WHS Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination
Singapore, 13-15 April 2015
Background

Convened by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and organized by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) will be held in May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey with the purpose of setting a forward-looking agenda to make the humanitarian system ‘fit for purpose’ in responding to emerging challenges in the twenty-first century. Focused on four global themes: (i) humanitarian effectiveness, (ii) reducing vulnerability and managing risk, (iii) transformation through innovation, and (iv) serving the needs of people in conflict; the Summit will provide an opportunity to take stock of achievements, share lessons and good practices on humanitarian action, and build a more inclusive and diverse humanitarian system committed to the humanitarian principles.

The Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination in support of the World Humanitarian Summit was hosted by the Government of Singapore from 13 to 15 April 2015 at the Changi Command and Control Centre, Changi Naval Base, Singapore. The Global Forum was focused on the two WHS themes where civil-military coordination has a role to play and can contribute to generate discussions and formulate recommendations on how to set an innovative and forward-looking agenda for humanitarian action. These themes are: 1) Humanitarian Effectiveness and 2) Serving the Needs of People in Conflict.

More than 100 delegates from around the world attended the event and took active part both in the plenary sessions as well as in the working group discussions. The key objective of the gathered participants was to shape the future of humanitarian civil-military coordination by identifying a set of innovative, concrete and forward-looking recommendations which will contribute to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

A preparatory stakeholder consultation, in the form of an online survey/questionnaire was conducted in March 2015, prior to the Global Forum. The survey objective was to have an initial overview of stakeholders’ opinions in relation to the proposed themes. It also contributed to defining the key areas/issued to be discussed in Singapore by Global Forum participants.

Briefing Sessions

The WHS Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination was officially opened on Monday 13 April by the Singapore Minister for Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen. This speech was followed by a key note address delivered by Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

The first day of the WHS Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (Monday 13 April) set the scene for the following theme-based working group discussions. This scene-setting included briefings by subject matter experts on the World Humanitarian Summit process and objectives, as well as presentations and interactive discussions on civil-military coordination in the context of natural disaster (Humanitarian Effectiveness) as well as complex emergencies (Serving the Needs of People in Conflict).

The second day of the Global Forum (Tuesday 14 April) was then dedicated to working group discussions led by experienced moderators on the two WHS themes. As a result of these discussions, a number of key recommendations were formulated and presented during the last day of the Global Forum (Wednesday 15 April – morning session).

“There is no doubt that this Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination represents a unique opportunity for all of us who have travelled from different regions of the world to be here in Singapore. Over the next two and half days, we must grasp this rare but very important opportunity to discuss how to increase the...
Humanitarian Effectiveness:

Presentations related to this theme focused on best practices in civil-military coordination in a context of natural disaster, taking into account both the disaster preparedness and the disaster response phase.

The first case study used for this theme focused on the Philippines. Following the devastating effects of typhoon Haiyan that affected the Philippines in November 2013, a significant number of foreign military assets (FMA) were deployed to support disaster response efforts. As a result, an after action review (AAR) on civil-military coordination was conducted in March 2014 to capitalise on the good practices and lessons learned of the response. During this Global Forum session, the ARR civil-military coordination findings and recommendations were outlined with a view to evaluating progress made in civil-military coordination when, almost exactly one year later, cyclone Hagupit made landfall in the Philippines (December 2014).

The second case study outlined during this session was the response to tropical cyclone PAM that struck Vanuatu as an extremely destructive category 5 cyclone on the evening of 13 March 2015. PAM caused severe damage to critical infrastructure, housing and crops and affecting an estimated 166,000 people, more than half the country’s population. This case study was of high relevance for this session since the support provided to the response by the Vanuatu Mobile Force (VMF), Vanuatu Police Patrol Boat, FRANZ partners (France, Australia and New Zealand), United Kingdom, Tonga, Solomon Islands and Fiji was critical to the success of the response. Military assets were used to support a number of key activities besides the delivery of immediate humanitarian relief supplies. Military imagery analysts were embedded with the UNDAC/OCHA Information Management team during the initial ten days of the response. This facilitated exchange of aerial photography of the affected area and then used to prioritise assessments and complement the assessment reports. Military support was also critical in the second and more detailed phase of the assessment process. There is little doubt that without military support to the planning and execution of this complicated movement schedule the second phase of assessments would have taken weeks. Effective humanitarian civil-military-police coordination made it possible for this task to be completed in five days.

