

Document 1. INTRODUCTION AND BRIEFING

Distribution to:

- Directing Staff of Exercise;
- Exercise Observers.

**INTRODUCTION AND BRIEFING FOR
SIMULATION EXERCISE:**

**MITIGATION PLANNING IN THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT
TO REDUCE THE RISK OF INLAND FLOODING.**

...games set up a 'free space' which participants can use to experiment with new roles or variations of their present roles....it is a space where norms of validity are suspended and totally new approaches to the real world can be formulated.

Burkhart Holzner

...a good game will drive itself. In some exercises the facilitator is constantly saying, "Now this is the next step" But a good game takes on a life of its own.

Barbara Steinwacks

1. CONTEXT

This document is the first of a set of papers that comprises an interactive Simulation Exercise in Disaster Management which is concerned with the development of a major national flood protection programme.

This document, No.1, is to be read by the directing staff of the exercise, and NOT by the participants before the exercise, although the directing staff may wish to distribute this when the exercise is complete where the participants are potential trainers. All the other documents, set in the format of letters, SIT REPS, etc. to encourage a sense of reality, are for distribution in accordance with precise instructions at the top of each document.

A full listing of all the exercise documents is attached as Annex No.1. to this document.

2. AIMS OF EXERCISE

This simulation exercise has been created to assist participants to a better understanding of some aspects of the social, technical, political and environmental dynamics of disaster mitigation and to test basic skills in leading and participating in a government convened meeting.

It is up to the directing staff to decide how to use this set of aims. It is important not to interfere with the simulation of a meeting by artificially informing participants of the 'learning objectives' in a direct manner; this could easily distort the manner in which the exercise is followed. However the various aims are communicated, it is important that they are stated in a natural, rather than artificial manner. For example, if this meeting was to be actually convened to discuss a Flood Action Plan, any discussion on aims would relate to achieving the task in hand, and not to the satisfaction of learning objectives.

Some of the aims that follow have been incorporated into the exercise, where they will hopefully surface in a subtle, unobtrusive manner. The authors have several suggestions for sharing aims with participants so that they establish their own objectives:

- The day before the exercise, ask participants to write down their own aims in undertaking the forthcoming simulation
- For the Directing Staff to write them on wall posters and put these up the day before the exercise, then leave them there without drawing attention to them
- Discuss the objectives noted below, with any extra suggestions during the post-exercise reporting session

Therefore, whilst the participants may not be fully informed about the objectives prior to the exercise, it is vital for the Directing Staff to be crystal clear. We suggest that there are three broad aims:

2.1 UNDERSTANDING THE INTERESTS OF THE VARIOUS PARTICIPANTS

- priorities, roles and inter-relationship of the various national and international interested groups who contribute their resources, and remain concerned over policy directions in the implementation of a major mitigation project. (i.e. National Country, Donor Countries, the UN System, NGO groups, Technical Consultants and Academic/Research Groups)
- opportunities and constraints of the UN system in the development of mitigation plans

- identification of conflicting perceptions and viewpoints and the possibility of resolving opposing positions in mitigation planning

2.2 UNDERSTANDING MITIGATION PLANNING

- awareness of the range and nature of mitigation measures: environmental, structural and non-structural
- costs of protection in social, economic and financial terms
- linkages of development to mitigation and vice-versa

2.3 IMPROVING MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- development of organisational skills: chairmanship, cooperative teamwork, listening, problem analysis, rapid synthesis, assertiveness, being flexible whilst maintaining direction, coordination, conflict resolution and forming a consensus

3. ORGANISING THIS SIMULATION EXERCISE

To ensure maximum effectiveness, it is important to follow the following advice very carefully:

3.1 TIMING OF EXERCISE

The exercise has been planned for use within a Training Workshop on Disaster Management. Ideally, it should be timed to come just before or after workshop sessions on the theme of Disaster Mitigation. There are arguments for either position in a programme, but the authors generally favour its use immediately before a session on Disaster Mitigation since the exercise is likely to provoke ideas and raise issues in anticipation of them being covered in the workshop.

3.2 ALLOCATING ROLES, TWO APPROACHES

There are two approaches to casting the roles in this exercise:

'STATUS-QUO APPROACH': PRACTISING EXISTING ROLES

As far as practical cast people according to their present jobs, to provide useful practice in managing a specific disaster management situation in a familiar manner. With this pattern the exercise can run very smoothly, with good decisions being made that are well within the participants's levels of competence.

