

**VII REGIONAL MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE MECHANISMS  
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, (MIAH for its acronym in Spanish)  
Guatemala City, May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2015**

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean participating in the VII Regional Meeting on International Mechanisms of Humanitarian Assistance (MIAH for its acronym in Spanish) "Strengthening the International Humanitarian Agenda" celebrated in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2015;

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and International Humanitarian Law as well as the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance adopted by resolution 46/182 of the United Nations General Assembly, particularly the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality in the activities of humanitarian assistance;

Convinced that affected States are responsible for protecting their populations and coordinating humanitarian assistance and effective response, including international cooperation. The actions of the International Humanitarian Assistance must respect the sovereignty of States, their legal frameworks, territorial integrity and national unity;

Reaffirming also the central role of the United Nations in coordinating international humanitarian assistance and further recognizing the fundamental contribution of the mechanisms and sub-regional, regional and international organizations.

Reaffirming that the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 provides the main guideline for a comprehensive approach to disaster risk management in promoting sustainable development; noting that poverty, inequality, hunger, underdevelopment, exclusion, social marginalization and discrimination are causes that exacerbate vulnerability;

Highlighting the importance of international cooperation in all its forms, which favor the transfer of resources, technology and knowledge, which contribute to the enhancement of national and sub-regional capacities to address the causes and conditions of humanitarian emergencies;

Recognizing that the Regional Meetings of MIAH are the appropriate forum in the region to discuss and agree on issues and humanitarian operations towards a more effective coordination between governments and humanitarian actors in the region;

Considering the opportunity presented by the World Humanitarian Summit to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2016 to exchange experiences, views and agree on actions to strengthen the international humanitarian system. Recalling at the same time the importance of the leadership of States in the processes of dialogue, negotiation and follow-up to the outcome of the Summit;

Recognizing the importance of the contribution and input from civil society, the academic and scientific community, and the private sector in their efforts to achieve concrete progress in the humanitarian system;

Recognizing the contribution of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC for its acronym in Spanish) to strengthen the Regional Meetings on International Humanitarian Assistances Mechanisms, and spirit to achieve greater coordination in this field;

HEREBY AGREE:

1. To invite governments to provide the necessary support in consolidating the processes of the MIAH Regional Meetings, to strengthen coordination and cooperation in humanitarian efforts among local, national, sub-regional and regional actors;
2. To reaffirm the contribution of the Action Plans proposed by MIAH to advance together with the operational tools that support the coordination and exchange of knowledge among governments and humanitarian actors;
3. To encourage governments and other humanitarian actors, in accordance with their mandates, to continue to support and contribute to the preparatory processes of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2016;
4. To encourage governments to take the lead in the preparatory process of the World Humanitarian Summit and that through their Permanent Missions in New York and Geneva, information is exchanged and positions are coordinated for this purpose;
5. Invite the Secretariat of the World Humanitarian Summit to facilitate necessary modalities of intergovernmental dialogue and negotiation as part of the preparatory process of the Summit and its possible results;
6. To urge States and other actors, in accordance with their respective mandates, to strengthen the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, taking into consideration the voice, participation and the needs of the affected populations and communities, ensuring that they are prepared to initially respond to disasters and emergency situations;
7. To promote, in all humanitarian actions, the protection and promotion of all human rights for all ensuring equal and inclusive attention to groups considered vulnerable by gender, age, ethnicity and disability;
8. Invite humanitarian actors to respond within their respective mandates to the guidelines established by governments, ensuring that the actions taken meet the most urgent needs, to ensure the timely provision of predictable and adequate resources; and contributing to capacity building to conduct humanitarian action; also to strengthen transparency and accountability, from and towards the communities regarding the effectiveness of their assistance;
9. To urge the United Nations System to harmonize its systems of accountability and transparency and promote the participation of developing countries in their management and monitoring bodies;
10. To urge governments and other humanitarian actors, in accordance with their mandates, to make efforts to strengthen local, national, sub-regional and regional capacities for understanding major vulnerability and their causes, to reduce them, manage the risk of disasters and achieve resilience of the communities;
11. To frame the actions of humanitarian assistance as part of a comprehensive process of disaster risk management and the promotion of sustainable development;
12. Urges humanitarian actors, when giving assistance, to respect the beliefs, culture, traditions, dietary habits and preferences of affected communities; and invites to avoid any action that might be perceived as stereotyping;
13. To promote transformation through innovation in the humanitarian action field, taking technology into consideration, and the participatory and inclusive processes to generate solutions that will allow stakeholders to adapt and apply mechanisms and products that are

able to overcome operative problems based on the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance, involving the ancestral and traditional communities and using their knowledge;

14. To reaffirm that violence generates complex problems that hinder the access and support to the affected communities. Prevention and assistance must satisfy the specific needs, urging governments to continue strengthening their national and political policies to combat the phenomenon of violence and its various manifestations and consequences;
15. To reiterate that International Humanitarian Law, particularly the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, is the framework for protection and attention to the needs of people in armed conflict situations;
16. To encourage governments to promote mechanisms to receive and protect refugees and asylum seekers due to humanitarian causes;
17. To invite the Secretariat of the World Humanitarian Summit to receive this Declaration of Guatemala as an input of the countries of the region in its global preparatory process; and invite Governments and humanitarian actors to take note of the Co-Chairs Summary of the Regional Consultation of Latin America and the Caribbean towards the World Humanitarian Summit;
18. To call on the CELAC to continue to exchange information, coordinate and communicate their positions in the process towards the World Humanitarian Summit;
19. To welcome the offer of the Government of Peru to host the VIII MIAH, to be held in 2017;
20. Express appreciation to the people and Government of Guatemala for their hospitality and their efforts in the organization of the VII Regional Meeting on International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms in Latin America and the Caribbean.