Following the two disaster response briefings, participants discussed the civil-military dimension of pandemic response, focusing on case studies where military medical teams were deployed as part of international disaster response efforts. Some of the key observations on how effective civil-military coordination in these contexts was achieved included the following: civil-military coordination as part of a pandemic response requires a robust forward needs assessment process; a structured and coordinated preparedness phase is also paramount to avoid deployment arrangements (including logistics and administration) being ad hoc as to who, when and where military or civilian agencies should deploy. The role of joint training and exercises to enhance civil-military coordination efforts was also highlighted.

The session on pandemic response and the need for more effective civil-military coordination in the preparedness phase, led the OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) to outline a key initiative implemented at regional level. In Asia and the Pacific, host governments, militaries and the broader humanitarian community are engaging in coordinated preparedness planning for response to likely large-scale emergencies. In particular, ROAP highlighted the objectives and outcomes of a civil-military coordination conference that took place last October 2014 in Bangkok (Thailand) and that resulted in the creation of a Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific.
The RCG acts as a regional forum that brings together the humanitarian, civilian and military actors involved in disaster response preparedness planning and disaster response. Aspects that are taken into consideration as part of the RCG include: coordination of logistic planning processes aimed at harmonizing logistic efforts; revision/update of information-sharing platforms to facilitate civil-military coordination in the preparedness and response phase of large-scale natural disasters; agreement on structures for civil-military coordination mechanisms to be activated during disaster response operations.

The RCG also provides a platform for gathering, disseminating and the exchange of information and ideas in order to enable well-coordinated, quality and needs-based efficient and effective disaster response to a broad range of humanitarian emergency operations. Emerging policy issues and gaps in the field of response preparedness and civil-military coordination can be identified and addressed by the RCG.

The establishment of a Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific was further discussed by Global Forum participants during the working group sessions and was considered to be a good practice that should be replicated also in other regions.

“[…] I am therefore very much heartened by the strong participation in this Global Forum. It affirms that our evolving military doctrine is robust, responsive and correctly scoped. I am also happy to note the creation of a multi-stakeholder Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific […]”

(Dr Ng Eng He, Minister of Defence, Singapore)

Serving the Needs of People in Conflict:

The plenary sessions related to this theme focused on civil-military coordination in the context of complex emergencies. Participants agreed that, especially when discussing conflicts, there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all for civil-military coordination arrangements. Context is paramount and participants agreed that it should be the most important consideration when discussing and agreeing on key issues such as: drafting of protocols and content of information sharing between humanitarian actors and parties to a given conflict; establishing dialogue with various parties to the conflict to ensure access to affected populations and protection for humanitarian actors; determining opportunities and risks related to the use of military assets as part of relief operations in conflicts.

Similarly to the session on humanitarian effectiveness, a number of case studies were examined, including: how civil-military dialogue is conducted and maintained in Colombia; what are the key roles and responsibilities in civil-military coordination in Somalia; how civil-military coordination can help meet operational requirements in South Sudan.

Some of the observations related to these case studies included the fact that early civil-military coordination in complex emergencies is essential and that this should be facilitated by trained and competent liaison officers and/or civil-military coordination officers. In addition, the importance of developing context-specific (country and/or regional) guidelines for humanitarian civil-military coordination in complex emergencies was discussed and widely acknowledged by all the participants.

As part of this introductory session, Global Forum participants received a briefing on the findings of the preliminary survey that was conducted for the two WHS themes prior to the Global Forum. The survey findings were instrumental in identifying the key areas for discussions to be addressed by the working groups that were formed to discuss specific aspects related to the two themes: Humanitarian Effectiveness (Tuesday 13 April - morning session); and Serving the Needs of People in Conflict (Tuesday 14 April - afternoon session).

