



## Chairperson's Summary: Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting 2026

09-10 July 2026, Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil



The international and national urban search and rescue (USAR) community of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) gathered in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, from 9 to 10 July 2026, for the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting (IV IGM). With 368 participants from 41 countries and 18 organisations attending. The list of participants countries and organizations can be found in [Annex A](#). The IV IGM Programme can be found [Annex B](#). The IGM Master PowerPoint can be found in [Annex C](#).

This meeting was hosted by the Federal Government of Brazil, through the National Secretariat for Protection and Civil Defense (SEDEC), of the Ministry of Integration and Regional Development (MIDR), and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and co-organised by OCHA in its capacity as the INSARAG Secretariat, housed within the Emergency Response Section (ERS) of the Response Support Branch (RSB), Crisis Response Division (CRD), OCHA Geneva.

There were two key outcomes at the IGM:

- The unanimous endorsement of the [Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026](#), which reaffirms INSARAG's three Strategic Objectives: (1) Quality Standards, (2) Localization, and (3) Flexible Response defined in the [INSARAG Strategic Plan 2026-2030](#), guiding the network for the next five years.
- The 2026 [INSARAG Guidelines](#) were officially launched following their endorsement at the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) Meeting in March 2026.

The IV IGM was preceded by three regional meetings, the Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting, the Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting and the Americas Regional Meeting, held concurrently on 7 and 8 July, as well as the Team Leaders Meeting, held on 6 and 7 July, and six Working Groups meetings, held from 3 to 5 July.

### DAY 1 JULY 9, 2026

#### Part I: Opening Ceremony

##### i. Mr. Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

In a video message recorded from La Guaira, Venezuela, an area hard hit by the earthquakes of 24 June 2026, ten days before the start of the Working Group meetings that preceded the IV IGM, Mr. Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, expressed his appreciation to Brazil for hosting the INSARAG community and thanked all responders for their commitment to preparedness, training, accreditation and international cooperation. Referring to the recent Venezuela earthquake response, Mr. Fletcher highlighted the rapid mobilization of 73 teams from over 30 countries and commended their professionalism, dedication and courage.

Mr. Fletcher emphasized that INSARAG's work is focused on ensuring readiness for real emergencies and encouraged participants to use the Global Meeting to further strengthen their capacity to respond to future disasters and humanitarian crises. He concluded by expressing his solidarity and gratitude to the network, noting that its work remains essential to communities affected by disasters around the world.

## ii. Ms. Edem Wosornu, Crisis Response Division Director, OCHA

Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of OCHA's Crisis Response Division, opened the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting, thanking Ambassador Dominik Stillhart, the INSARAG Regional Chairs, Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, the Government of Brazil, and all participants. She expressed condolences to the people of Venezuela following the recent devastating earthquakes and commended the rapid deployment of INSARAG-classified teams and other international responders.

Ms. Wosornu highlighted the growing humanitarian needs worldwide amid funding constraints, conflict, and climate-related disasters, noting the ongoing humanitarian reset led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, guided by the principle of "as local as possible, as international as necessary." She reaffirmed OCHA's strong commitment to INSARAG and its Secretariat, emphasizing the network's vital role in delivering life-saving assistance and international solidarity in the aftermath of disasters. She concluded by thanking all partners for their leadership and support and wished participants a productive meeting.

## iii. Ambassador Dominik Stillhart, INSARAG Global Chair

Ambassador Dominik Stillhart, INSARAG Global Chair, opened the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting, thanking the Government of Brazil, OCHA representatives, the INSARAG Secretariat, and network members for their contributions.

Having travelled to Venezuela right before the INSARAG Global meeting, he expressed condolences to those affected and highlighted the rapid deployment of 19 INSARAG-classified teams and other international responders. He noted that the operation demonstrated the strength of international solidarity and reflected lessons learned from previous responses.

Ambassador Stillhart reaffirmed INSARAG's commitment to continuous improvement, support to national and local capacities, and adaptation to a changing humanitarian environment. He welcomed the new INSARAG Guidelines and 2026–2030 Strategy and encouraged participants to use the Global Meeting to help shape the future of the network and strengthen its life-saving mission.

## iv. Mr. Wolnei Wolff, National Secretary of Civil Protection and Defense at the Ministry of Integration and Regional Development, Brazil

Mr. Wolnei Wolff, National Secretary of Civil Protection and Defense at the Ministry of Integration and Regional Development, welcomed participants to the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting and highlighted the significance of hosting the event in Brazil. He noted that the meeting provides an important opportunity to strengthen national capacities, foster international cooperation, and reaffirm commitment to INSARAG principles and standards. Mr. Wolff highlighted Brazil's ongoing INSARAG External Classification process and referenced Brazil's recent response to the earthquakes in Venezuela, where Brazilian teams

and a field hospital were rapidly deployed, demonstrating the value of preparedness, common standards, and international solidarity. He emphasized the growing challenges posed by climate-related disasters and the need to ensure that disaster response remains connected to the needs of vulnerable populations.

He encouraged discussion on how INSARAG's expertise and cooperation mechanisms could contribute to addressing increasingly complex flood emergencies while maintaining the network's core mandate. He concluded by reaffirming Brazil's commitment to strengthening international cooperation, preparedness, and effective disaster response, and wished participants a productive Global Meeting.

