This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year’s theme: The future of humanitarian affairs: towards greater inclusiveness, coordination, interoperability and effectiveness.

**Background and objectives**

**BACKGROUND**

Humanitarian civil-military dialogue and coordination is essential to the implementation of principled humanitarian action and the appropriate use of foreign military assets. The expanding presence and engagement of military forces in humanitarian contexts has led to an increasing need for humanitarian civil-military dialogue and coordination.

Foreign militaries often play a key role in natural disaster response, such as the Nepal earthquake, while the Ebola epidemic saw the role of foreign militaries expand beyond natural disaster response. Armed conflict has also taken a multifaceted form with foreign militaries indirectly supporting and/or engaging in conflict between warring factions, such as in Yemen of late. These complexities present the humanitarian and military communities with a range of coordination challenges, from appropriate ways of interfacing through to negotiations for humanitarian access.

Humanitarian civil-military dialogue must adapt to meet these challenges in future contexts so as to maintain a clear separation between humanitarian and military actors, and to ensure that foreign military assets are used appropriately when supporting humanitarian operations.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To explore new models and approaches to meet future challenges and in support of the objectives of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS).
2. To reiterate the operational importance of humanitarian civil-military dialogue.
3. To acknowledge the key principles of the internationally-recognized guidelines of humanitarian civil-military coordination and the use of military and civil defence assets.

**Discussion points**

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested questions:

- The fundamentals of humanitarian civil-military coordination (origin, humanitarian principles, five UN-CMCCoord tasks etc.)
- The practicalities of operating in the field, such as responding in natural disasters and complex emergencies. This will also encompass important aspects such as humanitarian access, interoperability and protection.
- Some essential tools, such as the establishment of a coordination platform and the creation of a de-confliction mechanism, with examples from the field.
- How to plan for unforeseen emergencies, such as the Ebola epidemic.
- Universal standards for the utilization of foreign military and civil defence assets in support of humanitarian action.

**Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations**

1. Ideas are generated for new models and approaches that would meet future challenges, and would also inform the WHS.
2. Buy-in and consensus are generated for ongoing initiatives.
3. There is a reorientation towards new objectives.

**Format**

*Panel discussion, interactive dialogue or others.*

Moderated debate with Q&A, with audience participation encouraged throughout.
(Co-)Chair(s):
- Ambassador Urs Schmid, Deputy Permanent Representative – Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva

Moderator:
- Catherine Fiankan-Bokonga, Vice-President – Foreign Press Association of Switzerland & Lichtenstein

Panel composition:
- Mr. Anthony Craig, Senior Preparedness & Response Adviser – United Nations World Food Programme
- Mr. Peter Essens, Principal Scientist, Dept. of Human Behaviour & Organisational Innovations – Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research
- Ms. Jules Frost, Senior Advisor, Civil-Military Relations – World Vision International
- Mr. David Maizlish, Adviser, Unit for Relations with Arms Carriers – International Committee of the Red Cross
- Ms. Anke Reiffenstuel, Deputy Head, Humanitarian Division – Federal Foreign Office of Germany

Background Material
Hyperlinks to relevant reports, websites, etc…
http://tinyurl.com/HMDialogue

Contact
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