“The debate in conflict relates to three main areas: (1) framing an appropriate humanitarian civil-military interaction platform; (2) de-conflicting humanitarian and military action when sharing the same operating environment; and (3) negotiating humanitarian access”

(Ambassador Toni Frisch)
Humanitarian Effectiveness

The objective of this session was to formulate a set of concrete, forward-looking recommendations on how to build more predictable engagement and coordination among all the stakeholders, including national and foreign military actors that are involved in humanitarian action in a natural disaster context.

Forum participants were divided into four working groups:

| I. Humanitarian Effectiveness in Natural Disasters; |
| II. Emerging Roles: Foreign Military Forces, the Private Sector; |
| III. Inter-Operability among Actors Involved in Humanitarian Action; |
| IV. Civil-Military Coordination and Legal Frameworks. |

I. Humanitarian Effectiveness in Natural Disasters

As part of this working group, participants discussed what are the key factors that can contribute to make civil-military coordination in support of humanitarian action more predictable and therefore effective. They agreed that the humanitarian system – including the role of militaries in support of humanitarian action – must adapt to new contexts, actors and challenges. Therefore, for humanitarians and militaries to work effectively together, it is necessary to establish a common situational awareness of the requirements of people-in-need. The use of existing information-sharing tools and platforms should be promoted and institutionalised within the civil-military coordination community. Participants acknowledged that advocating for the use of applicable coordination platforms – such as the Humanitarian Civil-Military Operations Coordination Centre (HuMOCC) – can assist in identifying humanitarian capability gaps, as well as provide opportunities for the more effective use of foreign military assets (FMA).

Following the good practice of the Asia-Pacific region, participants agreed that Regional Consultative Groups (RCG) on Civil-Military Coordination would facilitate and advance the civil-military coordination agenda at the regional and sub-regional levels; linkages should then be established between the work of the RCG and other relevant forums, as and when appropriate, with an emphasis on the relationship with Regional Organizations and the Global Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (REC 1). Given that regional-level emergency response networks are becoming increasingly operational, RCGs would need to discuss the following aspects: development of regional and/or country-specific civil-military coordination mechanisms; drafting of regional guides for the military; engagement in coordinated operational planning between humanitarian and military actors in the preparedness phase; establishment of information sharing platforms; elaboration of context-specific request for assistance (RFA) and request for information (RFI) processes; activation of de-confliction mechanisms.

In addition, participants discussed the need to agree upon, develop and implement international standards regarding the entry, employment and withdrawal of foreign military assets (FMA) in natural disaster response. Participants agreed that the introduction of universal standards would facilitate informed decision-making by Member States that might consider deploying their militaries in support of humanitarian action. It would also ensure the appropriate and effective use of military assets as part of a people-centred approach. Similarly, the development and implementation of standards for CMCoord Officers and other emergency managers – with a focus on skills, knowledge and attitude – would serve to reaffirm humanitarian principles (of neutrality, impartiality and operational independence) and preserve humanitarian space (REC 2).

Building on existing civil-military coordination guidelines,1 working group participants highlighted the need for key concepts and principles enshrined in this guidance to be operationalized and tailored to regional and national contexts (REC 3.) They agreed that particular attention should be placed on the

1 Such as the Oslo Guidelines and the MCDA Guidelines – available in the Resource Library at tinyurl.com/HMDialogue.
following aspects: better identification of the context of application of the guidance, moving beyond the binary categorization of natural disaster vs. complex emergencies (i.e. natural disasters taking place in conflict settings); more clear determination of roles/functions and capability/assets that military are likely to be requested in the 0-6 day phase in support of humanitarian action; revision of the concept of ‘last resort’ towards ‘most appropriate’ or ‘most relevant’; guidance on the timeline for the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) and setting of standards for the implementation of a transition plan/exit strategy towards civilian capability.

At the system-wide level, an understanding of, and adherence to, civil-military coordination principles, concepts and standards at all levels of leadership should be addressed, according to participants, through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) structure (REC 4). Possible tools to achieve this objective would include: the Global Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military coordination; the formal ratification of civil-military coordination guidelines; the establishment of funding mechanisms for civil-military coordination processes and functions; the adoption of the transformative agenda and the key principle of empowered leadership (HC/RC); the deployment of liaison officers trained in civil-military coordination principles / standards.

