UNOCHA

United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

on behalf of the Inter-Agency

WORKING GROUP ON EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS (WGET)

WORKING DOCUMENT FOR THE SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS)
17TH-28TH FEBRUARY 2003, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

The Working Group on Emergency Telecommunications (WGET) / Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on ICT (IASC-RGICT), in its 14th Plenary Meeting, Geneva, 20 - 21 February 2003, adopted the following resolution and instructed its secretariat, to bring it to the attention of the Second Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

PROVISION OF EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The Working Group on Emergency Telecommunications (WGET), at its 14th Plenary Meeting, Geneva, 20 - 21 (February 2003)

having considered

  a) the increasing number of disasters causing human suffering,
  b) the particular needs of developing countries and the special requirements of the inhabitants of remote areas,
  c) the potential of modern telecommunication technologies as an essential tool for disaster mitigation and immediate response and relief,

having considered further

the provisions of Nos. 17 and 191 of the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union which state, respectively, that the Union shall promote the adoption of measures for ensuring the safety of life through the co-operation of telecommunication services, and that international telecommunication services must give absolute priority to all telecommunication concerning the safety of life,

endorsing

the Resolutions and Recommendations of WTDC (Istanbul, 2002) and Resolution 36 of the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Marrakech, 2002),

noting

that activities are undertaken at the national, regional and international levels within the ITU and other relevant organisations to establish internationally agreed means to prepare for the operation of telecommunications for public protection and disaster relief on a harmonised and co-ordinated basis,

further noting

the necessity of an appropriate regulatory environment to facilitate the full utilisation of telecommunication networks in disaster relief,

resolves to appeal to administrations

a) to ensure proper consideration and provision of emergency telecommunications by service providers,
b) to address the need to introduce the regulatory regime, and provisions for emergency telecommunications as part of disaster mitigation and relief operations through national regulations,

invites

United Nations Agencies, the International Telecommunication Union and in particular ITU-D and

further invites

Governments, participating in the preparatory Committee for the World Summit of the Information Society

to emphasize

the role and provision of emergency telecommunications nationally, regionally and internationally, in developed and developing countries especially remote and far flung areas while dealing with the theme **'promotion of development oriented applications for all, in particular the prevention and early warning systems for disaster'**

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