**v. Ambassador Ruy Pereira, Brazilian Cooperation Agency Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil**

Ambassador Ruy Pereira, Director, Brazilian Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed participants and highlighted the significance of the Global Meeting being held in the Americas, and for the first time in a country from the Global South. He described the meeting as the culmination of extensive technical and regional consultations and emphasised its importance in shaping the future direction of the network. He noted that the planned Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 would build upon previous INSARAG declarations and provide strategic guidance for the coming years.

He drew particular attention to the increasing frequency and impact of flood-related disasters globally, citing their growing humanitarian consequences and their links to climate change. In this context, he welcomed ongoing efforts to explore how INSARAG's methodology, coordination mechanisms and operational expertise could contribute to flood response while maintaining the network's established standards and principles. Ambassador Pereira also reflected on the response to the earthquakes in Venezuela, expressing solidarity with the affected population and highlighting Brazil's contribution through the deployment of rescue personnel, medical support, humanitarian supplies and technical assistance. He reaffirmed Brazil's commitment to strengthening regional and international cooperation and to supporting the continued development of the INSARAG network.

**vi. Colonel Saulo de Tarso Sanson Silva, Secretary of State for Public Security, State of Paraná, Brazil**

Colonel Saulo de Tarso Sanson Silva, Secretary of State for Public Security, State of Paraná, welcomed participants and expressed pride in hosting a meeting of such importance to the global search and rescue community. He emphasised that disasters require preparation, coordination and cooperation before, during and after emergencies and described INSARAG as a network founded on technical excellence, common standards and effective international collaboration.

Reflecting on recent disasters, including the earthquakes in Venezuela and major flood events in Brazil, he stressed the value of common protocols and coordinated action in ensuring effective emergency response. He highlighted the collaborative efforts of Brazilian institutions and state-level fire services in strengthening national preparedness and advancing classification efforts. He further underlined the importance of exchanging experiences, building trust and strengthening institutional partnerships, noting that every lesson shared through INSARAG has the potential to contribute to lives saved during future emergencies.

At the end of the session, a group photo was made and is available here: [4th INSARAG Global Meeting – Brazil – INSARAG](#)

## Part II: Reflections and Strengthening INSARAG Capabilities

### Session 1: 35 Years of INSARAG: Reflections and Key Insights Taking Stock

#### i. Reflections on 35 Years of INSARAG, a review

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, INSARAG Secretary, reflected on INSARAG's journey since its establishment in 1991, recalling how the network emerged from lessons learned following major earthquakes and the recognised need for stronger international coordination of urban search and rescue operations. He highlighted the adoption of the INSARAG Guidelines and the establishment of the External Classification system (IEC/R) as defining milestones that have enabled teams from different countries and operational cultures to work together through a shared methodology and common standards

He noted the significant growth of the network, from a single classified team in 2005 to 63 classified teams from 46 countries today, demonstrating both the maturity of the classification system and the commitment of Member States to preparedness and quality assurance. He recalled a number of major international responses, including Haiti, Japan, Nepal, Türkiye/Syria, Myanmar and the ongoing response to the earthquakes in Venezuela, highlighting the consistent contribution of INSARAG-classified teams to life-saving operations and international coordination efforts.

Looking ahead, he underlined the importance of preserving the professionalism, unity and humanitarian principles that have characterised the network throughout its history. He observed that INSARAG has evolved into a significantly larger and more complex network and emphasised the need to maintain a common purpose, continue learning from operational experience and ensure that governance and coordination arrangements remain effective as the network grows.

#### ii. Africa-Europe-Middle East Region – 2021-2026 Regional Achievements, Reflections, and Priorities Ahead

Colonel-General of Internal Service Anatolii Suprunovskiy, AEME Regional Chair, reflected on the achievements of the INSARAG network over the past five years, expressing appreciation to the Government of Brazil, the INSARAG Secretariat, Ambassador Dominik Stillhart, and Ms. Edem Wosornu for their support and leadership.

He highlighted the resilience of the network during the COVID-19 pandemic, the significant responses to major disasters including the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, the floods in Libya, and the earthquake in Morocco, and the important lessons learned from these operations. He noted that the Türkiye/Syria response led to a comprehensive operational review and subsequent updates to INSARAG governance and guidelines, culminating in the adoption of the revised INSARAG Guidelines in 2026.

Looking ahead, he emphasized the implementation of the INSARAG Strategy 2026–2030, focused on quality standards, agile response, and localization. He also stressed the importance of incorporating operational feedback from responders to ensure INSARAG tools remain practical and effective in the field, while reaffirming the network's commitment to

humanitarian principles, international cooperation, and its shared mission of saving lives. Colonel-General Suprunovskiy formally invited all parties to participate in the upcoming African USAR Conference in Mombasa in December 2026.

### iii. Americas Region – 2021-2026 Regional Achievements, Reflections, and Priorities Ahead

Mr. Luis Alonso Amaya, Americas Regional Chair, reflected on the progress made across the region in strengthening the implementation of INSARAG procedures, standards and methodologies. He welcomed recent classifications and reclassifications within the region, including progress achieved by Ecuador and Colombia, as well as the successful completion of the INSARAG-recognized National Accreditation Process (IRNAP) in Guatemala, and noted the growing interest of additional countries seeking to advance their national accreditation and classification processes.

