening Quality Standards and Coordination; Advancing Flexible Assistance; and Enhancing Preparedness Efforts and Bolstering Partnerships. Participants were instructed to consider the application and implementation of these objectives in the Africa-Europe-Middle East region.

Session 7 – Breakout Session Review

The outcomes of the breakout discussions presented in the plenary can be found in [ANNEX C](#).

Formal Dinner hosted by Italy at Trattoria del Massimo in Palermo

Session 8 – Regional Chairs Updates on their regional Workplans

Mr. Agostino Miozzo, Head of Institutional Affairs, National Civil Protection Department, representing the AEME Regional Chair, provided an overview of the status of the Africa-Europe-Middle East regional workplan and how it has been operationalized for 2019, under their three goals of participating in Working Groups, promoting and building effective national USAR, improving quality and coordination on international USAR.

Ms. Megan Northrope, Asia-Pacific Regional Chair, provided an overview of the Asia-Pacific region and activities achieved in 2019. Objective 1 promote and support the building of effective national USAR response activities included incorporation of a protection component into the UCC training conducted in New Zealand has now been reflected into the global UCC syllabus; an information and training day targeted at female staff in NSW; introducing the humanitarian principles into USAR doctrine; and developing a humanitarian strategy that will guide engagement across the region. Objective 2 – improve the quality and coordination of international USAR response: Australia conducted a pre-event risk assessment in Solomon Islands, based on learning from the Cyclone Gita response in Tonga and conducted a joint simulation exercise in collaboration with the US and Australian USAR, as well as their NDMOs and militaries.

Mr. Martijn Viersma provided an overview of the Americas region and activities achieved in 2019: Regional SIMEX in Cuba in September; Lessons learnt workshop of the Regional Technical Support Group on the National Accreditation Process, in October, in Chile; Strong Americas region participation in the Team Leaders meeting in Chile. Additional training events: UCC course in March in the US; INSARAG awareness course in Venezuela, April; OSOCC and UCC awareness course in July in Venezuela; INSARAG event as part of the IX regional Meeting on International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms (MIAH in Spanish) in June in Argentina; Meeting with the Board of Directors of the Organization of American Firefighters (OBA) 1 August to discuss the implementation of the LoU signed early 2019 between INSARAG and OBA. Upcoming events in 2019: Joint INSARAG & UNDAC Regional meeting, 12-14 November, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Key overall priorities: Provide discussion paper on the topic of quality standards and coordination, with a focus on adaptation and localization of INSARAG guidelines and coordination mechanisms to the national contexts; Enlarge the regional roster of experts of the Technical Support Group to support countries establishing the INSARAG recognized National Accreditation Process; Translate the INSARAG guidelines 2020 and related material; Support national USAR coordination courses; Strengthen collaboration and synergies with the UNDAC system and consolidate the existing team.

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Session 9 – INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Workplan for 2019/2020 – Discuss and Consolidate

The participants were divided into two Breakout groups and have discussed the following topics:

1. Goal 1: Promotion of NAP at regional level;
2. Goal 2: Results from survey on INSARAG; involvement of new countries in the region in the INSARAG family, synergies with other regions offer of classified teams for twinning with prone countries.

Outcomes in [Annex D.](#)

Session 10 – Results from the workshop on Ponte Morandi held on 23 October 2019 in Palermo

Mr. Edoardo Cavalieri d'Oro, National Fire and Rescue Service, presented the outcomes of the International Workshop on Large scale USAR operations: Morandi Bridge and other case studies, which was held on 23 October in Palermo.

Outcomes in [Annex E.](#)

Session 11 – Presentation on Emergency Response in the Republic of Azerbaijan

Mr. Rashad Gasimzada, Head of the Division for International Cooperation, Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, briefed the participants on the emergency response system in Azerbaijan, including the INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East (AEME) Regional Earthquake Response Exercise (ERE) 2019, which will be held from 4 to 8 November 2019 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Session 12 – Presentation on Virtual Training of ASR2

Mr. Martin Evers, Co-Chair of the Guidelines Review Group, presented on the latest developments regarding Virtual Training of ASR2.

The purpose of the Virtual Reality (VR) Training is to improve USAR's preparation for the different scenarios at an earthquake location. USAR will be able to increase the number of lives saved in earthquake zones by using VR training internationally. The advantages are: worksites can be (re-)created realistically; different scenarios and environments can be created; and reviewing and monitoring training. Virtual Reality Training encompasses: a 3D realistic simulation; individual awareness; time switch option; communication with locals (virtual); interaction with surroundings.

