INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RELIEF

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An essay on a Ditchley Foundations conference held at Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire, England on the weekend of 19-21 February 1993.

INTRODUCTION

The Ditchley conference on international disaster relief convened at a time when the issue of humanitarian aid to victims of natural and man-made disaster was in the forefront of international public consciousness, perhaps as never before.

Television images of efforts to forestall mass starvation in Somalia and to get food and medicine to besieged war victims in the former Yugoslavia have been seared into the minds of the general public and policymakers. The military have assumed a newly visible leading role in humanitarian aid. Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), NATO and the United Nations are all increasingly consumed with the practice and the politics of relief. As one conference participant put it, "Humanitarian concerns are now - for better and for worse - a part of the mainstream political dialogue". And news of the latest troubles and breakdowns, as well as of the next likely appearance of famine's spectre - in war- and drought-plagued Southern Sudan - faced the conference participants with the arrival of the morning newspaper.

The conference also came near the end of the first full year of operations of the new and much-heralded United Nations structure established to deal with these concerns, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, headed by UN Under Secretary General Jan Eliasson. Amid a general perception that the demand throughout the world for humanitarian assistance to victims of disaster, as well as the pressure on these efforts to produce solid results, will only increase in the months and years to come, the conference participants sought to learn from past failures (and, to a lesser extent, from successes).

The conference was formally charged with a focus limited to response to natural disasters, as distinguished from those attributable to manmade causes such as war and civil unrest. However, this distinction proved less than entirely useful in categorizing and analyzing the effectiveness of responses to today's complex, multi-faceted disasters. The prevalence of, and the need for effective mechanisms to deal with, humanitarian crises having multiple causes and no clear resolution became a central core of the Ditchley conversation.

The overall tone of the conference was somewhat bleak. We found ourselves focusing heavily on the shortcomings of the international response to a mushrooming array of human needs around the world, with a prevailing sense of a system that has largely failed to meet those needs. Introspection and self-criticism were the order of the day for a group of participants drawn from a wide spectrum of non-governmental organizations, donor nations and international organizations.

To an extent this self-criticism reflects a constructive striving for improvement. Sometimes, however, it succumbs to the temptation of invalidating an entire galaxy of efforts that have in the past produced historic breakthroughs and saved millions of human lives and continue to do so today. Finding the proper balance - a balance that challenges rather than stifles - remains a real challenge.

WHAT IS IN STORE?

Looking ahead just seven years to the beginning of the third millennium, it is difficult to project a global scenario without increased levels of conflict, poverty, instability and disaster. Increasing population pressures in many parts of the world, the persistent reality of poverty and chronic hunger for a quarter of the world's people, and the vacuum left by the collapse of a superpower - dominated bipolar world order can only result in increasing vulnerability for many.

In 1989 a Ditchley conference on refugees and migration discussed the extent to which the worldwide explosion of involuntary migration is one of the great issues of our time. While the focus of the present conference was not on the causes of conflict and resulting human tragedy, but rather on the provision of needed humanitarian assistance, it cannot go unmentioned that the dissolution of historical political boundaries and the erosion of the sovereignty and integrity of nation-states in many parts of the world has led to an increased number of people living outside the protections afforded by stable governmental and societal structures.

Even seemingly random "natural disasters" are directly related to the way we live our lives. Deforestation of mountains causes soil erosion and increases the likelihood of landslides in heavy rain. The lack of available land forces poor people to build their homes on steep hillsides in earthquake-prone areas. Seasonal flooding of river basins and deltas becomes

a disaster only because thousands or millions of families live there.

The point of all this is that, as one participants noted, "disasters are about people, not about events. An earthquake is not a disaster in itself. It becomes one when it affects vulnerable people".

With some exceptions, disaster victims are those whose lives are already in stress. Small disruptions in food availability or price can push a poor, chronically hungry family over the edge into the pit of starvation. (Indeed, in most cases of severe famine, food remains available locally. It simply becomes unaffordable.) Strong infrastructures and economic resilience mean the difference between life and death. Drought in Europe or America never means famine. Even the ravages of Hurricane Andrew throughout southern Florida destroyed much more in terms of property than in human life, since the victims were not already living on a precipice. But for the more than one billion people living in poverty around the world, including the millions who are refugees or are internally displaced, there is no safety net.

As the human family continues to grow, putting more stress on resources and pressing people closer together, disasters affecting the survival and well-being of large numbers are likely to become more and more a daily part of the news. Responding to this growing need, and stemming its growth where possible, will be a major challenge facing humanity through the next century.