He emphasised the importance of regional cooperation in supporting capability development and highlighted the role that international partnerships have played in strengthening training, equipment, preparedness and operational readiness. He noted that the experiences and achievements of classified teams continue to inspire other countries in the region to pursue similar pathways and contribute to a stronger collective response capability.

Mr. Amaya also drew attention to the increasing impacts of hydrometeorological hazards in the Americas, particularly hurricanes, storms and flooding. He welcomed ongoing discussions on flood response within INSARAG and stressed the importance of ensuring that regional capacities continue to evolve in line with emerging risks while maintaining established standards and operational excellence.

### iv. Asia-Pacific Region – 2021-2026 Regional Achievements, Reflections, and Priorities Ahead

Mr. Douglas May, on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Regional Co-Chair Commissioner Steve Smith, thanked the INSARAG Secretariat and the Government of Brazil for hosting the Global Meeting and conveyed condolences to those affected by the earthquakes in Venezuela.

Reflecting on progress since 2021, he highlighted the Asia-Pacific region's efforts to maintain readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic, modernize systems and technology, broaden regional participation, strengthen localization, and integrate lessons learned from major operations. He noted the region's increasing focus on multi-hazard response capabilities, including floods, cyclones, and other complex emergencies, in recognition of the evolving disaster risk landscape. He also acknowledged the Pacific delegation at the Global Meeting and highlighted efforts to strengthen engagement and partnerships across the Pacific.

Mr. May emphasized ongoing investments in training, classification, capability development, and support to local responders, as well as the region's commitment to innovation, partnerships, and inclusive approaches.

Looking ahead, he stressed the importance of ensuring that INSARAG remains effective, adaptable, and fit for purpose, while maintaining the high standards that underpin international cooperation and disaster response.

## Session 2: Strengthening INSARAG Capabilities

## i. INSARAG Guidelines 2026 – Key Revisions, New Modules, Implementation Pathway

Mr. Belit Taşdemir, member of the Guidelines Review Group, presented the 2026 INSARAG Guidelines, highlighting the extensive review process carried out over several years and informed by lessons identified during the Türkiye/Syria earthquake response, governance discussions and contributions from INSARAG working groups.

Mr. Taşdemir explained that the Guidelines have been restructured into five volumes covering policy, national capacity building, operations, classification and reclassification, and field operations. Key revisions include clarification of binding and non-binding elements, strengthened guidance on national capacity building, updates to national accreditation and quality assurance processes, enhanced support for affected countries receiving international assistance and revisions to operational coordination arrangements.

Mr. Taşdemir also highlighted the incorporation of ICMS 3.0, updates to information management procedures, refinement of classification requirements and the inclusion of lessons learned from recent responses. Mr. Taşdemir noted that the Guidelines were endorsed by the INSARAG Steering Group in March 2026 and officially launched during the Global Meeting, with implementation commencing on 1 January 2027.

## ii. ICMS 3.0 – New Features, Field-Tested Improvements, Integration with OSOCC and UNDAC

Mr. Peter Wolff and Mr. Jeff Maunder, Information Management Working Group Co-Chairs introduced ICMS 3.0, describing it as the result of a comprehensive review process following the largest international USAR mobilisation in INSARAG's history during the Türkiye/Syria earthquakes response.

The presenters explained that while ICMS 2.0 had performed effectively, the scale and complexity of recent operations highlighted the need for a more flexible and scalable system capable of managing large volumes of operational information. ICMS 3.0 was therefore designed to improve simplicity, flexibility, low-bandwidth functionality and support decision-making.

The session outlined the new system's capabilities, including simplified worksite identification, enhanced interoperability and improved user interfaces. Participants were informed about the planned transition process, associated training packages and certification pathways for users, with full implementation scheduled for February 2027.

## iii. From Adoption to Operational Readiness: A Classified Team's Perspective

Mr. Patricio Fuentes, CHI-01 (Chile) Team Leader, presented a practical perspective on the development of USAR capability, emphasising that classification should not be viewed as an end goal but rather as one stage within a broader process of continuous improvement.

He described three key phases: the adoption of national capacity, international classification and long-term operational readiness. He explained the relationship between national accreditation processes and INSARAG recognition mechanisms and highlighted the importance of sustained investment in capability development, training and reclassification.

Mr. Fuentes underscored that operational readiness requires continual effort beyond the classification exercise itself, ensuring that teams maintain their capabilities, adapt to new challenges and remain prepared for deployment when needed.

## Part III: Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026

### Session 3: Adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026

#### i. Ambassador Dominik Stillhart, INSARAG Global Chair

Ambassador Dominik Stillhart introduced the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 as the outcome of an extensive consultation process across the INSARAG network. He noted that the Declaration provides the strategic vision and policy direction for the network in the coming years, reaffirming commitment to UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150, the INSARAG Guidelines, and strengthened international coordination of Urban Search and Rescue operations.

He highlighted that the Declaration is aligned with the theme of the Global Meeting and responds to a changing humanitarian landscape marked by climate-related disasters, increasingly complex emergencies, resource constraints, and growing emphasis on nationally and locally led response. The Declaration endorses the INSARAG Strategy 2026–2030 and identifies key priorities including maintaining operational standards, strengthening agility and adaptability, advancing localization and national capacity development, promoting innovation, and enhancing INSARAG's effectiveness in complex humanitarian environments.

