



United Nations
Office for the Coordination
of Humanitarian Affairs

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Humanitarian Aid
European Commission
Directorate General for
Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

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Dear Colleagues of the international humanitarian community,

We are pleased to announce the release and joint launch, in Brussels, of the United Nations Civil-Military Coordination Officer Field Handbook, as already presented to the international Consultative Group on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) at its annual meeting hosted by OCHA in Geneva on 29 November 2007.

With the increase in frequency and complexity of both natural disasters and complex emergencies, as well as a growing involvement by the military to support humanitarian emergency operations, the role of the UN Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Officer has become an important one in all parts of the world.

In the meantime, a number of guidelines and documents have been developed and updated in the international framework of the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group and the Consultative Group on the Use of MCDA. This Field Handbook is a collaborative effort by UN Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) experts and practitioners to translate the principles and concepts of the above guidelines, together with major developments in the humanitarian community, into a practical guide to assist the UN-CMCoord Officer in the performance of his/her daily tasks in the field.

OCHA's Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS), of the Emergency Services Branch in Geneva, is the custodian of this Handbook and other relevant UN guidelines and documents on civil-military coordination and use of MCDA. Further information and material can be found at <http://ochaonline.un.org/cmcs> (e-mail cmcs@un.org).

The development and joint launch of this Handbook in Brussels is an expression of the European Commission's long-standing commitment towards promoting the tools and guidelines on civil-military coordination. The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (DG ECHO - http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm) funded the organization of the technical workshops and the preparatory work for the elaboration of the Handbook.

We trust the UN-CMCoord Officer Field Handbook will become a valuable and practical tool, also for the many other field personnel and partners, in meeting their daily challenges. Our reiterated thanks go to all those who contributed with their time, experience, drafting and comments, to make this possible.

Yours sincerely,

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UN Under-Secretary-General for
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Emergency Relief Coordinator

Louis Michel
European Commissioner
for Development and
Humanitarian Aid