DISASTER RESPONSE: A CHANGING VIEW

In the past, and to a certain extent today as well, responding to disaster has been seen as a short-term activity with limited objectives and limited impacts. Conference participants recalled that in the 1960s a typical disaster relief effort would last perhaps three months.

This is no longer the case, both because the disasters we face today are larger and more complex, and because our understanding of the dynamics of disaster response itself is changing. Those responsible for responding to disasters have begun to focus attention on what comes before disaster strikes and on what happens in a society after the immediate disaster is over.

There is a growing recognition that the business of responding to disasters is one that must be viewed holistically and as a continuum.

It begins not with the onset of disaster, but with an enhanced local and international capacity to anticipate, prepare for and even prevent the disaster from happening in the first place.

As more and more disasters grow out of conflict, the disruption of civil society and the disintegration of traditional forms of sovereignty, prevention will increasingly mean the active involvement of governments and international organizations in peacekeeping, peacemaking and conflict resolution. While the role of the disaster response community in this domain remains today a limited one, and while a full discussion of these issues was beyond the scope of this conference, there is no doubt that increasing emphasis will need to be placed on what former US President Jimmy Carter has called "Preemptive Conflict Resolution". Taking this a step further, the situations in Northern Iraq, Bosnia and Somalia demonstrate that new approaches to negotiation, mediation and facilitating effective communication are relevant not only to the prevention of conflict, but also to the successful management of complex multilateral disaster response activities.

Specific steps to be taken in prevention and preparedness vary according to the situation and the risk. Planning for flood in Bangladesh, for typhoon in the Philippines, for drought in the Sahel, or for conflict anywhere, require different actions.

The first step, always, is to minimize the vulnerability of the population likely to be affected. This is at its heart a development challenge. People who are healthy, who have enough to eat, who are economically productive, who are not forced by poverty into marginal and environmentally unsustainable livelihoods, and who are enfranchised participants in a functioning society, are much less likely to suffer. Development, along with an improved quality of life, is a key component of preventing disasters. On the other side of the coin, disaster preparation and preparedness are critically important "platforms for development".

The same formula holds true once disaster has struck and responses are being mobilized. Although resources for emergency assistance are generally targeted to the very short term, disaster relief planners are learning to raise their horizons. They need to consider the impact of the disaster (and of the response itself) on the long-term survivability and economic life of affected people. In many cases these long-term effects, including the loss of jobs, lands, seeds and markets, far outstrip in importance the short-term losses of material possessions.

This poses a real dilemma for many in the disaster relief community, forced by funders to limit the scope of activities and to use resources for immediately consumable commodities. Conference participants were deeply concerned that historical distinctions between relief and development assistance create situations in which relief programs save lives, only to leave people more vulnerable and more threatened than they were before the disaster struck.

The dilemma is complicated by the recognition that relief programs themselves can have a negative impact on the long-term sustainable development and well-being of communities. The provision of large quantities of free food, for example, can depress local market prices and discourage local production.

We are moving away from simplistic models of disaster response, applying more sophisticated "systems" approaches which recognize the complex interrelationship of causes and effects, the wide range of unanticipated consequences and the need for a long-term view even when providing short-term assistance. Orderly, "logical" thinking and planning based on a linear, problem-solving approach often falls short of the mark when attempting to deal with complex inherently chaotic systems. There are many lessons to be learned in this arena from the computer-based simulations and modeling undertaken both by

military tacticians and by the scientists and scholars working in the field of systems dynamics. In these disciplines, there is a recognition that inputs do not necessarily yield predictable outputs, and that there will inevitably be breakdowns and failures. As one Ditchley participant noted, "If these situations weren't so difficult to manage, they wouldn't be disasters".

Still, many in the disaster response community, as well as those in political leadership, the media and the general public, remain rooted in the seemingly common-sense notion that "if people are hungry, give them food". Following related and similarly flawed thinking, anything less than a complete success on the first try (and without losses or breakdowns) is no success at all. We have fostered an unjustified and irrational expectation that everything is supposed to work 100 per cent of the time - a notion that military planners (for example) would find laughable. So when reports arise, as they inevitably do, of food rotting on the docks, the response has often been to cut off the giving - rather than to give more to compensate for the losses.

In this, as in many other areas, there is a sense that attitudes *are* changing, and real learning *is* taking place. Still, for many conference participants, the pace of change is frustratingly slow, and battles once fought must be fought again and again.