Ambassador Stillhart emphasized that stronger local capacity saves lives, underscoring the importance of supporting national USAR development, preparedness, and capacity-building while ensuring that international assistance reinforces national leadership. He further highlighted the value of partnerships, coordinated humanitarian action, and adaptation to climate-related disasters, before presenting the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 for adoption by the Meeting.

#### ii. Mr. Luis Alonso Amaya, Americas Regional Chair

Mr. Luis Alonso Amaya, Americas Regional Chair, on behalf of the Americas Region, expressed support for the adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026, noting that it provides clear direction for the work of INSARAG members and helps strengthen understanding of the roles and responsibilities of countries across the region. He emphasized that the Declaration serves as an important framework for guiding national efforts and supporting countries seeking to develop INSARAG-classified teams operating under common standards, procedures, and coordination mechanisms.

Mr. Amaya highlighted that the Declaration reinforces the humanitarian principles, guidelines, and technical standards that underpin international search and rescue operations. Reaffirming the network's shared commitment to saving lives and supporting people affected by disasters, he encouraged all participants to adopt the Declaration and continue advancing professional, coordinated, and effective disaster response capacities throughout the Americas and beyond.

#### iii. Colonel-General of Internal Service Anatolii Suprunovskiy, AEME Regional Chair

Colonel-General of Internal Service Anatolii Suprunovskiy, AEME Regional Chair, reported that the draft Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 had undergone review within the region and discussed during the AEME regional meeting, followed by further consultations with the Government of Brazil and the INSARAG Secretariat.

Colonel-General Suprunovskiy noted that amendments reflecting the views of regional members had been incorporated into the final text and shared with regional focal points. As no further comments were received, the AEME Regional Group confirmed that consensus had been reached and formally supports the adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 at the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting.

#### iv. Ms. Jennifer Noble, Asia-Pacific Regional Chair

Ms. Jennifer Noble, AP Regional Chair, endorsed the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026, noting that it builds on the progress achieved since the Warsaw Declaration while reaffirming INSARAG's commitment to humanitarian principles, sovereignty, common standards through the classification system, and collaboration with OCHA and the wider humanitarian system. The statement welcomed the INSARAG Strategy 2026–2030, particularly its focus on localization, strengthening national capacities, inclusiveness, gender equality, and enhancing agility in responding to hydro-meteorological and extreme weather events.

Ms. Noble emphasized the importance of maintaining rigorous and achievable standards, supporting communities and local first responders, strengthening interoperability, and ensuring responder safety. Appreciation was expressed to the Government of Brazil for hosting the Global Meeting, to Asia-Pacific members for their collaboration during Australia's chairmanship, and to the INSARAG Secretariat for its continued leadership. The Asia-Pacific region reaffirmed its commitment to supporting implementation of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026.

#### v. Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director Crisis Response Division

Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of the Crisis Response Division, emphasized the importance of prevention, preparedness, and response in addressing increasingly interconnected global challenges, including conflict, climate change, pandemics, poverty, and inequality. Stressing that preparedness is essential in an era of growing uncertainty and compound risks, Ms. Wosornu commended the dedication and professionalism of national and international search and rescue teams, whose work in responses such as the earthquakes in Türkiye and Venezuela has demonstrated the value of readiness, partnership, and rapid action.

Highlighting the importance of international cooperation, the speaker noted that INSARAG embodies the principles of the United Nations by strengthening collective capacity to respond to disasters. The Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 was presented as a reaffirmation of the network's commitment to preparedness, effective emergency response, and principled humanitarian action, while supporting disaster-affected States in leading and coordinating international assistance. Ms. Wosornu concluded by expressing confidence in the network's ability to implement the Declaration and thanked all participants, organizers, hosts, and members of the INSARAG community for their continued commitment to saving lives.

#### vi. Adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026

Lastly, Minister José Solla, Ambassador Dominik Stillhart and National Secretary Wolnei Wolff expressed their gratitude to the regional chairs and OCHA representatives for their support for the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 and formally adopted it by a joint strike of the gavel.

Please find the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 [here](#).

## Part IV: Strategic Objectives

### Session 4: Strategic Objective 1 – Quality Standards

Mr. Martijn Viersma, INSARAG Global Lead, moderated the session.

#### i. State of the classification system: sustainability, growth, quality first and the road to 2031

Mr. David Sochor, IEC/R Quality Assurance Working Group Co-Chair, reaffirmed the importance of the IEC/R process as INSARAG's principal quality assurance mechanism. Mr. Sochor emphasised that classification and reclassification are not competitive exercises, but rather peer-review processes designed to strengthen performance, identify opportunities for improvement and maintain confidence in operational capabilities across the network.

Mr. Sochor provided an update on ongoing efforts to revise the classification checklist, improve flexibility, strengthen the use of technology and enhance support for future classifiers through training, mentoring and quality assurance mechanisms. Particular emphasis was placed on maintaining quality assurance while ensuring that systems remain practical and sustainable.

