

Beat: News

International Search and Rescue Advisory Group

Be Proud of Your Success

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USPA NEWS - Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message, delivered by Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator Kyung-wha Kang, to the second Global Meeting of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), in New York .

I am pleased to send greetings to the second Global Meeting of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, and I thank the United Arab Emirates for hosting this event. It is encouraging to see the Group's growth and evolution since the first Global Meeting in Kobe in 2010.

The world today has more people living in urban and high-risk areas that exacerbate vulnerabilities. The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has nearly doubled in the last decade. It is, therefore, critical that we are prepared to face the challenge of disasters and conflicts.

Your network brings together Governments, NGOs [non-governmental organizations], international organizations, the military and the United Nations around a common methodology – the INSARAG Guidelines. The collective agreement of these actors to operate in a consistent manner provides professional and quality search and rescue assistance to people in need.

The World Humanitarian Summit consultations have highlighted that the scale and complexity of populations in need exceeds the resources that can be provided by the international system. We must strengthen local capacities to address this gap. I commend the commitment and work of the INSARAG network to share collective knowledge and experience on search and rescue with local communities. Through initiatives like the First Responders Training Package, communities can be better prepared to provide the front line of disaster response.

We have seen that this type of knowledge and skill is not just applicable in natural disasters such as earthquakes. INSARAG members are training first responders in countries facing armed conflict using the same basic principles of operating in collapsed structures in urban environments.

As INSARAG celebrates 25 years, you should all be proud of the success this community has achieved.

I congratulate you on the launch of the 2015 INSARAG Guidelines, the culmination of two years of consultations to ensure that they reflect the collective experience and expertise of this Group. By providing the Guidelines in multiple languages and through the latest technology, this knowledge will be globally accessible. The ability of the network to span continents and cultures is a testament to the commitment of its members and a model of best practice for the humanitarian community. I wish you a productive meeting.

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