THE NEED FOR NEED-DRIVEN ASSISTANCE

Among the most dramatic lessons learned in studying responses to disaster throughout the twentieth century is the need to have the response fit the real needs of the situation and the people. To be effective, assistance must be based on careful on-the-ground assessments by teams who know and understand what is really happening.

All too often, inappropriate responses, such as the shipment of useless clothing, food, medicine and equipment, are undertaken simply because such "stuff" is available. The horror stories are familiar: high-heeled shoes to Guatemala in the wake of an earthquake; pork to Muslims during a drought; outdated pharmaceuticals dumped in cartons without discrimination; prefabricated housing shipped at great expense. Well-meaning gestures and "supply-side" pressures from producers and suppliers in donor countries have in the past tended to unbalance the disaster relief equation. Even informed assessors fall prey to this phenomenon, identifying needs that are conveniently met by the goods which just happen to be available. As American writer Mark Twain noted, "To a man with a hammer, the world looks like a nail".

The call for needs-based assistance goes beyond the provision of inappropriate goods. It also relates to the mechanisms used for aid distribution. Again, with an eye on the long-term impact of disaster responses, there is a growing movement to look at local formal and informal market structures as primary channels for assistance and tools for fighting famine. Relief planners now look not only at stockpiles of food, but at local prices. Cash and commodities are seen as tools to stabilize food availability and affordability, and once-accepted methodologies which established parallel or alternate distribution channels for relief supplies are increasingly being called into question.

RESPONDING TO DISASTER: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Underlying this shift in thinking is an enhanced recognition of the primary significance of local capacity to respond to disasters and to restore the fabric of life. In the words of one participant, "We almost always underestimate the importance of local coping mechanisms". Put more positively, while international donors are busy putting together plans and raising funds, individuals, families and communities, working with local NGOs and governments, are undertaking the most critically needed actions to mitigate disaster and rebuild shattered lives. They are always the primary actors, doing everything they can do to make things work. This is just as true in the wake of a devastating cyclone in Bangladesh as it is in the streets of Sarajevo. It applies as well in drought - farmers know what they must do to survive, and when they can, they do it.

(It was pointed out with some irony that in spite of the broad diversity of perspectives and wealth of experience represented around the table, the discussion at Ditchley was necessarily limited by the lack of representation from the developing nations and the host-country organizations that are on the front lines of responding to disasters and interfacing with international donors.)

Responding to disaster represents at its heart an effort to assist human beings - to enable stricken people to survive a crisis and restore themselves to a course of life with some semblance of normality. Yet it is all too easy to lose the faces of these people in the midst of technical discussion of international structures and modalities of aid delivery. It is easy to lose sight of the strength, the dignity and the human worth of those we are pledged to aid. It is easy to depersonalize them - to label them as "victims" and to treat them as helpless objects of *our* benevolence.

The prevailing theme and guiding principle echoed resoundingly by conference participants is that international relief efforts should "enhance the capability of local people, organizations and governments to respond effectively to disaster and to meet their own needs on a sustainable basis". In many cases, the role of the international community is shifting, from "provider" to "enabler", and recognizing local *responsibility* implies international support to strengthen local *ability to respond.*

Many at Ditchley pointed out that this recognition of the primary responsibility of local structures is itself a double-edged blade, citing those cases in which governments fail to acknowledge and fulfil their own responsibility for the protection and well-being of their citizens. This "flip-side of sovereignty" is at the heart of current debates about the relationship between traditional concepts of territorial sovereignty and international law in the form of human rights norms and the humanitarian imperative. When is it acceptable to override the stated wishes of a sovereign entity to provide assistance to

individuals or groups? When can or should force or the threat of force be used to impose the will of the international community on an unwilling national government? What is the basis for this kind of action, and how does it relate to accepted standards of international humanitarian law? What does this mean for the role of the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and indeed for the very notion of sovereignty in the future? While full consideration of these questions was far beyond the scope of our conference, many participants highlighted these issues as an increasingly significant concern.

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

These questions of sovereignty also relate intimately to another set of issues discussed at Ditchley: the appropriate use and role of military forces as agents for the delivery of humanitarian aid. With recent (and continuing) case studies in Northern Iraq, Somalia and Bosnia in view, discussions reflected once again a strong diversity of perspectives. These differences were not always predictable, nor were they easily attributable to the particular institutional viewpoints represented by conference participants.