#### ii. What Classification Meant for our National System: a country perspective

Colonel Esteban Cárdenas Varela, Chief of the Quito Metropolitan District Fire Department, presented online Ecuador's experience of obtaining INSARAG classification. He described the process as a major milestone for national preparedness and institutional development, highlighting its contribution to strengthening coordination, disaster management structures and operational readiness.

He explained that classification had reinforced national systems, contributed to the development of public policies and strengthened Ecuador's capacity to participate in international response efforts. He also noted the value of the process in improving mobilisation arrangements, interagency cooperation and long-term capability planning.

#### iii. Development of SAR Capacity in Arctic Regions

Mr. Timofei Sulima, Deputy Head of Educational and Scientific Department of the Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergency Situations and Disaster Relief (EMERCOM) of Russia, presented developments in Arctic search and rescue capacity within the Russian Federation. Mr. Sulima highlighted EMERCOM's efforts to strengthen disaster preparedness and response across the Arctic through the development of emergency rescue infrastructure, aviation rescue units, and Arctic Integrated Emergency Rescue Centres, including new facilities in Pevek and Sabetta. The presentation also underscored the importance of training and exercises, notably the "Safe Arctic 2025" exercise, which brought together multiple agencies to test responses to a wide range of Arctic-specific emergency scenarios, including transport accidents,

avalanches, oil spills, industrial incidents, maritime emergencies, hazardous materials releases, and aircraft accidents.

The presentation emphasized the value of inter-agency cooperation, innovation, preparedness, and continuous capacity development in addressing the unique risks of the Arctic region. Looking ahead, future exercises are expected to expand their focus to include natural hazards such as wildfires and floods, reflecting the evolving risk landscape and the need for adaptable emergency response capabilities.

#### iv. ERE Frequency and Type

Mr. Martijn Viersma, INSARAG Secretariat, led the moderated plenary discussion on the INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercises (EREs) frequency and type.

Participants recognised EREs as an important mechanism for testing coordination arrangements, interoperability and preparedness across the network. Several participants highlighted opportunities to modernise exercise methodologies through greater use of technology and advanced information management tools. Discussions also considered the balance between maintaining exercise frequency and ensuring that events remain realistic, sustainable and adequately resourced. Suggestions were made to establish the EREs as annual global events that rotate between regions each year. This approach would promote equitable regional participation, facilitate regular testing and validation of procedures, strengthen knowledge exchange across the network, and help distribute the organizational burden more evenly, thereby reducing the workload on both the INSARAG network and the Secretariat.

#### Closing of Day 1:

In his closing remarks for the day, Mr Sebastian Rhodes Stampa reflected on the discussions held across the meeting, including INSARAG's achievements over the past 35 years, developments in capacity building, the adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 and discussions on quality standards and future preparedness. He underscored the network's continued commitment to saving lives and ensuring that INSARAG remains ready to support affected communities through coordination, professionalism and international cooperation.

## DAY 2 JULY 10, 2026

### Session 5: Strategic Objective 2 – Flood Response

Before the start of Session 5 on the second day, the Brazilian representatives and hosts conveyed their appreciation by presenting commemorative tokens to several distinguished individuals.

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, INSARAG Secretary, moderated the session.

#### i. The Flood Response Landscape in Iberoamerica

Mr. Jorge Tamayo, Head of the Secretariat for the Conference of Ibero American National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (CIMHET), highlighted the increasing frequency and impact of hydrometeorological hazards across Ibero-America, noting that floods, storms and

related phenomena account for a significant proportion of disaster losses. He underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation between meteorological services, hydrological institutions and civil protection authorities to improve forecasting, early warning systems and preparedness. He described how regional cooperation mechanisms are helping to harmonise warning systems, improve information sharing and support coordinated action across national boundaries.

## ii. Flood Response in Malawi and Mozambique

Paul Courtney, Training and Assurance Officer with UK ISAR, shared lessons from the team's flood response deployments to Malawi and Mozambique. He described the rapid deployment of specialised water rescue personnel, the rescue of affected populations, support to humanitarian relief efforts, and subsequent capacity-building initiatives undertaken with national partners. Drawing on operational experience, he highlighted the importance of mobility, self-sufficiency, inter-agency coordination, information sharing and early engagement with local authorities and humanitarian partners. He also noted the value of supporting national capacities through training, equipment donations and train-the-trainer approaches following emergency deployments.

## iii. 2024 Southern Brazil Floods

Mr. Wolnei Wolff, National Secretary of Civil Protection and Defense, Ministry of Integration and Regional Development, provided an overview of the devastating floods that struck Rio Grande do Sul State in 2024, affecting 452 municipalities and causing extensive damage to infrastructure, housing and livelihoods. He described one of the largest emergency responses undertaken in Brazil, involving the rescue of approximately 80,000 people and 15,000 animals, large-scale humanitarian assistance and significant investments in recovery and reconstruction. He emphasised the importance of building back better, reducing future risk, relocating communities from high-risk areas and investing in more resilient infrastructure capable of withstanding future climate-related events.

