INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

SEVENTH SESSION
OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION GROUP FOR THE TSUNAMI EARLY WARNING AND MITIGATION SYSTEM IN THE NORTH EASTERN ATLANTIC, THE MEDITERRANEAN AND CONNECTED SEAS (ICG/NEAMTWS-VII)

Paris, France
23–25 November 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 48.3, ICG/NEAMTWS, as a primary Subsidiary Body of IOC, is required to report to a Governing Body on its sessions.

The IOC Assembly at its 26th Session will be invited to consider this Executive Summary.

1. The seventh session of the UNESCO/IOC Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (ICG/NEAMTWS-VII) met at UNESCO, Paris France, on 23–25 November 2010.

2. The ICG extended the mandate of the Task Team on the Regional Tsunami Warning System Architecture and established a Task Team on Communication Test and Tsunami Exercises, which will conduct during 2011 Communication Test Exercises involving the Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFPs) and set up procedures for the first NEAM tsunami exercise to be conducted in 2012.

3. The ICG established a Task Team on the Multi-hazard Approach to Coastal Inundation in NEAMTWS, emphasizing the need to link tsunami warning and preparedness with other types or related coastal inundation within a multi-hazard approach.

4. The ICG acknowledged the IOC Sea Level Station Monitoring Facility as hosted by the Flanders Marine Institute (Oostende, Belgium), and notes its importance for the interim provision of data to NEAMTWS’ NTWCs.

5. The ICG encouraged Member States’ data centres to make sea-level data available in real time to NTWCs, e.g., through the Global Telecommunication System (GTS).
6. **The ICG acknowledged** the offer by the German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ) to provide to NEAMTWS members a prioritized automatic earthquake information service on demand and invites NEAMTWS members to make use of such service.

7. **The ICG adopted** the Operational Users Guide, including the revised decision matrix, to guide the Tsunami Exercises, to be reviewed and updated, if necessary, at ICG/NEAMTWS-VIII.

8. ICG/NEAMTWS-VII was attended by about 70 participants from 16 member countries, 2 observer countries and other observer organizations.

ANNEX I

AGENDA

1. OPENING

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION
   2.1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
   2.2 DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR
   2.3 CONDUCT OF THE SESSION, TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION
   2.4 ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

3. REPORTS ON ICG/NEAMTWS INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES
   3.1 REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON
   3.2 REPORT BY IOC SECRETARIAT
   3.3 REPORT BY TOWS-WG
   3.4 REPORT BY THE WORKING GROUPS AND TASK TEAMS
   3.5 REPORTS BY OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

4. IMPLEMENTATION
   4.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF RTWCs and NTWCs
   4.2 TSUNAMI INFORMATION CENTRE (NEAMTIC)
   4.3 UPDATE OF NEAMTWS GUIDING DOCUMENTS

5. PROGRAMME FOR 2011
   5.1 ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED FOR 2011
   5.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS AND TASK TEAMS

6. DATE AND PLACE FOR ICG/NEAMTWS-VIII

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9. CLOSING
ANNEX II

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the North Eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (ICG/NEAMTWS),

Having met for its 7th Session in Paris, France, 23—25 November 2010,

Having reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the NEAMTWS,

Taking into account the recommendations of the 3rd meeting of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG-III) (Lisbon, Portugal, 5-6 May 2010), adopted by the 43rd IOC Executive Council,

Having considered also IOC Resolution EC-XLI.6 on Global Coordination of Early Warning and Mitigation Systems for Tsunamis and Other Sea-level-related Hazards and its request to ICGs to provide TOWS-WG as soon as possible the results of an analysis of the impact of data gaps on the tsunami detection and forecast timeliness and accuracy,

Noting the reports of the Working Groups and the Task Teams of the Regional Tsunami Warning System as well as its draft Operational Users Guide and draft NEAMTWS Development Plan,

Noting the need for all the Members of the ICG to nominate their Tsunami National Contacts (TNCs) and Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFPs) and to provide tsunami forecast points,

Noting furthermore the positive results of the first two communication tests conducted by the candidate Regional Tsunami Watch Centres (RTWCs) in 2010,

Noting with satisfaction the approval by the European Commission of the project proposal concerning the Tsunami Information Centre for the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (NEAMTIC) at the IOC Secretariat for the ICG/NEAMTWS,

Re-emphasizing the urgency of having the NEAMTWS operational in an interim phase as soon as possible and the need to define the architecture of the system to be approved at the next session of the ICG,

Noting the progress made by some Member States in setting up National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWCs) and RTWCs,

Emphasizes the need to link tsunami warning and preparedness with other types or related coastal inundation within a multi-hazard approach.

Acknowledges the IOC Sea Level Station Monitoring Facility as hosted by the Flanders Marine Institute (Oostende, Belgium), and notes its importance for the interim provision of data to NEAMTWS’ NTWCs. Encourages IOC to develop national capacities for real-time quality control and to arrange a direct data transmission capability from this facility to NTWCs and establish a back-up system.

Encourages Member States’ data centres to make sea level data available in real time to NTWCs, e.g., through the Global Telecommunication System (GTS).

Acknowledges the offer by the German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ) to provide to NEAMTWS members a prioritized automatic earthquake information service on demand and invites NEAMTWS members to make use of such service.
Confirms the structure of the working groups for the intersessional period:

- Working Group 1 on Hazard Assessment and Modelling
- Working Group 2 on Seismic and Geophysics Measurement
- Working Group 3 on Sea Level Data Collection and Exchange, Including Offshore Tsunami Detection and Instruments
- Working Group 4 on Public Awareness, Preparedness and Mitigation

Supports the idea that Working Groups 1 and 4 have agreed to consider merging their operations in principle with the priority for the intersessional period to pursue this objective.