Military participation in relief activities has usually been focused either on the provision of protection and security for civilian humanitarian assistance in unstable or conflict-prone situations, or on the provision of logistical capacity, equipment and personnel in direct humanitarian relief missions.

In the first case, the military action bears a close relationship to peacekeeping and peacemaking operations, while in the second case, military units are acting essentially as contractors, albeit uniquely skilled and equipped ones.

In neither case should military involvement be undertaken lightly. Several participants pointed out that the participation of military forces inevitably changes the character of a humanitarian operation. Military organizations are structured and organized for other functions and purposes. Concerns were expressed by both military and civilian participants that the mixing of agendas could threaten the integrity of both military and civilian missions.

At the same time it was widely recognized that the military is uniquely qualified to fulfil critically-needed humanitarian assistance functions, and that there are times when there is no viable alternative if aid is to reach people in need. In these cases, it was suggested that a sound legal basis and clear mandates are needed for such activity, and that NATO and other regional military organizations can play important roles - both in providing credible multinational political and military capability, and in engaging in effective crisis management. The importance of a sound cooperative relationship between military and civilian organizations is key. The experience in Northern Iraq, characterized by a high level of open communication, flexibility and innovation, might serve as an important example of how this relationship can work.

Military planners cautioned that the participation of military units in humanitarian missions must be based on carefully defined, limited and achievable objectives. Other participants noted that an open-ended reliance on the military can become extremely expensive and perhaps not cost-effective.

There is yet another aspect of military involvement to be considered. Much of the self-criticism of the NGOs and donor organizations relates to a lack of consistent professional and technical skills in logistics, communication, transportation and other tactical skills commonly associated with military units. It has been suggested that the civilian disaster response community can learn needed skills from the military, both in specific needed disciplines and in the broader arena of strategy and planning for goal-oriented "campaigns". (The relevance of these disciplines and approaches can perhaps be measured by the prevalence of military analogies in the discussion of relief activities. Aside from the lack of a traditional military objective, there are many similarities between traditional military operations and humanitarian relief operations.) This "technology transfer" can be accomplished both through training and through the secondment of military personnel to civilian relief organizations.

LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

Discussion at the conference swung back and forth from the high ground of principles to the mundane practicality of operational realities, or, again using a military analogy, from grand strategy to the tactics of hand-to-hand combat.

Among the issues most discussed was the role in disaster relief of the United Nations, and particularly of the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) created by General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991. This Department was formed to act for the Secretary General in coordination of all humanitarian activity of the UN and its specialized agencies, superseding the old UN Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO).

There is virtually no disagreement that the UN has a critical, central role to play in providing leadership for sensitive and complex international humanitarian efforts. There is also little debate on the proposition that the UN DHA has not functioned nearly as well as it needs to in fulfilling its leadership role. Indeed an almost palpable frustration and sense of powerlessness characterized these discussions, as if the participants did not hold out much hope for improvement, at least in the short term and barring a drastic reform of the entire United Nations system.

The debate about the role of DHA was lively, and many specific recommendations were proposed to strengthen its performance, including (but not limited to) the creation of streamlined administrative and financial procedures, a flexible and responsive staffing mechanism, a clearer focus of the DHA mission on coordination in complex disasters, stronger quick-response funding mechanisms and a unified needs-assessment function. Participants noted, though, that what is needed most of all

is "broad vision and a willingness to think beyond the conventional".

The discussion reflected an underlying tension that is not easily to be resolved. At its heart, this is a structural tension between the need for strong leadership to bring together and efficiently to mobilize the diverse array of institutions involved in complex relief efforts, and the jealously guarded independence of those institutions. As one conference participant stated it, "Everyone wants coordination, but nobody wants to be coordinated".

There is a related tension between the felt desire for clear and unambiguous structural solutions to the challenges of quick, coordinated response and the equally felt need for flexible, dynamic mechanisms capable of changing their own shape, size, and structure to generate dynamic solutions in fluid and quick-changing situations.

Neither of these tensions is amenable to quick solutions or simple answers. Conference participants recognized that, in a certain sense, the quest for a structure to meet all needs is at its heart a quixotic one. And while nobody has suggested that DHA is "the last, best hope" for a strong and responsive UN focus, there was a clear sense that a limited window of opportunity exists right now to strengthen the DHA, and through it, the entire international disaster response system. If DHA is to fulfil its mandate, "to get things moving", the time is now. Few at Ditchley doubted the warning that there are not many months left in which to act.