## iv. Rapid Water Rescue at the Piracema Canal – Lessons from the Itaipu Exercise

Lieutenant-Colonel Eduardo Slomp Aguiar, a Commander with the Military Fire Brigade of Paraná State, presented practical lessons from the state's experience in flood response and water rescue operations. Reflecting on deployments during major flooding events in southern Brazil in 2024, he highlighted the evolution of rescue tactics, the role of specialised equipment, including rescue runners, and the value of collaboration between fire services, volunteers and local communities. He stressed the importance of readiness, innovation and operational flexibility in responding to increasingly complex flood emergencies.

## v. Unlocking Funds for Search and Rescue Operations: Mainstreaming SAR into Climate Adaptation

Mr. Luiz de Andrade Filho, Coordinator for Climate Finance, Presidency of the 30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP30), discussed developments since the conference and reflected on evolving approaches to adaptation finance. Mr. Andrade Filho highlighted the growing international focus on adaptation planning, early warning systems and resilience-building measures, as well as efforts to increase adaptation financing. He emphasised the importance of integrating disaster preparedness, risk reduction and emergency response capacities within broader

climate adaptation frameworks and strengthening investments that support prevention, preparedness and rapid response.

## Session 6: Strategic Objective 3 – Strengthening Localization

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, INSARAG Secretary, moderated and introduced the session.

### i. Localization in the Humanitarian Reset

Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of OCHA's Crisis Response Division, highlighted localisation as a central pillar of the Humanitarian Reset, emphasizing the need to move decision-making, resources, and leadership closer to crisis-affected communities. Against a backdrop of growing humanitarian needs and constrained funding, Ms. Wosornu stressed that localisation is both a principled and practical approach to improving the effectiveness and sustainability of humanitarian action.

While acknowledging progress in increasing the representation of local actors and directing greater funding to national partners, Ms. Wosornu noted that significant challenges remain, particularly in ensuring that local organizations are empowered not only to implement responses but also to shape priorities and lead decision-making. Greater direct, flexible, and predictable funding, stronger participation in coordination structures, and improved approaches to risk-sharing were identified as key priorities.

Ms. Wosornu emphasized that local actors are often the first to respond, the last to leave, and frequently the only responders able to maintain access during crises. Concluding, Ms. Wosornu underscored that the success of the Humanitarian Reset will depend on translating commitments into action and advancing genuinely locally led humanitarian response.

### ii. The Bridge to Localization: IRNAP, the Community First Responders Package, INSARAG Capacity Building

Mr. Andrew Shurety, a member of INSARAG's Training Working Group, outlined how the localisation approach in the network can be understood as a progressive pathway that begins with community-level preparedness and first responder capability, then builds through national capacity-development, accreditation and, where appropriate, international interoperability. Mr. Shurety noted that training products such as the Community First Responders Package and First Responder Course provide practical foundations for locally led response, while IRNAP and national accreditation processes support the development of nationally owned USAR capability. Mr. Shurety emphasised that the Training Working Group and the National Capacity Building Working Group have complementary, but distinct roles in supporting this continuum, and that effective localisation depends on aligning training, national systems, standards and partnerships in a coherent pathway.

### iii. Partnerships for Community Resilience and Capacity Building – where The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and INSARAG complement each other

Mr. Nicolas Olivier, Head of the Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, presented the perspective of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, highlighting the importance of local leadership and community-based approaches in disaster response. Drawing on recent

experiences from complex emergencies and natural disasters, including Myanmar, Türkiye/Syria and Libya, Mr. Olivier emphasised that resilient communities depend on strong local institutions, volunteer networks, and sustained investment in preparedness. Mr. Olivier also underlined the value of complementary partnerships between INSARAG, national authorities and humanitarian organisations.

#### iv. Capacity Building in Practice: South-South Cooperation and USAR Capacity Building in the Global South

Minister José Solla, General Coordinator of Humanitarian Cooperation, Brazilian Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reflected on Brazil's growing engagement within INSARAG, describing how the country has progressively expanded its contribution to regional capacity-building efforts. Minister Solla highlighted Brazil's support for IRNAP processes and national accreditation initiatives in several countries across Central America, and reaffirmed Brazil's commitment to strengthening regional capacities through technical cooperation, peer support and knowledge-sharing. Minister Solla stressed the importance of ensuring that countries develop nationally owned capabilities while benefiting from collective regional expertise and solidarity.

#### v. Capacity Building in Practice: UK in Kenya

Mr. Paul Courtney, a Training and Assurance Officer with UK ISAR, presented his organisation's ongoing partnership with Kenyan authorities to support the development of national USAR capabilities. Through a train-the-trainer approach, the programme has focused on strengthening technical competencies, command and control arrangements and readiness in line with INSARAG standards. Mr. Courtney highlighted the importance of long-term partnerships, mentorship, equipment support and local ownership in building sustainable operational capacity.

## Part V: Looking Foward

### Session 7: The Next Chapter: Looking Forward

#### i. INSARAG, the Next Five Years, Looking Forward. opportunities and challenges

Representatives of the INSARAG Working Groups reflected on the implementation of the INSARAG Strategy 2026–2030 and identified future priorities for the network.

The panel discussion included Mr. Belit Taşdemir (Guidelines Review Working Group), Mr. Andrew Shurety (Training Working Group), Mr. Peter Wolff (Information Management Working Group), Mr. David Sochor (IEC/R Quality Assurance Working Group) and Mr. Jeremy Stubbs (Search and Rescue in Flood Response Working Group). It focused on maintaining quality standards, strengthening localisation, enhancing flexibility, improving information management and ensuring that INSARAG systems remain operationally relevant in a rapidly changing risk environment. Participants emphasised the importance of continued collaboration between working groups, regular engagement with team leaders and sustained investment in innovation, training and capacity development.

