

**EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS – ONGOING ACTIVITIES AND POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS FOR REGIONAL ACTION - FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE PCC.I RAPPORTEURSHIP ON DISASTER PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND MITIGATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

The United States congratulates the Peruvian Administration, the CITEL Secretariat and the ITU on holding a successful Emergency Communications workshop prior to the Cusco PCC.I meeting on May 25. We were pleased to serve as Coordinator for this workshop “*Emergency Communications: “From Preparedness to Regional Action.”*”

During the final session of the workshop, participants identified a number of potential next steps for consideration by the CITEL PCC.I Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation. This contribution first recognizes a number of ongoing disaster-related activities and then proposes additional achievable activities, based on the workshop recommendations, to increase emergency communications preparedness and improve capacity building and collaboration within the region, while preserving scarce resources and without additional expense or burden to the CITEL Secretariat or the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation. The following resolution project is proposed for review and consideration by the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation.

**CONSIDERING**

- a. The importance of Sharing Information, Expertise and Best Practices Across the Region.
- b. The “*Emergency Communications, From Preparedness to Regional Action*” Workshop held in May 2015 in Cusco Peru prior the PCC.I meeting was a complete success thank to the Peruvian Administration, the CITEL Secretariat and the ITU.
- c. The PCC.1 Disaster Rapporteurship remains a useful mechanism for ongoing exchange and collection of information from the membership.
- d. Workshops benefit CITEL Administrations by bringing members together to gauge progress, address capacity gaps, build relationships, and assist the development of additional programs and tools to increase planning, regional coordination and readiness to respond.
- e. Disaster Exercises or Simulations re-create the chaos of a disaster and can be greatly beneficial for countries in implementing and updating their disaster communications plans.
- f. The Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation is should strengthen collaboration with the ITU, including the ITU-Development Sector Study Group 2 Question 5/2 on disaster communications activities.
- g. CITEL members may benefit from having information on disaster communications accessible online, to be able to see all the ongoing activities in disaster response within CITEL, providing the names and contact information for leads by project and links to other relevant information.

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<sup>1</sup> CCP.I-TIC/doc. 3656/15 rev. 1

- h. Emergency Communications is one of the Americas Regional Initiatives adopted at by ITU WTDC-14.

#### RECOGNIZING THAT:

- Establishing a regional “Roster of Disaster Experts” could help identify contacts, but would also help facilitate direct interactions and collaborations among CITELE members by allowing members to contact colleagues directly for assistance in all phases of emergency communications, including preparedness and planning, coordination, stakeholder engagement, and response. At the XXVI PCC.I meeting in Cusco, the U.S. agreed, at the request of the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation, to coordinate the development of a CITELE “**Roster of Disaster Experts**” and will present a draft template for review and consideration by this meeting.
- An “Expert Group e-Mail List” could further enable real time discussion and information sharing, driving further collaboration among disaster communications subject matter experts in all phases, from preparedness to response. **The Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation is invited to consider the benefits and feasibility of establishing an Emergency Communications “Experts group e-Mail”** taking account of any costs or requirements for maintenance of the addresses.
- Emergency communications and disaster response incorporates a wide range of stakeholders. The Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation is invited to **consider how future activities could include increased participation and collaboration of other relevant parties** including National Disaster Authorities, Civil Protection Agencies, and the response community, including Humanitarian response NGOs, industry, Academics and technical experts.

#### TAKING INTO ACCOUNT

The outcomes and recommendations of the Workshop held in Cusco, Peru in May 2015, and following review and consideration within the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation during PCC.I XXVII: The meeting resolves to establish an action plan and timeline for actions to address greater regional disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation by this Rapporteurship.

#### RESOLVES:

- a. **To share the Summary of May 25, 2015 Workshop “Emergency Communications, From Preparedness to Regional Action” held in Cusco Peru, as well as the link to the full workshop report** prepared by primary event host Peru, widely among CITELE Members, with regional organizations, and with the ITU - (October, 2015);
- b. **To build a Roster of Experts** by soliciting from each CITELE Administration (and Associate Member) the name of one (or more) focal points with experience and/or interest in disaster prevention, mitigation and response. Joseph Burton of the United States will compile this list and provide updates to the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation and the CITELE Secretariat - (October – November 2015);
- c. **To create an “Experts Group” e-mail list** to enable greater collaboration and the sharing of information, best practices, and tools between meetings of the CITELE Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation - (December, 2015);

- d. **To continue sharing emergency communications regulatory frameworks, plans, policies and best practices and experiences** within the PCC.I Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation - (Ongoing);
- e. **To seek opportunities to organize additional emergency communications workshops** during CITEL meetings and/or in collaboration with ITU or other organizations, as appropriate, **which will include a brief disaster exercise/simulation** - (2016 and Ongoing);
- f. **Consider how future activities could include increased participation and collaboration of other relevant parties** including National Disaster Authorities, Civil Protection Agencies, and the response community, including Humanitarian response NGOs, industry, Academics and technical experts. (Ongoing)
- g. **Recommend that the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response and mitigation determine interest of CITEL Members regarding the organization of a brief disaster exercise or simulation** which could be held during a future Emergency Communications Workshop. Such a simulation could include information on impacts to (and the availability of) communications, and activities and needs of humanitarian and local responders. Participants would include Member States, industry and civil society. Results would help inform recommendations for increased national and regional preparedness and coordination.
- h. **Strengthen the collaboration with the ITU on disaster prevention, response and mitigation including:**
  - **The ITU-Development Sector Study Group 2 Question 5/2 on disaster communications activities.** Inform and increase participation of CITEL Members of major initiatives within this Question, including the ITU Emergency Communications Online Toolkit; an Emergency Communications Seminar to be held in Geneva in September 2016; and a Checklist for National Emergency Communications Planning to be completed in 2017 (Molly McPherson to provide a link to the ITU Toolkit, which will be shared with CITEL Administrations for comment) Dissemination of information and opportunities for participation in the development of programs and tools will be coordinated with the Rapporteur, and will be sent to the “Experts Group” E-mail list when it is created. (October 2015 and Ongoing)
  - **ITU Americas Region:** Bruno Ramos to act as the ITU point of contact to provide greater information exchange with the Rapporteurship on disaster prevention, response, and mitigation and the CITEL Secretariat. A first project is to **create an Americas Region Emergency Communications webpage on the ITU website** that includes information on existing contributions, programs, experts and events to increase coordination and avoid duplication. This will include a list of all relevant events across the ITU and regional communications organizations including the ITU, CTU, and COMTELCA. (October 2015 and Ongoing)
  - **Encourage CITEL Administrations to explore opportunities with ITU for direct capacity building support** in developing national Emergency Communications Plans, including the development of advanced legal and regulatory frameworks to support the activities of national institutions related to emergencies, and to guide roles of those institutions as part of an emergency response. (October 2015 and Ongoing)