Extends the mandate of the Task Team on the Regional Architecture of the Tsunami Warning System until the next session of ICG/NEAMTWS with modified Terms of References as detailed in Annex II.A.

Establishes a Task Team on Communication Test and Tsunami Exercises for the next intersessional period with the Terms of References detailed in Annex II.B.

Establishes a Task Team on the Multi-hazard Approach to Coastal Inundation in NEAMTWS, whose Terms of Reference are detailed in Annex II.C.

Decides to conduct during 2011 Communication Test Exercises involving the TWFPs and to set up procedures for the first NEAM tsunami exercise to be conducted in 2012.

Adopts the Operational Users Guide, including the revised decision matrix, to guide the Tsunami Exercises, and to be reviewed and updated, if necessary, at ICG/NEAMTWS-VIII.

Welcomes the draft document “Reducing and Managing the Risks of Tsunamis” produced by Working Group 4 and requests that it should be made available to the other ICGs and TOWS-WG.

Requests Member States to

- nominate or verify both TWFPs and TNCs, if they have not done so,
- ensure active participation in the Communication Tests and the preparation for the Tsunami Exercises,
- provide their tsunami forecast points, if they have not done so,
- nominate experts to the Working Groups and the Task Teams,
- consider extra-budgetary and in-kind contributions to IOC in support of NEAMTWS, including the NEAMTIC.

Requests the Co-chairs of the Working Groups and of the Task Teams to prepare, in consultation with the Members of their respective Working Groups or Task Teams, a plan of action for the intersessional period and submit it to the IOC Secretariat, if they have not already done so, no later than the end of January 2011.

Thanks Spain for the offer to host the eighth session and decides to organize it in Santander on 23-25 November 2011.
Annex II.A

Terms of Reference of the Task Team on the Regional Tsunami Warning System Architecture

Mandate

Taking account of the NEAMTWS implementation plan, the Interim Operational Users Guide and the Development Plan, the outcomes of working groups and task teams, and of the previous decisions made by the ICG and the work carried out formerly, the Task Team shall:

1. Continue to refine architecture, tools and cooperation for RTWCs, as elements of the technical end-to-end operational structure of the NEAMTWS;
2. Maintain and update the Development Plan and Operational Users guide for the NEAMTWS network

Modus operandi

The Task Team will mainly work by correspondence, but hold a first meeting at the beginning of 2011 and a final one, in preparation for the next ICG meeting. Other meetings will be held as needed.

Membership

- The ICG officers and the chairpersons of the ICG working groups
- Representatives of potential RTWCs
- Experts designated by Member States having interest in participating in the system
- Representatives of relevant organizations working in the NEAMTWS region

The Task Team will have two co-chairs nominated by the Officers of the ICG/NEAMTWS.

Annex II.B

Terms of Reference of the Task Team on the Communication Test and Tsunami Exercises

Mandate

As part of the preparations phase for the NEAMTWS the Task Team on Communication Test and Tsunami Exercises will:

1. Refine procedures for testing the communication of tsunami alert messages between National Tsunami Warning Centres and Tsunami Warning Focal Points, including speed and availability within NEAMTWS region
2. Conduct a Workshop ahead of the enlarged Communication Test to inform about the procedures and discuss the practical means of the Tsunami Exercise in 2012. Participants: NTWC, TWFPs, TNCs, Civil Protection authorities, IT experts, representatives of relevant organizations working in the NEAMTWS region
3. Prepare and conduct the test and organise its assessment
4. Contribute to reviewing and proposing amendments to the relevant parts of the Operational Users Guide in the light of experience with the tests
5. Based on experience gained, set-up procedures for the first NEAM Tsunami exercise to be conducted in 2012

6. Report to ICG/NEAMTWS-VIII

Modus operandi

The Task Team will mainly work by correspondence, but hold a first meeting at the beginning of 2011 and a final one, in preparation for the next ICG meeting. Other meetings will be held as needed.

The offer of JRC to host the workshop is acknowledged.

Membership

- The ICG officers
- Chairs or co-chairs of existing NEAMTWS Task Teams and Working Groups
- Representatives of potential RTWCs
- Experts designated by Member States having interest in participating in the system (NTWC, TWFP, TNC, Civil Protection authorities)
- Representatives of relevant organizations working in the NEAMTWS region

The Task Team Co-chairs will be nominated by the Officers of the ICG/NEAMTWS.

Annex II.C

Task Team on the Multi-hazard Approach to Coastal Inundation

Mandate

Taking account of encouragement by EC-XLIII and TOWS to develop a multi-hazard (MH) approach to tsunami warning systems, where appropriate, the Task Team shall:

1. Identify, in collaboration with relevant bodies, existing national sea-level related warning and mitigation systems in the NEAM region;

2. Explore ways of linking or integrating national tsunami warning functions and existing or planned multi-hazard systems, using the experience gained across NEAM and other ICGs

3. Consider how multi-hazard systems could include prevention, awareness and mitigation aspects of NEAMTWS

4. Explore linkages with existing frameworks for coastal inundation mapping such as, but not restricted to, the EU Floods Directive and the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol of the Barcelona Convention

5. Make specific proposals to ICG/NEAMTWS-VIII for implementation of NEAMTWS functions in a MH framework

Modus operandi

The Task Team will mainly work by correspondence, but hold a first meeting in the beginning of 2011 in Paris and a final one, in preparation for the next ICG meeting
Membership

- The ICG officers and the chairpersons of Working Groups 3 and 4
- Representatives of NTWCs
- Experts designated by member states having interest in participating in the system, including particularly representatives of civil protection authorities
- Representatives of relevant organizations working in the NEAMTWS region

The Task Team will have one chair nominated by the Officers of the ICG/NEAMTWS.