#### ii. 2026 Initiatives

#### a. Global INSARAG Earthquake Exercise, October, Qatar

Representatives from Qatar introduced the INSARAG Global Simulation Exercise, to be held in Doha and now postponed to 15 March 2027. The exercise will bring together international teams, coordination mechanisms and operational partners in a realistic full-scale deployment environment designed to test international coordination, interoperability, and operational readiness. Participants are invited to join and to contribute to the planning phase of what will be the first exercise of its kind hosted by Qatar. Registration for the event is now open.

#### b. America's Earthquake Response Exercise, December 2026, El Salvador

Mr. Luis Alonso Amaya, Americas Regional Chair, Director General of Civil Protection, Prevention and Disaster Mitigation, El Salvador, presented plans for the 2026 Americas Earthquake Response Exercise. Mr. Amaya explained that the exercise is being designed to strengthen national and regional preparedness, validate coordination arrangements, test interoperability and support institutional learning across multiple stakeholders. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that lessons contribute to long-term improvements in national preparedness, political support and operational capability development.

#### iii. Learning from Türkiye 2023: enhancing coordination, capacity and resilience

Mr. Hamza Taşdelen, Vice-President of the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), Türkiye, provided an overview of the response to the February 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye. He reflected on the scale of the disaster, the mobilisation of international assistance and the significant challenges associated with coordination, infrastructure damage, and information management. He acknowledged the support provided by INSARAG teams and highlighted reforms subsequently undertaken by Türkiye, including expanded search and rescue capacity, increased training investments, strengthened accreditation systems and enhanced preparedness measures. He concluded by emphasising the continued importance of risk reduction alongside response capacity development.

#### iv. Strengthening USAR Capacity in the Pacific

Mr. Puamau T. Sowane, Chief Executive Officer of the National Fire Authority, Fiji; Ms. Litiana Bainimarama of Fiji's National Disaster Management Office; Mr. James Ketaru, Director of the Fire Rescue Service Team, Solomon Islands; Mr. Lusete Laso Mana, Director of the National Disaster Centre, Papua New Guinea; and Mr. Bill Pyalyokao Roo, Chief Fire Officer of the Papua New Guinea Fire Service, highlighted the unique vulnerabilities and operational challenges facing Pacific Island countries.

They underscored the impacts of climate change, geographical isolation, limited resources, and infrastructure constraints, while emphasizing the importance of strengthening local response capabilities, enhancing regional cooperation, and sustaining investment in rescue capacities. Speakers also highlighted successful partnerships with Australia and New Zealand, noting how targeted training, mentoring, and equipment support have contributed to improved preparedness, response capabilities, and resilience across the Pacific region.

#### v. Announcement of the IEC BRA-01 2028

Mr. Martijn Viersma, INSARAG Global Lead, OCHA, announced that Brazil is scheduled to undertake its INSARAG External Classification (IEC) as a Heavy team in 2028

## Part VI: Closing Ceremony

### i. Ambassador Dominik Stillhart – INSARAG Global Chair

Ambassador Dominik Stillhart closed the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting by expressing appreciation to all participants for their contributions, dedication, and commitment to strengthening the INSARAG network. Ambassador Stillhart noted that the discussions and outcomes of the meeting had reaffirmed INSARAG's core values of preparedness, quality assurance, coordination, and life-saving response.

Ambassador Stillhart emphasized that effective coordination is built on trust and remains essential to operational success, while highlighting the need to continue improving response effectiveness, strengthening local capacities, and enhancing cooperation in disaster-prone regions. Ambassador Stillhart underscored the relevance of INSARAG's work not only for urban search and rescue operations but for emergency management more broadly.

Ambassador Stillhart thanked the Government of Brazil, the Military Fire Brigade of Paraná State, the INSARAG Secretariat, Regional Chairs, Working Groups, facilitators, presenters, and all participants for making the meeting a success. He encouraged members to remain actively engaged in sharing expertise and fostering cooperation across the network and expressed his anticipation of continued collaboration at future INSARAG events, including the next INSARAG Global Meeting in 2031.

### ii. Americas Regional Chair

Mr. Luis Alonso Amaya reflected on the successful conclusion of seven days of discussions at the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting in Foz do Iguaçu, highlighting the opportunity for participants from across the world to meet in person and virtually to review progress, exchange experiences, and strengthen the network's collective commitments. Particular emphasis was placed on the adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026, which was presented as a shared roadmap for the future of the network.

Mr. Amaya noted that the world is facing increasingly complex and frequent threats, particularly biological and meteorological hazards, and stressed the importance of understanding vulnerabilities and strengthening institutional preparedness to reduce loss of life. Mr. Amaya emphasized the need for continuous improvement in readiness, response capacities, and international cooperation to ensure more effective assistance to people affected by disasters.

In closing, Mr. Amaya thanked all participants, organizers, firefighters, supporting institutions, the Government of Brazil, and the State of Paraná for their contributions to the success of the meeting. While acknowledging the achievements made, he also highlighted the work that remains ahead and expressed confidence that continued collaboration would enable the network to address future challenges effectively.