Ultimately, this dialogue led back to a set of larger, centrally relevant questions: Can DHA become something larger than just another UN agency? Can it be the home for more than the bureaucratic and administrative functions which, while important internally to the UN, don't make a difference outside its halls and walls? Can it "Fulfil the underlying passion of the General Assembly Resolution" by providing true leadership, bringing together the diverse interests and institutions which constitute the disaster response community? Can it move beyond "Consolidated Appeals" presented by specialized agencies to potential donors and begin to spark "Consolidated Strategies" which incorporate the array of resources and skills available to meet defined needs? Can it include within its purview the NGO community, recognizing not only their critical role as effective implementors of aid programs, but also their stature as full partners with vital links to the on-the-ground situation and key constituencies in donor nations? Can it replicate on a regular basis the 1987 experience in Ethiopia, generating unified needs assessments and dynamic operational planning focused on clearly articulated goals and strategic objectives, mobilizing concerted action to produce extraordinary results?

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

The Ditchley conference on international disaster relief spun many rich threads, not all of which have been woven into this imperfect narrative. All lapses, omissions and inadequacies which may be found in this essay should be attributed to the failures of the author, and not to the conference deliberations themselves.

Several important points and themes have inevitably slipped through the cracks of this writing, or have not received due emphasis. Among these are the following, presented here without even the most thinly disguised attempt at constructing a logical framework:

- There is a great need for enhanced *informal* mechanisms of information sharing, communication and cooperation among NGOs, donor organizations and the UN system, particularly in the needs assessment phases.
- Under the heading of disaster prevention and preparedness, special efforts need to be directed toward *anticipating potential disasters* before they become disasters. Having said this, it is necessary to confront and wrestle with the political realities and competing priorities which make it very difficult to generate resources for a crisis before it occurs.
- Much heat, and somewhat less light, surrounds the issue of the *institutional visibility* that is sought by donor oganizations and NGOs as part of their effort to generate and justify increased funding and contributions. This "flag-waving" and the concerns raised about its negative impact on programmatic integrity, efficiency and inter-agency cooperation, is part of the continuing tug-of-war between the need to build, mobilize and validate constituencies on one hand, and the importance of melding into a seamless web of collaborative action to ensure maximum program efficiency and effectiveness, on the other hand.
- Similarly, *the role of the media* - both positive and negative - is a favourite topic for many. Linked closely to the issue of "flag-waving" discussed above, the challenge of working with the media to generate appropriate and timely support for humanitarian assistance without skewing the relief effort or violating the dignity and humanity of vulnerable people remains an important concern. Much more work needs to be done in this area, beginning with efforts both to educate the media about the dynamics of disaster and to educate ourselves about the dynamics of the news and "the journalistic imperative".
- There is a growing recognition of the need to look closely at our own capacity and skills, and to work to develop programs of *professional training* for those who will make disaster response service their career.

Finally, we need to strengthen the *institutional memory* of our organizations to make sure that the lessons learned by hard experience are not lost. We need to become what US management writer Robert Waterman has called "Learning Organizations". As part of this, we need to recognize the importance of standing on the accomplishments of the past in order to become more effective in the future.

There will be droughts, such as the one which spread across much of Southern Africa in 1990. But we are learning that drought does not have to lead inexorably to famine.

There will be infestations, such as the ones that struck the Sahel in 1989. But we are learning that a plague of locusts does not necessarily have to lead to a harvest of human suffering.

There will be hurricanes, cyclones and typhoons. But we are learning that, with preparation, the toll of these events can be limited.

Families and communities, governments, non-government organizations and international donors can all claim credit for minimizing the impact of disaster.

In India, where two million people died in the Bengal famine of 1943, a sophisticated early warning system, combined with an array of pre-planned programmes ready for deployment by government in times of drought, has built a strong resistance to famine in the villages. As a result, the even more severe drought of 1987 did not kill.

In Ethiopia in 1987, lessons learned in India and in the Ethiopian famine of 1984-85 were applied as early warning systems signaled the onset of another major drought. Quick and concerted action by the Ethiopians themselves, the NGOs and the international community resulted in an unprecedented victory for humanity - a famine that did not happen.

In 1990, drought throughout Southern Africa produced estimates that millions might face starvation. Governments, donors and NGOs went into action to mitigate the disaster. As a result, large-scale drought-related deaths once again did not occur.

NGO and government-operated early warning systems, prepositioned emergency relief, seed banks, work projects, intensive health and nutrition monitoring, and distribution of supplies to people in their villages to avoid the mass migrations and encampments that breed death and disease, all represent tested and successful approaches to disaster prevention.

