



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

ECOSOC, Humanitarian Affairs Segment

Swiss Event, 21 July 2011

Palais des Nations - Room XXV - 13:15-14:45

Light lunch will be provided

**“Enhancing the Effectiveness and Quality
of International Disaster Assistance :
International and Regional Initiatives
to Support Affected States”**



Panelists

- Beat von Däniken, Chief of Staff, Deputy Head of Humanitarian Aid, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- H.E. Evan P. Garcia, Philippine Ambassador, Geneva
- Xavier Castellanos, Director for the Americas, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop, Executive Director, International Council of Voluntary Agencies
- Rudolf Muller, Chief Emergency Services Branch, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Geneva.

With the growing frequency - and intensity - of natural disasters around the world, a government can be quickly overwhelmed by the scale and suddenness of an emergency. No matter how well prepared and resourced, this may be the case even in highly-developed countries as has been witnessed in 2011. Recourse to international assistance may well be essential, in a time-critical emergency, to ensure that sufficient rescue and relief efforts can be launched, not only to save lives, but to meet urgent humanitarian needs, minimize the long-term impact and restore essential services.

Over the years, an increasing array of commendable international rescue and humanitarian response initiatives has grown up to support disaster-affected countries in an emergency, driven by a strong sense of global solidarity and motivation to help those in need. However, in order to maximize the effectiveness of all these different international initiatives, it is critical that they be brought together, interfaced with the national response, and utilized in a coordinated and complementary manner.

This event will bring together a number of international response actors, from governments, the UN system, Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and the NGO community, to share their vision on the importance of a complementary approach

The Swiss government will present its overall approach to enhance humanitarian accountability from a donor's perspective. Moreover, this presentation will include concrete steps taken from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid to improve the effectiveness of its interventions but also include affected States in the emergency response.

H.E. Ambassador of the Philippines will highlight the internal mechanisms an affected government disposes of to face an emergency and the specific needs related to the international relief aid.

The IFRC will present progress in the efforts of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to support states in making themselves more prepared both to expedite and to adequately oversee and monitor international disaster assistance, in particular through domestic implementation of the "Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance" (also known as the "IDRL Guidelines").

ICVA will provide an overview of the various quality and accountability initiatives of the NGO community as they feed into this common vision.

UN-OCHA will close the series of presentations by providing an overview of current initiatives underway in the humanitarian reform process which seek to improve the effectiveness of assistance. The floor will then be open for a discussion on how the various ongoing initiatives could be brought forward.

As a result of sharing best practices, we hope that this panel will support to the work currently taking place in the IASC and across the humanitarian community at large in promoting the importance of strengthening leadership at country level, improved quality and effectiveness of response by all actors, and provide useful lessons learned for stronger coordination.

Ample time will be left following the presentations for an interactive dialogue among those in attendance. Perspectives from states having experienced international disaster response from the perspective of the affected states will be especially welcomed, as well as examples of other initiatives from donor states and other humanitarian actors.