The Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations

Opportunities and Benefits

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Background

• International Conference on Disaster Communications (Geneva, 1990).
• Based on 50 international regulatory instruments including the Constitution of the ITU, calling for absolute priority to emergency life-saving communications.
• Tampere Declaration on Disaster Communications (Tampere, 1991).
• United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 46/182, for strengthening international coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance.
Relavant UN and ITU Resolutions

• United Nations General Assembly Resolution 44/236, designating 1990-2000 the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

• United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/182, for strengthening international coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance.

• ITU Plenipotentiary Conference of 2006 Resolutions 36, and 136.

• ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference of 2006 (WTDC-06) Resolution 34.
ARTICLE 1 - Purposes of the Union:

2 - To this end, the Union shall in particular:

\[ g \]: “promote the adoption of measures for ensuring the safety of life through the cooperation of telecommunication services”.
Tampere Convention – Facts!

• Provides the legal framework for the use of telecommunications in international humanitarian assistance
• Fully protects the interests of the States requesting and receiving assistance. The host government retains the right to supervise the assistance. Fully respects the sovereignty of the state
• Foresees the establishment of bilateral agreements between the provider(s) of assistance and the State requesting/receiving such assistance.
• Reducing and Waiving Regulatory Barriers
• Ensuring Privileges and Immunities for Relief Personnel
Tampere Convention – Overview

The Preamble of the Convention notes the essential role of telecommunications in humanitarian assistance and the need for its facilitation, and recalls the major legal instruments, such as respective Resolutions of United Nations and of the International Telecommunications Union, which prepared the way for the Tampere Convention.

Definitions

Article 1: defines the terms used in the Convention. Of particular significance are the definitions of non-governmental organizations and non-State entities, as the Tampere Convention is the first treaty of its kind which attributes privileges and immunities to their personnel.

Coordination

Article 2 describes the operational coordination, to be carried out by the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator (i.e. through the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA).
Provision of Telecommunication Assistance

Article 4 describes the procedures for request and provision of telecommunications assistance, specifically recognizing the right of a State Party to direct, control and coordinate assistance provided under this Convention within its territory.

Privileges, Immunities, and Facilities

Article 5 defines the privileges, immunities and facilities to be provided by the Requesting State Party, again emphasizing that nothing in this Article shall prejudice rights and obligations pursuant to international agreements or international law.

Termination of Assistance

Articles 6, 7 and 8 define specific elements and aspects of the provision of telecommunication assistance, such as Termination of Assistance, Payment or Reimbursement of Costs or Fees, and establishment of a Telecommunications Assistance Inventory.

Payments or Reimbursement of Costs or Fees

Article 9 can be considered as the core element of the Tampere Convention, as the Removal of Regulatory Barriers has been the primary aim of the work towards this treaty since 1990.
The remaining Articles, 10 to 17, contain the standard provisions concerning:

• **Article 10**: Convention's Relationship to Other International Agreements,
• **Article 11**: Dispute Settlement
• **Article 12**: Entry into Force
• **Article 13**: Amendments
• **Article 14**: Reservations
• **Article 15**: Denunciation
• **Article 16**: Depository (is the Secretary-General of the United Nations)
• **Article 17**: Authentic texts
Ratification of the Convention

When the Convention was adopted, a State could express its consent to be bound by the Convention by any of the following means:

• By definitive signature

• By signature subject to ratification, acceptance, or approval followed by deposit of an instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval

• By deposit of an instrument of ratification
Administrative Parties Involved in the Tampere Convention

- UN - Secretary General
- Depositary of the Convention
- Office of Legal Affairs Treaty Section UN HQ
- In charge of relevant procedures
- UN Relief Coordinator
- Operational Coordinator
- OCHA working closely with ITU
- In charge of the implementation
- Working Group on Emergency Telecommunications
- Advisory Board
Tampere Convention: Current Status

• Tampere Convention was concluded in 1998
• Came into force on January 8 of 2005
• Currently, there are 46 countries that have ratified the treaty
• A number of countries in various regions are currently working on the ratification of this treaty
• Luxemburg was the latest Member State to Ratify the Connvention
### List of countries that have ratified the Tampere Convention

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<tr>
<th>AFRICA</th>
<th>ARAB STATES</th>
<th>ASIA</th>
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<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
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**12 Member States**
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<td>Luxemburg</td>
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20 Member States
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**14 Member States**
Challenges in Ratifying

- Lack of Mandate and Organizational Structures
- Lack of inter-agency coordination
- Lack of awareness of the benefits the convention brings
- Long ratification processes
- Lack of thorough study of the convention (fear of the unknown)
Future Actions

- Ratification of the convention
- Implementation of the ratified convention
- Make an inventory of resources available (equipment, personnel, etc..) for disaster mitigation and relief
- Develop/Review emergency telecommunication plan and standard operating procedures
- Establish organizational structures to ensure effective coordination and cooperation for better DM activities
Opportunities

- Member States get closer to the International community on disaster and risk management
- Facilitate better cooperation among National agencies within the country
- Establish long lasting bridges with International Organizations (ITU, UNOCHA, UNHCR, IFRC, WFP, etc.) that in case of disaster will be of big advantage to coordinate relief activities.
- In case of a disaster ratification does help in better coordination of relief activities with external and internal organizations
Benefits

• Puts in place an international legal framework for managing requests for assistance
• Creates mechanisms for establishing best practices, model agreements, etc..
• Improves preparedness before disasters strikes
• Facilitates the deployment of telecommunications/ICT resources in the immediate aftermath of disasters
• **Protects the interests of the host states**
Thank you