II. Emerging Roles: Foreign Military Forces, the Private Sector

Working group participants discussed and found agreement on the need to develop guidelines that would help countries in identifying what external (regional and/or international) assistance may be required during disaster response operations. This process would entail the following steps: a) drafting of a summary list of expected relief-items or external assistance that would be needed during different types of disaster, as indicated in a country’s disaster risk profile and contingency plan; b) integrating the national disaster management law/policy with a mechanism or policy to support the receipt, facilitation and coordination of incoming international assistance during large scale disasters; c) communicating the actual requirements for external assistance as a “shopping list” to international humanitarian organizations for follow up action and coordination (REC 1).

During the discussions it was acknowledged by participants that military forces play an important role in responding to disasters since they are often the first responders at national level. Where militaries have a real comparative advantage is at the front-end of response operations. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster it is militaries which, possessing standing forces and often unique capabilities and assets, can deploy rapidly to support initial assessments and response operations and enable national authorities and humanitarian responders to identify and service initial needs while longer-term and more structured operations are being established. At the same time, participants agreed that foreign military assistance should be coordinated and regulated in the preparedness phase, in consultation with the national and humanitarian leadership involved in the disaster response (REC 2).

In this working group, the role of the media was explored. Consideration was given to how humanitarian actors could support host nations in the area of media engagement. According to participants, the objective would be to develop a more positive approach to the communication of needs-based humanitarian response in the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster. Governments should receive support through professional media engagement capacity. This service provision would be designed to bolster the capacity of the host government to manage - with discipline - the various stakeholder pressures, including political and media. Participants agreed on the following key areas for further development: media management; leverage of social media; info-metrics (REC 3.)

Finally, participants discussed the need for governments to reach out and engage with the private sector as part of disaster preparedness and management planning (mapping of assets, resources, capabilities, etc.). The need was highlighted to incorporate and involve the private sector as early as possible in local, provincial and national level response planning. Participants agreed that guidelines, memorandum of understanding (MOUs) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) between humanitarian actors and the private sector could be established with a view to responding to a crisis in a coordinated manner and on the basis of assessed needs (REC 4).
III. Inter-Operability among Actors Involved in Humanitarian Action

Discussions of this working group started by trying to answer the following question: “What is meant by inter-operability in the humanitarian context?” The meaning of inter-operability was defined as “the effort to optimize the response to the needs of affected people by making systems that are by nature very different work better together, based on their respective comparative advantage, without co-opting and while accommodating different values”. Participants then agreed that to implement the concept of inter-operability at the tactical level would mean to identify the different response systems, including their interests, drivers and capacities, and create opportunities to enhance compatibility between them.

Participants acknowledged that all the major actors involved in humanitarian action, first and foremost national and foreign military actors could achieve greater interoperability. Therefore, they agreed that a civil-military coordination platform established or hosted with the affected state would enhance both the cooperation and the predictability of the disaster response, contributing to establishing a needs-based and demand-driven system and build a common operational picture. This body/platform should also set priorities (government/humanitarian needs), facilitate effective and consistent sharing of information between humanitarian and military actors and provide support to plan the transition and exit of foreign military forces involved in disaster response operations (REC 1).

Similarly to other working groups, the importance of Regional Consultative Groups (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination was highlighted to tailor international standards, develop regional civil-military coordination guidelines and tools and support regional response preparedness priorities. Participants agreed that membership of RCGs should be kept to as manageable a size as possible. This could include actors from National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs), line ministries, national and international military forces, regional organisations, IASC members, subject matter experts (SME).

Participants also agreed on the need to better guide disaster response communities (in disaster preparedness and response) to existing information sharing tools/platforms. This would allow the effective identification of the platform which adds most value to a given operation in a particular context. It would also ensure that the most credible information sources are utilized for informed decision making. As much as possible, information sharing networks/web-based coordination systems would then need to be rationalized to support more coordinated civil-military interaction (REC 2).

IV. Civil-Military Coordination and Legal Frameworks

In relation to this working group, participants agreed that there are a number of suitable international guidelines and frameworks and that there was no need to come to create new legislation. According to participants the problem was that existing legal tools were not sufficiently circulated and also that only a few countries had adopted and translated these frameworks into national laws or policies. In relation to international humanitarian assistance, it was highlighted that there are varying standards or mechanisms country by country and that the International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) Guidelines should be promoted as a useful tool to ensure that basic standards are met when delivering international humanitarian assistance.