Yet often these lessons are not seen to be as compelling as they could, or should, be.

A television camera, seeking to capture gripping images, sees nothing. The pictures, of people working, eating and continuing their daily lives, are of a disaster that did not happen. It is, in media terms, a non-event. It does not spark action. Even where disaster does strike, and where relief is being provided, the camera will naturally swing toward the people not being reached rather than those who are being reached.

Furthermore, our own inherent caution makes it difficult to acknowledge the impact of this work. Looking back on a disaster that never happened, some wish to minimize the extraordinary achievement, saying that "our estimates were wrong" or that "we failed to consider the strength of local coping mechanisms".

In essence, the disaster response community has placed itself in a "no-win" position - if tragedy occurs, it is attributed to a failure of the international community to anticipate and prepare. If, however, the tragedy does not occur, we say that there was never a real threat in the first place.

This, we recognize, is a serious mistake. In the end, the consequences of refusing to acknowledge and learn from what we have done right can be just as grave as failing to learn from what we have done wrong.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman: **The Rt Hon the Lord Hunt of Tanworth GCB** Chairman: Banque Nationale de Paris plc (1980-), BNP UK Holdings Ltd (1991-); Director: IBM (UK) Ltd (1980-90); Advisory Director, Unilever plc (1980-90); Chairman, The Tablet Publishing Co Ltd (1984-); Chairman, Disasters Emergency Committee (1981-89); Deputy Secretary and First Civil Service Commissioner, Civil Service Department (1968-71); Second Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office (1972-73); Secretary to the Cabinet (1973-79); Chairman, Inquiry into Cable Expansion and Broadcasting Policy (1982); Chairman, Prudential Corporation plc (1985-90)(Deputy Chairman 1982-85); a Governor, The Ditchley Foundation, (Chairman 1983-91).

Mr Michael Aaronson Director, Overseas Department, The Save the Children Fund, London.

Mr Jose A Aponte American Red Cross: General Manager of International Services (1990-)(Director 1986-90); International Services Officer, Red Cross national headquarters (1980-86); Chapter and Division Manager (1977-78); Director of Disaster Services, Puerto Rico Chapter (1971-77); Leader of team to Mexico's earthquake area and leader, international relief efforts following Gulf War; American Red Cross Representative at conferences in Central and South America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Middle East.

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Mr Fred Cuny Chairman of Board of Trustees, The Centre for the Study of Societies in Crisis Inc; previously President, City & Regional Planner, Frederick C Cuny & Associates, Dallas; Visiting Professor, Engineering and Public Affairs, School of Urban & Public Affairs, Carnegie Mellon University; Executive Director, INTERTECT International Technical Consultants in Emergency Management, Dallas; President, Quetzal Aircraft Co, Dallas; member: Advisory Committee, International Decade of Natural Hazard Reduction, National Academy of Sciences; Advisory Board, Refugee Policy Group; Earthquake Engineering Research Institute; Wind Engineering Research Council Inc; Editor, (USA) *Disasters, The International Journal of Disaster Studies and Practice*; Senior Adviser, Development of Strategies for and Management of US Relief Effort to States of the Former Soviet Union (1992); Consultant, Somalia-Kenya Emergency Assessment Mission (1992).

Mr Peter J Davies President and CEO, InterAction (the American Council for Voluntary International Action)(an association of 148 international private voluntary organisations engaged in international humanitarian efforts) (1984-); Director, Food for Peace Programme, Agency for International Development Mission to Brazil (1968-71); Programme Director, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region (1972-76); President, Meals for Millions/Freedom from Hunger Foundation (1976-84).

Dr Ian Davis Deputy Director, Disaster Management Centre, Oxford Brookes University (formerly Oxford Polytechnic) (1989-93); Member: Committee on International Disaster Assistance, National Academy of Sciences, Washington DC (1976-78); International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), UK Coordination Committee (1993); Board of Management (1973-78 and 1993-) Overseas Committee, TEAR FUND; Board of Directors, International NGO Training and Research Centre (1991-93); Honorary Fellow, Oxford Brookes University (1991-); UK delegate to Nadir Committee of EC Climatology and Natural Hazards programme (1992-93); Advisor to UNDRO (DHA/UNDP Disaster Management Training Programme (1990-93).