### iii. AEME Regional Chair

Mr. Alexey Ivanashko, First Secretary of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Brazil, on behalf of Colonel-General of Internal Service Anatolii Suprunovskiy, the AEME Regional Chair, reflected on the successful conclusion of the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting, noting the large number of participants that have gathered in Brazil to exchange experiences, discuss

new initiatives, and strengthen international cooperation in support of the shared mission of saving lives and protecting affected populations.

He highlighted the long-standing engagement of EMERCOM of Russia within INSARAG, emphasizing its contributions to international response operations and the development of methodologies that support cooperation among rescue services worldwide. Reaffirming Russia's commitment to humanitarian principles, he noted the country's intention to continue contributing to the work of the global rescue community.

The speaker expressed appreciation to the Government of Brazil, the Military Fire Brigade of Paraná State, and the INSARAG Secretariat for the successful organization of the meeting and their hospitality. Secretary Ivanashko concluded by thanking all participants for their contributions and expressed his hope for continued cooperation until the next opportunity for the INSARAG community to meet again.

#### iv. AP Regional Chair

Ms. Jennifer Noble expressed appreciation to the Government of Brazil, OCHA, the INSARAG Secretariat, and all contributors for the successful organization of the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting. Particular thanks were given to Pacific representatives for their participation in the Global Meeting.

Reflecting on the meeting, Ms. Noble noted that discussions took place against the backdrop of the devastating earthquakes in Venezuela and reaffirmed solidarity with affected communities and responders. Ms. Noble highlighted the increasing pressures facing the humanitarian system, the growing frequency and complexity of disasters, and the impacts of climate change, emphasizing the need for INSARAG to remain agile and adaptable while maintaining its high standards.

Ms. Noble reaffirmed the Asia-Pacific region's commitment to strengthening capabilities, supporting national and local capacities, and ensuring that response efforts remain centered on the needs of affected communities. Concluding, Ms. Noble welcomed the adoption of a clear strategy and shared declaration and expressed the region's commitment to working with all INSARAG members to advance the priorities and commitments agreed during the meeting.

#### v. Ms. Edem Wosornu – Director of OCHA's Crisis Response Division

Ms. Edem Wosornu thanked INSARAG members for their continued commitment to humanitarian action and highlighted the increasingly complex challenges facing the humanitarian sector. Reference was made to growing humanitarian needs and resource constraints, which have required difficult decisions across the humanitarian community, while reaffirming a shared commitment to delivering assistance to those most in need.

Ms. Wosornu noted that the recent earthquake response in Venezuela demonstrated the value of coordination, preparedness, and international cooperation, with national authorities and international responders working together to save lives. The critical role of the INSARAG network in strengthening response capacity, sharing knowledge, and supporting effective emergency operations was emphasized.

In closing, Ms. Wosornu underscored the importance of continued collaboration, adaptability, and solidarity across the humanitarian community, expressing confidence that a united

approach would strengthen response capabilities and improve outcomes for disaster-affected communities.

vi. Mr. Wolnei Wolff, National Secretary of Civil Protection and Defense at the Ministry of Integration and Regional Development, Ministry of Integration and Regional Development, Brazil

Mr. Wolnei Wolff, National Secretary of Civil Protection and Defense at the Ministry of Integration and Regional Development, reflected on the successful conclusion of the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting, noting the productive discussions, exchange of experiences, and strengthened cooperation among participants from diverse countries and institutions. He emphasized that beyond the meeting's formal outcomes, participants leave with new knowledge, partnerships, and friendships, which remain among INSARAG's greatest strengths.

Highlighting the increasingly complex nature of disasters, Mr. Wolff stressed the importance of INSARAG's ability to adapt and evolve while maintaining its core principles, standards, and commitment to saving lives. Referring to recent events, including the earthquake response in Venezuela and the ongoing wildfire emergencies in Europe, he underscored the critical value of international cooperation, shared learning, and collective action in addressing evolving risks and humanitarian challenges.

Mr. Wolff expressed appreciation to all organizations and individuals who contributed to the success of the meeting, including Itaipu Parquetec, the Military Fire Brigade of Paraná State, the Federal University of Latin American Integration (UNILA), the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, interpreters, organizers, and technical partners. He concluded by thanking all participants for their contributions, expressing hope that they would take home both valuable experiences and lasting friendships.

vii. Minister José Solla, General Coordinator of Humanitarian Cooperation, Brazilian Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil

Minister José Solla, General Coordinator of Humanitarian Cooperation, Brazilian Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, formally closed the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting, noting that the adoption of the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration 2026 marked the successful culmination of more than eighteen months of preparation and seven days of intensive discussions, collaboration, and engagement in the State of Paraná. He highlighted the Declaration as a key achievement of the meeting and a reflection of the network's shared vision for the future.

Minister Solla thanked all participants for their commitment and contributions throughout the process, extended his best wishes for safe travels and reunions with their families and loved ones, and officially declared the Fourth INSARAG Global Meeting closed.

*Drafted by the INSARAG Secretariat with the guidance of the Global and Regional Chairs and circulated for comments before finalisation.*