Participants agreed that states have the primary responsibility to strengthen domestic frameworks. At the same time, regional bodies have a duty to promote and support the strengthening of disaster management framework within their membership. International organizations and expert bodies can also provide technical expertise and their engagement to promote structured disaster management framework at domestic level should be encouraged (UN, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, Centers of Excellence, Think Tanks and academia etc.) (REC.1).

Discussing disaster response operations, participants acknowledged that in the aftermath of a disaster, a number of reviews are usually conducted by governments/ donors and other agencies, including in the field of civil-military coordination. However, they recognised that more needs to be done to share information in an open and transparent manner, preferably through global and regional bodies, so as to ensure that best practices and lessons learned inform future practice (REC. 2).
Finally, participants discussed the issue of protection and agreed that affected states should have mechanisms in place to respond to identified vulnerabilities in their communities in an appropriate way. Assisting actors should strengthen their awareness and education of protection issues in natural disaster response operations. This should include the ability to identify protection needs and the ability to report on or refer such issues. A number of participants raised questions on how the international community should hold affected states responsible for failing to take into account protection issues during natural disasters (REC 3).

Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

The afternoon session of the second day of the forum (Tuesday 14 April) focused on the role of civil-military coordination in complex emergencies. During this session, participants identified a number of key recommendations on how to promote better interaction and information sharing between humanitarian organizations and armed forces (including national militaries, peacekeeping missions and/or non-state armed actors where necessary), with the aim of ensuring access and security of humanitarian workers, as well as the protection of civilians. Forum participants were divided into four working groups:

I. Humanitarian Access in Conflict Settings;
II. Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Action in PK Missions;
III. Civil-Military Coordination, Guidelines and Legal Frameworks;
IV. Civil-Military Coordination: Humanitarian Principles in Conflict.

I. Humanitarian Access in Conflict Settings

Participants of this working group agreed that there is a need to establish a dedicated and predictable space in peace and security operations for humanitarian civil-military interaction. This is based on the premise that civil-military coordination is accepted as a shared responsibility and that sufficient civil-military coordination capacity and capability is built across agencies, including the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Overall, there was consensus on the fact that strong leadership is required at headquarters and in UN missions to ensure that principled humanitarian engagement is developed and sustained, such as on the protection of civilians and the use of peacekeeping mission assets in support of humanitarian action. Moreover, and similar to the working group on Humanitarian Effectiveness in Natural Disasters, participants acknowledged that there was the need to adapt traditional civil-military coordination strategies and thinking so as to account for employing military assets in natural disasters that occur within the context of complex emergencies (REC 1/2).

Participants highlighted the fact that supporting humanitarian access negotiations in highly insecure environments is becoming an increasingly important aspect of civil-military coordination. Despite the security and safety risks, humanitarian actors must effectively negotiate humanitarian access without compromising humanitarian principles. Due to the fact that humanitarian access is an increasingly difficult aspect of humanitarian work, it was important to develop effective and coherent approaches for CMCoord Officers supporting this function. Participants therefore acknowledged the need to develop standardized skill sets that would be required to implement CMCoord in conflict situations (REC 3).

Given the protracted nature of conflicts, participants finally agreed that it is essential to de-conflict humanitarian and military action in a sustainable manner. Applying the appropriate strategies of humanitarian civil-military interaction in complex emergencies is critical to upholding humanitarian principles. In addition, there was consensus that the increased complexity of armed conflicts has
created the need to revisit the relevance of existing policies on engagement with non-state armed groups and non-military groups (REC 4).

II. Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Action in PK Missions

Participants in this working group discussed whether there are appropriate civil-military coordination tools and mechanisms to effectively promote the protection of civilians. In addition, they discussed how humanitarian action fits within the context of peacekeeping operations. As a result of these discussions, participants agreed that while operations and context vary, peacekeeping operations with a protection of civilians mandate must ensure that they actively participate in the establishment and maintenance of an effective civil military coordination forum in any given country (REC 1).

