ANNEX 6B

International Association of Broadcasting - Cooperation between
broadcasters and government entities

For over 80 years, radio and television broadcasters from all over the three Americas have been, and are an example for their mission in the service of their countries, to provide multiple forms of assistance and support in dramatic situations caused by natural disasters, catastrophes, epidemics and any other situations requiring the protection of human life.

In the United States, radio and television broadcasters are constantly serving their communities and audiences in critical times of emergencies and disasters of all kinds. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) has important information and programs about this extraordinary task of commitment, dedication and generosity.

In Latin America, the experience is similar: broadcasters and their national associations are also an example of on-going commitment to disseminate life-saving information, to undertake aid campaigns and mobilise the public at critical moments when other communication technologies fail. Since broadcasting began its development in the Latin American countries, broadcasters understood and assumed the important role they play to help their people, not only in the specific dissemination of emergency and safety issues, but also to organize solidarity campaigns, to raise funds, medicines, food and the necessary things to provide relief to victims of tragedies.

Several examples of aid campaigns for the rebuilding of villages and communities were implemented by the voluntary action of broadcasters. There are also prevention programs through radio and television programmes, as well as brochures and instruction manuals that have been disseminated to collaborate with public organizations engaged in disaster prevention.

The International Association of Broadcasting (IAB) and its broadcasters associations of different countries have held multiple activities to strengthen and improve their work in this area. The Declaration of Principles of Ethics IAB adopted in Lima in 1955 states in its fifth principle:

*"Broadcasting is uniquely capacitated to render the greatest service in all cases where human life or the welfare of the nation is in peril through catastrophes, epidemics, pests, states of panic or other upheavals. Its duty, in such circumstances, is to give their uttermost effective aid to both the people and the authorities".*

Facing hundreds of phenomena that have plagued most Latin American countries, IAB and its members have held seminars and events to share experience and knowledge on what to do in cases of emergency and natural disasters or man-made catastrophes.

**First Regional Forum of Radio and Television Co-operation, Mexico, Central America, January 31 - February 2, 1999, Villa Hermosa, Tabasco, Mexico.**

This meeting was organized by the National Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry of Mexico (CIRT) supported by the Union of Broadcasters Associations of Central America (UNARCA), and IAB's sponsorship and co-operation. Multiple actions and radio and television contributions in favour of supporting campaigns in view of social emergency situations, public health plans and civil promotion were analysed. Over 200 broadcasters from those countries that had been summoned attended this Forum. The outcome of the event was the Tabasco Declaration, which strengthened even more the recognized work of broadcasting to the service of high social and community interests and ratified the enforcement of the principles stated by IAB in Lima in 1955.

In recent years, training and cooperation agreements between broadcasters and government entities for the prevention and attention of natural disasters have increased in almost all Latin American countries.

In addition, IAB has been fostering regional campaigns to promote broadcasters' support in different countries, for the assistance to other countries under disaster situations. IAB promotes among its members the incorporation of New Broadcasting Techniques and Systems for Uses in Emergency Communications. This resolution, after its preamble states:

*"To request the Governments and civil protection agencies to consider the advantages of sound broadcasting in terms of coverage, surplus, infrastructure and technology available, as a fundamental support in the implementation of early warning systems and civil protection. To urge Mobile Telephone Companies, and those Companies that manufacture mobile equipment, to include FM radio in consumer devices, facilitating the access of the public to the information this free, over-the-air medium provides in real-time access, especially if the fundamental role that radio plays in emergency and disasters of various kinds is considered".*

IAB is permanently defending freedom of expression and freedom of reception of all kinds of broadcasts, to foster the collaboration of the broadcasters in public interest and social service activities. The principles of friendship and solidarity among people are part of IAB doctrine and promote the knowledge and the cooperation bonds for the countries. It is timely to transcribe the third principle of the IAB Declaration of Ethical Principles from 1955:

*"3. By its very essence, broadcasting has an international mission with exacting duties to fulfil. Broadcasters of the Americas concur in their purpose of permanently serving the principle of solidarity and friendship among the American peoples and of using the powerful broadcasting media of the radio and television industry to make know the sister republics of the continent in their own countries, exalting the characteristics akin to all and which form a bond between them. This principle, which by preference refers to the countries of the Americas, also embraces all the other nations in the world".*