IOC Circular Letter No. 2312
IOC/SC/TSU/UW/SB/PE
(English only)
31 July 2009

To: Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC Member States in the NEAMTWS region
Relevant organizations working with the IOC
IOC Officers

cc: Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
IOC/NEAMTWS Tsunami Focal Points

Subject: Invitation to and preparations for the 6th 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-IV), Istanbul, Turkey, 11 – 13 November 2007

The IOC Twenty-third Assembly decided by Resolution XXIII-14 to create the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (ICG/NEAMTWS). In this connection, I am pleased to invite you to nominate a delegation to attend the Sixth Session of the ICG/NEAMTWS to be held in Istanbul, Turkey from 11 to 13 November 2009. You are invited to communicate the names and positions of your representatives to Ms Forest Collins by email at f.collins@unesco.org with a copy to the Executive Secretary of the IOC, Mr Patricio Bernal, p.bernal@unesco.org, by 20 October 2009 or register online through the NEAMTWS-VI website at http://www.ioc-unesco.org/icg-neamtwsvi.

This session is being hosted by the Government of Turkey and the working language will be English. Participants are encouraged to secure their own financial support to attend this session and are responsible for obtaining their own visas, if necessary. For logistics information and updated documentation prior to the meeting, please refer to the NEAMTWS-VI website listed above.

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The Sixth Session of the ICG/NEAMTWS will elect the Officers of the ICG/NEAMTWS for the next biennium, namely, one Chairperson and two Vice-chairpersons according to the procedure laid down in the attached document. Please bear in mind that the Chairperson and the Vice-chairpersons of an IOC Subsidiary Body shall not remain in his/her mandate more than two successive terms.

The ICG/NEAMTWS currently operates four Working Groups:

- Working Group 1 - Hazard Assessment, Risk and Modelling
- Working Group 2 - Seismic and Geophysical Measurements
- Working Group 3 - Sea Level Data Collection and Exchange, Including Offshore Tsunami Detection and Instruments
- Working Group 4 - Advisory Mitigation and Public Awareness

Member States of ICG/NEAMTWS are kindly requested to nominate experts to the above indicated Working Groups, according to the expertise required to contribute intersessionally to their attached Terms of Reference. Your nominations, addressed to Mr Ulrich Wolf (u.wolf@unesco.org) copied to Ms Patricia Eyzaguirre (p.eyzaguirre@unesco.org) should reach the Secretariat not later than 15 October 2009.

Additionally, I would like to remind you that IOC Resolution XXIII-14 stipulated that the membership of the ICG/NEAMTWS should consist of:

- Member States of the IOC within and bordering North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas;
- Observers from other IOC Member States;
- Invited observers from other organizations (including NGOs), programmes and projects in accordance with the IOC rules and procedures.

The meeting is technical in nature and delegates should be prepared to participate in these technical discussions. A copy of the provisional agenda with its annotation and timetable is appended to this invitation.

In reference to letter DG/2.5/471 dated 2 November 2005 from Mr Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO to your Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you to nominate your 24/7 Tsunami Warning Focal Point (TWFP) and your Tsunami National Contact (TNC), if you have not done it yet. Please communicate this information in writing using the TWPF and the TNC forms (both attached to this invitation).

Please note that the Tsunami Warning Focal Point (TWPF) is the contact person, or other official contact or address, available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to receive and issue tsunami and other coastal hazard-related information, whereas the Tsunami National Contact (TNC) is the contact person designated to represent your country in the coordination of international tsunami warning and mitigation activities. If you choose to designate the same person/contact as both TWFP and TNC, please state this clearly in your forms. Please be aware that both TWPF and TNC must be nominated through your Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Head of UNESCO National Commission or permanent delegation to UNESCO.
Finally, please note that we will begin scheduling assessment missions within the upcoming months. If you are interested in having representatives of the IOC/UNESCO visit your country for the purposes of informing national stakeholders on the requirements for the establishment of a tsunami warning and mitigation system, assessing the available resources and identifying capacity building needs, please let us know.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Sincerely Yours,

Patricio Bernal
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
Executive Secretary, IOC

Attachments:  Provisional Agenda
              Timetable
              Provisional Annotated agenda
              Technical Arrangements for the Elections of the Officers of the ICG/NEAMTWS
              TWFP and TNC Nomination Forms
              Terms of Reference of the Working Groups