Session 13 – Presentation on Standards for Water and Flood Rescue by UK based NGO Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Mr. David Whiddon, Royal National Lifeboat Institution (UK), presented on Standards for Water and Flood Rescue. Globally, 320,000 people drown every year, with 90% of drownings taking place in Africa and Asia. According to WHO, flooding affects more people globally than any other natural hazards, and drowning has been identified as the most significant cause of flood deaths, especially in Asia. Bystander rescue and resuscitation can nevertheless make the difference between life and death in individual drowning situations. Benefits of having global flood rescue standards are: more resilient communities with a better understanding of the hazards associated with floods; communities better equipped to provide safer bystander rescues; co-ordinated local/national and international response to floods following common operational models and standards for training and equipment; a global community of best practice that can aspire to work to set guidelines and agreed standards.

Session 14 – Presentation on Training for Medical USAR Team (France)

Mr. Christophe Debray, General Directorate for Civil Protection and Crisis Management (France), presented on a training course for Medical USAR Teams - Project H2020 USAR Advanced Medical Care. Improvement of USAR Teams' skills in medical care for victims is essential. The purpose of the project is: establish specific guidelines and procedures; develop new biomedical equipment and devices; offer high-level, theoretical course and practical training for both medical support for USAR teams and medical care for the victims. Specific USAR Teams Medical Skills to be considered: Sanitary preparation (aptitude, vaccinations, prophylaxis, health info); Operational health support (circumstantial pathologies, psychological support); Hygiene in the field (water, food, vector control, waste...); Tropical medicine; Veterinary support for K9 teams; Care for local victims.

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Session 15 – Developments of the Chairman's Summary and Closing Remarks

The Africa-Europe-Middle East (AEME) group thanked Italy as the chair for 2019 and welcomed the AEME Troika for 2020, where Poland will be the AEME Chair, and Italy as the outgoing chair. South Africa has expressed interest in the incoming chair. The representatives thanked the AEME group for their support and commitment to support INSARAG's mandates and workplans and to achieve these in 2020 with the strong support and commitment from the AEME group.

Member States Announcements

Event	Country	Timeframe
1. USAR Coordination Course	Iceland	2020
2. Flood Rescue conference	Hungary	2020
3. Regional ERE 2020	Saudi Arabia	TBC
4. Expressed willingness to become the AEME Regional Chair 2021	South Africa	TBC

Closing Statements

Mr. Agostino Miozzo underlined the need of strengthening the role of the Chairmanship in shaping the INSARAG network strategy in cooperation with the Secretariat. He also underlined the difficulties in adapting the network to a globally changing landscape due both to climate change effects and to higher entry barriers set, also by developing Countries, when a disaster strikes. He also recalled the growing request for NAP and the challenges and risks involved in the process of advancing flexible assistance. Finally, he highlighted the AEME Region role in the network and the possibilities of synergy with the work done at European Union level on the different issues at stake. He expressed his deepest appreciation to the INSARAG Focal Points and guests for participation in the meeting. He further touched upon the achievements of the meeting and expressed his strong belief that the regional network indispensable for the effective disaster response was consolidated through this regional meeting. He concluded by thanking all the member states and donors for their support to the INSARAG regional activities and all the personnel involved in the organization of the meeting.

On behalf of the new AEME Regional Chair, Brigadier Tadeusz Jopek of Poland expressed appreciation for the Regional Meeting and the preceding International Workshop. All participants were invited to join the upcoming INSARAG Global Meeting (4 - 9 October 2020 in Warsaw, Poland).

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa reiterated his appreciation to Italy for the strong leadership and dedication to promoting the INSARAG agenda in the region and meeting facilitators, organizers and OCHA in its capacity as INSARAG Secretariat. He further thanked Member States for their support to the INSARAG activities and active contribution to the discussion. In conclusion, he reminded the participants to consider whether the network is ready to serve the people in need and if it is fit for purpose.

The next INSARAG AEME Regional Meeting will be held in Warsaw, Poland as part of the third IGM.

ANNEXES:

Annex A: Meeting Agenda

Annex B: Participants List

Annex C: Outcomes of the INSARAG Global Meeting 2020 discussions

Annex D: INSARAG AP Workplan 2020 Discussions

Annex E: Outcomes of the Workshop: Morandi Bridge and other case studies