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**IASC TASK FORCE ON HUMANITARIAN SPACE AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**  
TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Date established:** July 2011<sup>1</sup>

**Duration:** The continuation of the Task Force is subject to annual review by the IASC Working Group.

**Purpose**

The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations will advance policy, planning and operational issues through the identification of gaps and areas of common interest. It shall endeavour to build consensus and develop common positions within the humanitarian community, necessary to influence other relevant processes and agendas, including intergovernmental processes such as ECOSOC and the formulation of IASC and UN policy.

The Task Force will focus on the need to address the key challenges obstructing the delivery of principled humanitarian action. Specifically, it will identify and analyse particular threats to principled humanitarian action as they emerge and suggest ways to address them.

The Task Force will concentrate on the following five main work-streams, but may add others:

- (1) UN integration and humanitarian space.
- (2) Counter-terrorism measures and their impact on humanitarian action.
- (3) Operating in complex security environments.
- (4) Maintaining the civilian nature of humanitarian assistance
- (5) Awareness, understanding and application and revision of guidelines on humanitarian civil-military coordination, including revisions and updates as necessary

To support these work-streams, IASC partners will share respective organisational issues, views, approaches and activities with regard to operations and policy in order to gain a common understanding of various positions within the IASC framework. This will include the identification of emerging policy issues and gaps and the identification of extant documents and the possible need for updates or revisions.

In addition, the Task Force will engage in a range of activities including conducting inter-agency surveys, developing guidance, and preparing advocacy messages for the wider humanitarian community.

The Task Force will also serve as an information sharing platform for a broader set of humanitarian space and civil-military related initiatives being undertaken by individual IASC members, in collaboration with research institutions or other partners.

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<sup>1</sup> The Task Force was established by the 79<sup>th</sup> IASC Working Group (WG) decision to merge the IASC Core Group on Humanitarian Space, the Informal Forum on Humanitarian Civil-Military Relations and the Integration Focal Points Group

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## **Chair**

The Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations is co-chaired by OCHA and an NGO representative.

## **Participation**

Participation is open to IASC members. Participants are expected to be at an appropriate level, i.e. the focal points/subject matter experts within their organizations for the particular issues being discussed. Non-IASC experts, member state representatives/donors may be invited as observers to provide technical input or to discuss certain relevant issues, when needed. Operational NGOs are encouraged to participate actively.

## **Secretariat**

OCHA functions as the secretariat of the group and, under the direction of the co-chairs, coordinates the substantive implementation of the work plan. With information provided by representatives to the Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations, the secretariat drafts the annual work plan (for discussion and agreement by the membership), progress updates, and annual report to the IASC Working Group; maintains a listing with full contact details of participants; convenes regular meetings/provides venue arrangements; drafts and distributes the agenda and minutes; monitors progress of the implementation of the work plan and action points from the Task Force for the IASC Working Group and IASC Principals meetings; maintains an email distribution list of participants and keeps participants lists for each meeting; prepares materials for distribution to the group; facilitates the flow of communication; and updates the Task Force's webpage on the IASC website.

## **Meeting Schedule and Agenda**

The Task Force will meet on a monthly basis with extraordinary meetings called at the discretion of the co-chairs. The agenda is determined by the co-chairs through consultation with members, and will reflect the priorities of the workplan but also have the flexibility to respond to urgent issues.

## **Funding**

There is no dedicated funding attached to the routine work of the Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations. However, individual members' organisations/agencies may sponsor a particular piece of work to be carried out by external consultants.

## **Work Plan**

The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations prepares an annual work plan based on the standard template, prepared by the IASC Secretariat, which includes specific objectives, prioritized activities, indicators, and deadlines. Focal points/task teams are identified for each activity listed in the work plan, and are accountable for ensuring the implementation of the specific tasks and for progress reporting on a regular basis. Work plans should be submitted to the IASC Secretariat by the set annual deadline for the IASC Working Group to review, and subject to agreement, endorse before the end of the ongoing work plan year.

## **Reporting and Public Information**

The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations provides an annual report to the IASC Working Group against progress toward meeting the objectives of the work plan. This

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annual report will be prepared in accordance with the standard template and is due by the deadline (usually end January), in order for the IASC Working Group to take stock of progress and performance of the group. The Task Force is also required to submit a brief progress update (2-3 paragraphs) to the IASC Secretariat by the deadline (usually end of October) for consolidation and presentation to the Working Group before its November meeting.

The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations maintains a webpage on the IASC site, and will post regularly all relevant meeting notes, background papers and other documents on that site.

### **IASC Products**

The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations will ensure that any IASC products developed by the group are in line with the IASC guidelines on product development available from the IASC Secretariat. In addition, the Task Force will monitor and share information with regard to updates of or need for updates of extant products as well as the development of any new relevant documents by member organisations or other.

### **Relationship to the IASC Working Group**

The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations prepares background papers, key messages and recommendations on salient topics and broader policy/operational issues in support of effective field-based action at the request of the IASC Working Group or Principals. The IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations can propose agenda items for the IASC Working Group via the IASC Secretariat as part of the agenda setting process.

The IASC Working Group will review the performance and relevance of the IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations periodically. At that time, the mandate and the continuation of the IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations will be assessed. The IASC Secretariat supports the IASC Working Group in monitoring the performance of IASC subsidiary bodies.