Ms Patricia Diaz Dennis Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs (1992-93); Attorney, American Broadcasting Company, Hollywood, California (1978-83); Member of Board, National Labor Relations (1983-86); Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission (1986-89); Partner and Chair, Communications Section, Jones, Day, Reavis & Pague (lawyers), Washington DC (1989-91); Vice President, Government Affairs, Sprint, Washington DC (1991-92).

Mr Geoffrey Dennis Director, International Operations, British Red Cross, London.

Mr Jonathan Samuel Deull Programme Consultant, Search for Common Ground (Washington-based organisation which fosters new approaches to solving seemingly intractable conflicts) (1983-); President, Worldworks Communication Inc; previously, Director of Education and Outreach and Director of Washington Office, Save the Children (USA); launched major relief, reconstruction and development programmes in Thailand and Cambodia (1980), Somalia (1981 and 1984), Ethiopia (1984 and 1988).

Mr Arthur E Dewey Director, Office of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance for the Newly Independent States (NIS), US Agency for International Development, Washington DC (1991-); Office of the Defense Advisor, US Mission to NATO, Brussels (1977-78); Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs, Washington DC (1981-85); UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (1986-90); Director, International Development Programme, International Foundation, Washington DC (1990-91).

Mr Al Doerksen Executive Director, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Winnipeg MB (a coalition owned by 12 church partners which collects grain donations directly from Canadian farmers, as well as cash contributions and negotiates matching funding from CIDA - $21 million Cdn in '92); Development/Business Consultant (1981-90); Country Representative/ Director, Mennonite Central Committee, India (1981-84); Programme Manager, Mennonite Economic Development Assn, Winnipeg (1984-87); Vice President & President, Menno Travel Service Ltd, Winnipeg (1984-90); Moderator, Fort Garry MB Church, Winnipeg (1984-88); Secretary-Treasurer, IDE International Development Enterprises (1985-91); Member, Mennonite World Conference Organising Committee (1987-90).

Mr Michael Elmquist Director of Civil Emergency Planning Directorate, NATO Brussels and Chairman, Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee (1987-); Jan '91 responsible for organising NATO's assistance to Turkish Civil Defence during Gulf War; January '92 responsible to Secretary General for NATO's contribution to coordination of humanitarian assistance to Former Soviet Union; Staff Officer (General Policy), Civil Emergency Planning Directorate, NATO Brussels (1978-84); Head of Division, responsible to Director General for coordination of all civil emergency planning activities, Danish Civil Defence and Emergency Planning Agency (1985-87)(Staff Officer 1976-78).

