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REPORT OF WORKING COMMITTEE III

THEMATIC AXIS III:

Hemispheric Security and Defence Cooperation Policy: Beginning With Strengthened Humanitarian Emergency Assistance

Moderator (Mexico): Major General Víctor Hugo Aguirre Serna

Rapporteur (Chile): Mr. Rodolfo Gonzalez

Participants

This group comprised delegates from Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Presentations

Presentations were made by the following Member States:

- Chile (Towards an Inter-American System for Defence Cooperation in Disasters and Catastrophes).
- Bolivia (The development of a disaster risk management system of for the region).
- Mexico (Case study on Mexico on (i) Provision of aid to civilian population in disasters; (ii) The provision of humanitarian aid abroad.
- Dominican Republic (Cooperation in the aftermath of disasters – Regional Responses).

Presentations were also made by the following Observer institutions:

- International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) (The Role of the ICRC in Humanitarian Relief Operations in the Region).
- Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) (Disaster response mechanisms in Inter-American system).

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Key Issues Discussed

1. The need for effective strategies for the deployment of the military in provision of humanitarian emergency assistance; and the importance of having a coordinated response mechanism in a complex emergency environment.
2. In response to the proposal for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group to facilitate dialogue on the development of a framework for a Hemispheric Defence and Security Cooperation Policy, beginning with a focus on Humanitarian Emergency Assistance, members of the Working Committee debated under whose mandate this Group would be established.
3. Members of the Working Committee acknowledged the importance of utilising existing bilateral, sub-regional and hemispheric networks in developing a hemispheric cooperation mechanism in response to disasters.

Conclusions

1. Respect for sovereignty should be a foremost consideration in the development of any policy or cooperation/coordination mechanism.
2. Given the overwhelming support for the proposal for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group by the members of the Working Committee III, to facilitate dialogue on the development of a framework for a Hemispheric Defence and Security Cooperation Policy, beginning with a focus on Humanitarian Emergency Assistance, the proposal should be presented to the General Assembly.
3. Members of the Working Committee suggested that the following be included for consideration by the Ad Hoc Working Group:
 - Mechanisms to promote financial transparency for donor countries
 - Operational protocols in the provision of assistance
 - The promotion of civil-military cooperation in disaster response
 - Simulation exercises
 - Representation of the 4 geographical areas of the Hemisphere The operational framework
 - Incorporation of the Specialized Conferences and the IADB and other competent institutions in the coordinating mechanism
 - Review of country case studies and experiences in the Hemisphere (Chile, Ecuador and Haiti)
4. The importance of disaster-response training was acknowledged. In this regard, Member States welcomed the offer of Mexico to provide training in this area.

Recommendations

The following paragraphs from the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain (Rev 2) which were identified as relevant to Thematic Axis III, were considered and suggested amendments (as

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highlighted in red) were made in accordance with the discussions held in the Working Committee meeting.

Operative Paragraph 6 – chapeau (paragraph unchanged)

That they adopt the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Search and Rescue, in accordance with Article 7 of the Declaration of Arequipa, as described below:

Operative Paragraph 6 ii.

To urge the implementation of the measures adopted by Member States of the CDMA for the OAS General Assembly Resolution: AG/RES. 2750 (XL11-O/12) – *Existing Mechanisms for Disaster Prevention and Response and Humanitarian Assistance among Member States* – particularly where such measures strengthen the level of cooperation in the region and promote specific actions for the preservation of life and provision of humanitarian assistance in the event of accidents and disasters that may occur both at sea and on land in the Americas;

Operative Paragraph 14 (paragraph unchanged)

Its commitment to strengthen the mechanisms for the provision of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance, with a focus on civil-military collaboration for the use of military and civil defence assets to provide assistance in the event of a disaster (Oslo Guidelines), in accordance with the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, international humanitarian law and domestic legislation;

Operative Paragraph 16

Their agreement to create an Ad Hoc Working Group, in accordance with Article 45 of the CDMA Regulations, to facilitate dialogue on the development of a framework for a Hemispheric Defence and Security Cooperation Policy, focused on Integrated Risk Management and Prevention commencing with a focus on Humanitarian Emergency Assistance; this Group will analyse the proposals put forward by Chile in respect of the possible establishment of an Inter-American System of Military Cooperation in matter of Defence for Disasters and Catastrophes; similarly, the proposal of the United Mexican States to offer training in the area of Civilian Protection, action protocols and lessons learnt during recent Humanitarian Assistance operations carried out on the Continent, activities and existing agreements on the subject in various fora of the OAS and other existing mechanisms in the Hemisphere, which would be led by the host country of the XIII CDMA, other voluntary members and institutions that currently participate and competent institutions. The first meeting will be held during the first half of 2017, and will report to the XIII CDMA to be held in 2018.

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Operative Paragraph 23 (paragraph unchanged)

Their support for the continued participation of the defence sector in United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations, as required

Signature List

Major General Víctor Hugo Aguirre Serna
Moderator
MEXICO

Mr. Rodolfo Gonzalez
Rapporteur
CHILE