Participants also acknowledged that there is strong and recognized value in having dedicated civil military coordination expertise within OCHA, and agreed that a similar capacity should be built and replicated across a number of humanitarian stakeholders, agencies and also within DPKO (REC 2). Finally, the need was recognised for senior leadership to have the necessary knowledge, expertise and advice to make informed decisions on the implications and opportunities for the use of mission assets in support of humanitarian action, as well as to support effective and principled humanitarian action (REC 3.)

III. Civil-Military Coordination, Guidelines and Legal Frameworks

Participants in this working group discussed current developments in International Humanitarian Law, focused on a number of different treaties - including the Geneva Conventions – and evaluated the general level of awareness and understanding of the MCDA guidelines, especially from the military side (REC 1/2). In the case of IHL, it was highlighted that there is a need for stronger training tools and training packages to help improve awareness of civilian actors about IHL. At the same time, third party observers are needed to monitor, provide feedback and remind military actors about their obligations under IHL. Participants also agreed that more efforts should have been made to prosecute IHL violations at all levels (national and international) (REC 1/2).

Similar to other working groups, participants recognised the need to move beyond the binary categorization of natural disaster vs. complex emergency. Their recommendation was to strengthen humanitarian and military actors’ understanding that behaviour and perception in one context (natural disaster) might affect the other (complex emergency), also due to the increasing role played by social media and other information tools.

Lastly, participants acknowledged that within the military, decision-making is increasingly taking place at the lower levels of the institution. These junior officers are often inexperienced and not equipped with the proper knowledge to make decisions in critical times (REC 3).

IV. Civil-Military Coordination: Humanitarian Principles in Conflict

Discussions of this working group focused on modalities, structures and procedures for information sharing, taking into account the inherent limitations of different stakeholder groups (protection of humanitarian principles, force protection, operational security, etc.). From the outset, trust was identified as the overriding factor in determining whether information should be shared or not. In this regard, OCHA, entrusted with the mandate of humanitarian civil-military coordination, was identified as the most appropriate conduit for sharing information between military actors and the humanitarian community.

Participants agreed that military and humanitarian actors must establish a coordination and information sharing platform that is appropriate and tailored to the specific context of any given complex emergency. This platform must take into account the need to protect humanitarian principles.
and could be implemented either virtually or in person. As mentioned earlier, the use of a trusted agent or interlocutor was also evaluated to facilitate the communication exchange between humanitarian and military actors. According to working group participants, when initiating the dialogue, humanitarian and military actors should establish ground rules. These would include agreement on what type of information will be shared, and just as importantly, what information cannot or will not be shared. These arrangements would assist in managing expectations and could lead to developing trust between the actors (REC 1).

During the discussions, it was acknowledged that there must be minimum standards developed for UN-CMCoord officers serving as liaisons between the humanitarian community and military actors. These standards should include, but would not be limited to, minimum levels of training and context relevant experience. The minimum standards for UN-CMCoord officers would provide a level of predictability, credibility, legitimacy and trust, which will facilitate the exchange of potentially sensitive information (REC 2).

Findings and recommendations

As a result of the above outlined working group discussions a number of key recommendations were formulated.
I. Humanitarian Effectiveness in Natural Disasters

1. Establish Regional Consultative Groups (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination to facilitate and advance the civil-military coordination agenda at regional level and contribute to the findings and recommendations of the Global Consultative Group.

2. Introduce a standard qualification system for UN-CMCoord Officers that would regulate the need for continuous training, and implement the validation of standards for UN-CMCoord Officers.

3. Operationalise key concepts and principles enshrined in the OSLO Guidelines and tailor them to regional and national contexts (following the model of the Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines For The Use Of Foreign Military Assets In Natural Disaster Response Operations – “APC Madro Guidelines”).

4. Use the Global Consultative Group to bring to the attention of the IASC the need to ensure adherence and respect of civil-military coordination principles and standards.

II. Emerging Roles: Foreign Military Forces and the Private Sector

1. Develop guidelines to assist countries in identifying what external (regional and/or international) assistance may be required during disaster response operations.

2. Coordinate and regulate foreign military assistance, in consultation with the national and humanitarian leadership involved in the disaster response.