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Mr Julian Hopkins National Director, CARE BRITAIN, London (1988-); Executive Director, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)(1978-82); General Manager, Charity Christmas Card Council (1982-83); Finance Director, War on Want (1984-88).
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Herr Dietrich Läpke Head of Operations Division, Technisches Hilfswerk (THW) Germany, (Federal German Relief Organisation); Chairman, UN Advisory Group, Africa-Europe.
The Hon David MacDonald PC MP Member of Parliament (Progressive Conservative), Toronto-Rosedale (1988-) (for Egmont PEI 1968, 1972, 1974 and 1979 and Prince PEI 1965); Pastor, Alberton United Church, Western Prince Edward Island (1962-65); Programme Director and Special Adviser to Leader of Opposition (1982-83); Canadian Emergency Coordinator/African Famine (1984-86); Ambassador of Canada to Ethiopia, Sudan and Djibouti (1986-88); Special representative to Organisation of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa(1986-88); Chairperson: Standing Committee on Environment (1989-); Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on AIDS (1989-).
Sir Michael Marshall DL MP Member of Parliament (Conservative), Arundel (1974-); President, Inter-Parliamentary Council, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU); Member, House of Commons Select Committee on Defence (1982-87); Chairman, All-Party Parliamentary Information Technology Committee; Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Industry (1979-81); Chairman: Parliamentary Space Committee (1982-); IPU (1987-90)(Vice Chairman 1985-87); Parliamentary Information Technology Committee (1986-)(Vice-Chairman 1982-86); Parliamentary Adviser: British Aerospace (1982-); Cable & Wireless (1982-).
Mr Michael Mispelaar Team Leader, Food Security Unit, (1990-92); Commodity Assistance and Emergencies Advisor (1989-90) CARE, Canada; Regional Coordinator, CARE, Somalia (1982-84); Chief of Operations for Government of Mozambique/CARE's Logistical Support Unit (1987-89), (Provincial Logistical Office 1984-86; Manager, Commodity Section 1986-87); CARE, Canada.
Mr Paul Montacute Director, Division of Baptist World Aid (Youth Department)(1990-)(Chairman 1985-88), Baptist World Alliance (BWA), McLean, Virginia; member: BWA General Council, Executive Committee; Commission on Ministry of Laity; Christian Education workgroup; Promotion & Development Commission (1985-90); Congress resolutions committee (1989); European Baptist Federation Youth Committee Executive (1983-89); National Youth Officer, The Baptist Union of Great Britain (1982-90); Director, CARE, USA; Founding member, Church Action with the Unemployed; Past Chair, English Churches youth services.
Dr David N Nabarro CBE Chief Health and Population Adviser, Overseas Development Administration, London.
Professor Jean-Luc Nahel Vice-President, Médecins sans Frontières; Professor of Anthropology, University of Rouen.
The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Pattie MP Member of Parliament (Conservative), Chertsey and Walton (1974-); Vice Chairman, Conservative Party (1990-); Joint Chairman, GEC-Marconi (1991)(Chairman 1990); Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence for the RAF (1979-81); for Defence Procurement (1981-83); Minister of State: for Defence Procurement (1983-84); Department of Trade and Industry (for Information Technology)(1984-87).
The Hon Lawrence Pezzullo Executive Director, Catholic Relief Services (1983-); former Ambassador to: Nicaragua (1979-81), Uruguay (1977-79); Diplomat in resident, University of Georgia (1981-82).
Gen. Sir David Ramsbotham GCB CBE ADC Gen Adjutant-General, Ministry of Defence, London (1990-); Aide-de-Camp General to the Queen (1990-); Director, Public Relations (Army) (1982-84); Commander: 3 Armd Division (1984-87); UK Field Army and Inspector-General Territorial Army (1987-90); Colonel Commandant, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets (1987-); Honorary Colonel, Cambridge University Officer Training Corps.
The Hon Sir Peter Ramsbotham GCMG GCVO Chairman, World Memorial Fund for Disaster Relief (1992-); Chairman, Ryder-Cheshire Foundation for the Relief of Suffering (1982-); High Commissioner, Nicosia (1969-71); Ambassador to: Iran (1971-74); US (1974-77); Governor and Commander in Chief of Bermuda (1977-80); Trustee, Leonard Cheshire Foundation (1981-); a Governor, The Ditchley Foundation.
Mr Anthony D Redmond Consultant/Senior Clinical Lecturer, Trauma/Accident and Emergency Medicine, North Staffordshire Royal Infirmary.
Mr Graham Sims Senior Adviser, European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), Commission of the European Communities.
Admiral Sir Jock Slater GCB LVO Vice Chief of Defence Staff (1993-); Assistant Director of Naval Warfare, Ministry of Defence (1979-81); Commander, HMS Illustrious (1982-83); Captain, School of Maritime Operations and Commander, HMS Dryad (1983-85); Rear Admiral (1985); Assistant Chief Defence Staff (Policy and Nuclear) (1985-87); Vice-Admiral (1987); Flag Officer, Scotland and Northern Ireland and NATO Commander Northern sub area Eastern Atlantic, Commander Nore sub area Channel and Naval Base Commander, Rosyth (1987-89); Chief of Fleet Support (Member, Admiralty Board), (1989-91); Commander-in-Chief, Fleet, Allied Commander-in-Chief, Channel, and Eastern Atlantic (1991-93).

Mrs Julia Taft Consultant, State Department, Office of Coordinator/CIS Assistance (responsible for developing projects targeted toward families of Russian military) (1992-); Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Development, Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1973-77)(Director, Interagency Task Force for Indochina Refugees, Department of State 1975-76); Consultant to White House (1977-78); Project Director, New TransCentury Foundation (1979-79); Acting US Coordinator for Refugees and Director, Refugee Bureau, Department of State (1981); Public Project Consultant (1982-85); Director, Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance, Agency for International Development (1986-89); member, Board of Directors, International Rescue Committee.

Mr Tony Vaux Co-ordinator, Emergencies Unit, Oxfam.

Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent GBE KCB DSO Chairman of Military Committee, NATO (1993-): Commander, Royal Military College of Science (1940-83); Master-General of the Ordnance, Ministry of Defence (1983-87); Chief of the Defence Staff (1991-92)(Vice Chief 1987-91); Colonel Commandant, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (1981-87); Royal Artillery (1983-); a Governor, The Ditchley Foundation.

Dr Peter Walker Head, Disaster Policy Department, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva.

Mr Kenneth Westgate Director, Cranfield Disaster Preparedness Centre, Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham.

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