

Civil-Military Relations in Times of Disaster

Caribbean Islands

May 28, 2021

Considering,

FIRST: That in 2020 the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) initiated in the Caribbean through PIRAC “Working Together” funding whose objective is to contribute to improve disaster response preparedness in the Caribbean Basin, as well as to share its results with the entire American continent.

SECOND: That it will be possible to achieve this objective by strengthening the existing regulatory and institutional capacities that constitute the systems for integrated disaster management in the countries of the region.

THIRD: That the Disaster Law and Legislative Advocacy Program of the IDRL and its partners assist the National Red Cross Societies of the region to support their governments in the development and implementation of political and institutional legal frameworks that: (i) facilitate and regulate international humanitarian assistance in the event of large-scale disasters that exceed national response capacities; and, (ii) contribute to creating an enabling environment for disaster risk reduction.

FOURTH. That the IFRC's Civil-Military Relations Program for the Americas Region originated between 2011 and 2012, as a result of the identification of an important change in the development of governments and, specifically, in the involvement of their armed forces in response actions to disaster and crisis situations through the use of their logistical, medical and engineering platforms, placed at the disposal of the IFRC, medical and engineering platforms, placed at the service of saving lives, supporting those affected, repairing and reconstructing destroyed roads, as well as supporting the transport of goods, equipment and rescue teams, among other important missions according to the level of affectation of the communities and territories.

FIFTH: The general objective of this workshop has been to generate a space for dialogue on civil-military issues and law related to disasters, not only among the members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, but also with its partners in the region. To identify regional challenges, share experiences and good practices.

SIXTH - That it has also made it possible:

- To get to know the regional actors involved in disaster and crisis response actions, specifically in the area of civil-military relations, as well as their functions and scope within the framework of their competencies;
- Identify and discuss current challenges and next steps for the region in civil-military relations, sharing lessons learned; and,
- Initiate a process with the corresponding Terms of Reference and foundations of a group of regional experts on civil-military issues, in order to identify solutions to the challenges identified, enhance the use of the capabilities of each of the actors and avoid duplication of efforts.

Within this framework,

WE DECLARE

1. That the partners in attendance commit to implement the results of the Workshop, as well as to continue opening spaces for dialogue, training, advice and exchange of lessons learned;
2. That the partners commit to coordinate their efforts in the areas of Civil-Military Relations and Disaster Law in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of efforts.
3. To conduct, on an annual basis, follow-up meetings, monitoring and validation of the commitments and agreements derived from this first workshop.

This declaration is open to and all those actors who would like to join this initiative.

The Caribbean Islands, May 28th, 2021.