3. Engage the media as one of the key humanitarian stakeholders.

4. Engage the private sector as a humanitarian stakeholder in a centralized coordination structure, including through the development of guidelines and standard operating procedures.

III. Inter-Operability among actors involved in Humanitarian Action

1. Develop a concept for a fairly tight body, with limited membership, predictable, scalable and with full Government ownership (co-ownership).
2. Guide the disaster response communities (in disaster preparedness and response) to existing information sharing tools/platforms. Information sharing networks/web based coordination systems should be rationalized to support more coordinated civil-military interaction.

IV. Civil-Military Coordination and Legal Frameworks

1. Urge Member States to strengthen and operationalize domestic legal and policy preparedness for natural disasters (including robust needs assessments), by translating key guidelines, such as the IDRL Guidelines and Oslo Guidelines [or relevant regional guidelines] into domestic legal frameworks by 2020.

2. Call upon all disaster affected states and assisting actors to work with the IASC [and/or appropriate regional bodies or other mechanisms], to promote expanded sharing of best practice and lessons learned for civil-military coordination.

3. Call on all assisting actors to strengthen awareness and training on protection issues that may result from natural disasters and ensure that protection concerns are integrated into planning and deployment, including “do no harm,” reporting and referral mechanisms.
Serving the Needs of people in Conflict

I. Humanitarian Access in Conflict Settings

1. Revise traditional civil-military coordination strategies and thinking (i.e. cooperation in natural disasters vs. co-existence in complex emergency).

2. Develop policy and operational guidance tailored to increase humanitarian effectiveness in conflict situations (addendum to MCDA Guidelines).

3. Develop standardized skill set needed to implement civil-military coordination in conflict situations.

4. Recommend IASC to review the current engagement with non-state armed groups and non-military groups.

II. Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Action in Peacekeeping Missions

1. Ensure that peacekeeping operations with a protection of civilians mandate take active part in the establishment and maintenance of an effective civil-military coordination forum in the country where they are present.

2. Establish strong leadership at headquarters and at country level, to ensure that principled humanitarian engagement, including on security and use of mission assets, is developed and maintained.

III. Civil-Military Coordination, Guidelines and Legal Frameworks

1. Promote stronger training tools and training packages to help improve awareness of IHL. Ensure that third party observers monitor, provide feedback and remind military on their obligations under international humanitarian law. Despite the existence of an international court, foster a prosecution mechanism that is widely perceived as fair, just, and agreed by all.

2. Strengthen the promotion and awareness on the existing Oslo and MCDA guidelines (militaries, etc.), and evaluate the need for the development of operational guidance on new issues to complement the guidelines.

The Way Forward

The findings and recommendations formulated during the WHS Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination will inform discussions and events to be held in the lead up to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS).

To begin with, Global Forum recommendations already stimulated the debate at the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment side-event that was held on the topic of civil-military coordination at the beginning of June 2015. The ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment is a unique platform for Member States, UN agencies, humanitarian and development partners, the private sector and affected communities to discuss emerging and pressing humanitarian issues. The ECOSOC discussions represented an important step to make progress on some key issues highlighted during the Global Forum: a) recommitment to the proper use and the effective coordination of foreign military assets; b) development of universal standards for the FMAs; and c) the development of a platform to share information in complex emergencies (virtual and real).

There is no doubt that global humanitarian civil-military dialogue must continue at all levels. The Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS) in Geneva, as well as the OCHA Regional office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) remain committed to ensure that some of the key recommendations formulated during the WHS Global Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military coordination will continue to inform the WHS process and hopefully to shaping the future of humanitarian action.

4. In the face of increasingly decentralized decision making in armed forces (state and non-state), there is the need to train and empower junior officers with the proper knowledge to make decisions in critical times.

IV. Civil-Military Coordination: Humanitarian Principles in Conflict

1. Establish information sharing structures and procedures between humanitarian and military actors within the context of a complex emergency in order to manage expectations and create an environment where information sharing, when appropriate, should take place.

2. Establish minimum standards for liaison officers and interlocutors to assist in building trust and legitimacy between humanitarian and military actors in contexts where information sharing must be conducted by a specific humanitarian focal point or group on behalf of the humanitarian community.