

KINGSTON DECLARATION

VI REGIONAL MEETING ON THE INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (MIAH)

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of countries participating in the VI Regional Meeting on the International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean (MIAH), under the theme “*Strengthening Public and Private Partnerships, towards a Common Regional Platform for Humanitarian Action*”, in Kingston, Jamaica, from 16th to 18th October 2013;

Reaffirming the guiding principles of International Humanitarian Assistance of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, the state’s primary responsibility of caring for victims of disasters and the central role of the United Nations leading the coordination of the international community as provided in United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 and 58/114, and the guidelines for risk reduction and preparedness and response established in the Hyogo Framework; recognizing the role of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in its promotion;

Recognizing the strong support and efforts of all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the sub regional mechanisms, the international organizations and civil society whose contribution have been vital to achieving concrete progress in humanitarian assistance;

Highlighting as one of the pillars of integrated disaster risk management the work of the sub-regional Agencies, whose work in humanitarian assistance and cooperation such as CAPRADE, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC and REHU, members of the Forum on Cooperation and Coordination of the Sub-Regional Risk Management Mechanisms in the Americas, and those countries which do not formally belong to these organisations, but contribute actively to the fulfilment of its objectives;

Reaffirming also the Reports and Declarations adopted since 2008, on international mechanisms for humanitarian assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean;

Recognizing that the process generated by the Regional Meetings on the International Mechanism for Humanitarian Assistance, has allowed for more efficient coordination among humanitarian actors in the region at the local, national, sub-regional, regional and global levels; and stressing the need to consolidate and strengthen this process, which has become an appropriate forum in the region to discuss and agree on actions.

Welcoming the support of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC) to the VI Regional Meeting of the International Mechanisms of Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean (MIAH) and recognizing the fulfilment of the commitment of the Panama Declaration regarding the coordination among the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Community of Latin- American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Follow-up Group of

International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean process in the spirit of seeking complementarity between the two fora.

Highlighting the strong support received from the international community and civil society which have been actively participating with governments of the region in implementing humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction actions;

Reaffirming that the mechanisms of humanitarian assistance should be part of local, national and regional disaster risk management processes,

Call for the strengthening of the regional Donors Technical Group, the initiative advanced to establish a forum for dialogue to enhance coordination and complementarities of donors with the humanitarian community within the region;

Considering that there is still an urgent need to strengthen the actions for coordination of humanitarian assistance due to the constant and exponential occurrence of disasters that impact the region;

Welcoming the elaboration of the Panama Plan of Action 2012-2013, which encourages the creation of appropriate legal frameworks, mobilization of resources for the integrated management of risk, strengthening the humanitarian coordination at the local, national, sub-regional, regional and international levels, and the management of information technology systems;

Recognizing the need for strategic partnerships in the coordination of comprehensive disaster risk management, to allow for more effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance. This should include strengthening public - private partnerships for increased innovation and resource mobilization.

Taking note of the initiative promoted by OPS/WHO of classification and registration of foreign medical teams that respond to disasters in the region.

Taking note of the HOPEFOR Initiative which seeks to improve the effectiveness and coordination of military and civil defense assets for natural disaster response;

Seized with the knowledge that poverty, social and economic inequality play a major role in difficulty responding to disasters and other risks factors;

Considering that there is need to protect beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance, as well as the humanitarian actors.

Take note of the UN Secretary General's Initiative to convene a World Humanitarian Summit in early 2016 to take stock of achievements, share best practices and set a forward looking humanitarian agenda to better respond to on going and future humanitarian challenges.

AGREE TO:

1. Welcome the 2013 -2014 Kingston Plan of Action and encourage those responsible for its implementation to undertake the actions necessary to ensure that the elements of the Plan are achieved, and invite Governments, inter-governmental organizations and the international donor community to provide political and operative support for the Plan;
2. Invite governments to provide political and other support to consolidate the process of the Regional Meetings of the MIAH, which is a dynamic forum in Latin America and the Caribbean for the establishment of coordination and cooperation of humanitarian efforts among local, national, sub-regional and regional levels;
3. Encourage governments to ensure that international humanitarian actors recognize and coordinate with local, national, subregional and regional mechanisms in providing humanitarian assistance.
4. Encourage the strengthening of the Follow-up Group, to monitor and track commitments made during MIAH's regional meetings, and to report periodically on progress and preparation of upcoming MIAH meetings; as well as, to compile all the tools established in the process of the regional meetings, regularly update the information and make the tools available to all countries and actors interested in applying them with the support of the Follow-up Group and the participation of pertinent entities, international humanitarian organizations and civil society representatives;
5. Encourage governments to continue making efforts to consolidate official disaster risk management structures, specifically those responsible for humanitarian assistance at the local, national, sub-regional, regional and international levels;
6. Request sub-regional mechanisms and the Forum on Cooperation and Coordination of Sub-Regional Risk Management Mechanisms in the Americas, to continue to direct actions to develop tools and harmonized procedures, for fostering the horizontal cooperation and the exchange of experiences in the field of humanitarian assistance and implementation of programs and projects, as part of the comprehensive management actions for the integrated management of disaster risk, and strengthening official structures at national and regional levels;
7. Strengthen the synergies between the efforts of governments, regional institutions, international organizations and civil society to improve coordination, to avoid duplication of efforts and optimize resources for the coordination of humanitarian assistance and to support the 2013-2014 Kingston Plan of Action;

8. Support the early establishment of a Regional Logistics Centre for Humanitarian Assistance for the Americas in the Republic of Panama and a sub-regional hub in Jamaica, to allow for greater efficiency and management of regional and international humanitarian supplies, for fast and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance in disaster situations in the region;
9. Encourage greater partnership between the public and private sectors in the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance and to develop innovative ways to enhance resource mobilization;
10. Explore the possibility of developing a cadre of regional search and rescue and response coordination teams to fit within the INSARAG Las Americas infrastructure.
11. Ensure adjustments to regional data base such as REDHUM ,in order to respond to specific subregional, national and local needs.
12. Encourage governments to promote mechanisms to receive and protect refugees and asylum seekers due to humanitarian causes
13. Encourage Governments to seek more effective partnership with private sector, international organizations, civil society, community based organization to reduce inequality and increase access of the most vulnerable segments of the population, such as children, women, elderly, people with disabilities, to humanitarian assistance particularly during times of disaster;
14. Call upon governments to ensure as far as possible, that humanitarian actors can undertake their functions in a safe and secure environment;
15. Encourage Governments, regional organizations, civil society, private sector and other humanitarian actors to contribute to the consultation process leading up to the World Humanitarian Summit, including by engaging in the upcoming regional consultation in Guatemala, in early 2014, with the aim of identifying concrete recommendations for consideration at the Summit.
16. Ensure that the conclusions and recommendations of this VI Regional Meeting of International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance, as well as the 2013-2014 Kingston Action Plan be transmitted to the Pro Tempore Presidency of CELAC for submission to the Heads of State and Government during the next CELAC Summit to be held in January 2014, in the Republic of Cuba;
17. Take note of the consultations going on in Peru and Guatemala for the hosting of the VII Regional Meeting on the International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean.

18. Thank the Government and People of Jamaica for their hospitality and the organizers for a successful conclusion of the VI Regional Meeting on the International Mechanisms for Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean.

*Kingston, Jamaica
18 October 2013.*