'CONTRAST APPROACH' : UNDERSTANDING ANOTHER POSITION

Do the precise opposite of the above approach. Deliberately change roles from normal work patterns so that participants are confronted with a new level of decision making, or in seeing things from the very different standpoint of another agency or government. Placing participants in inexperienced roles can result in some unpredictable decisions in the meeting, but these can be used to good effect in subsequent reporting from the exercise observers.

EFFECTIVE CHAIRMANSHIP

However, there is one important job where experience is essential. This is in the chairmanship of the exercise. The chairperson is largely responsible for a useful simulated

meeting as a valuable learning experience, therefore, always cast this key role with great care.

The authors have good experience in using both the 'Status-Quo' and the 'Contrast' approaches, or even adopting a combination of both in the same exercise. Both approaches are useful and complementary learning experiences.

If there are two exercises in the same Training Workshop it may be sensible to use both approaches, using the more straightforward 'Status-Quo' approach first, and the less predictable 'Contrast' technique for the second exercise.

3.3 ALLOCATING ROLES, NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS

In this simulation there are 24 possible participants, but if the Training Workshop has a smaller number of participants a number of the invited persons to the meeting could 'send their apologies' on account of 'unexpected overseas travel', thus reducing the exercise to 16 or 11 persons.

To assist Directing Staff, a list of invited staff, which is set out in Document No.3, is attached as Annex No. 2 to this document. In this listing an asterisk (*) has been set beside eight of the names that have slightly minor roles. These could be dropped from the meeting, thus reducing the total to 16.

If this number is also too large, the Directing Staff could delete a further set of participants with two asterisks against their names (**), who could also be unable to attend due to 'family bereavements'.

If these further deletions are made, the number would drop by 5 to a total of 11. However it should be noted that in the meeting of just 11, persons some of the important exchanges will be lost, thus reducing the scope of the exercise.

Please note that if the number of participants is reduced to 16 or 11 then the distribution of papers will be reduced accordingly. However, in order to include some of the issues that would have been raised by the missing participants Directing Staff may pass papers to others with the attached note '...that in the absence of "x" or "y" you are asked to represent their interests as well as your own, therefore "x" or "y" would like you to see the attached letter, and use the confidential information it contains at your discretion'.

In addition to the role casting the participants, at least one experienced participant or resource person should be given the vital Observer Role.

3.4 ALLOCATING ROLES, CASTING EACH PART

In order to allocate roles effectively the Directing Staff need to:

- understand the exercise
- decide on which approach, 'status-quo' or 'contrast'
- consider the background and needs of each participant

Initially, they should read through the entire set of briefing papers to capture the flavour of the exercise and the varied positions and issues. Armed with this perspective, having decided on one of the two approaches noted above, they can proceed to consider the personalities, experience and existing positions of the participants in order to allocate roles. This task should not be hurried, and it is normally best if it is done by two people who can usefully discuss and debate varied opportunities.

3.5 TIMETABLE

1. Three Days Before Exercise

Directing Staff and Observer(s) to read the entire set of Documents. At this time, remind participants of the forthcoming workshop and ask them to make certain they have cleared their diaries to devote the evening before, the late morning, lunchtime and the afternoon of the exercise to the task in hand. Without this commitment of time and energy the exercise will fail.

2. Two Days Before Exercise

Allocate roles for the meeting, as noted in No. 3.2-3.4 above.

3. The Evening Before the Exercise

Pin a paper to the wall with the list of roles linked to the names of participants.

Issue documents in accordance with the instructions at the top of each document, and ask each person:

- a. to carefully read the full text, and to think about their own position, to 'get into the role'. Directing Staff should emphasise that from the time they have issued these documents until the exercise is concluded, John Smith is now the UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE. Therefore, he needs to discuss the exercise with other participants in his designated role prior to the meeting and not to secure any information that would not be forthcoming in a normal situation. He may even choose to dress for the meeting in a manner appropriate to a typical UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE.
- b. **not to discuss the meeting with other participants under any circumstances** unless this is to agree a joint position to be taken in the meeting. Remind them that, as in all meetings, participants know their own position well, as well as their immediate colleagues but they rarely know the 'agendas' of others.
- c. not to ask the Directing Staff any questions. If there are ambiguities, contradictions or errors in the information that has been distributed this may have been deliberate. Any clarification will be of trusted colleagues who would provide advice in a normal situation. For example the Minister of Planning would not ask advice from an NGO group in a real situation, so this should not occur in this exercise. Thus, queries will have to await the debriefing following the exercise.

4. Late Morning on the Day of the Exercise

Allocate approximately one hour during the late morning before the exercise for participants to see each other for private 'pre-meetings' in accordance with suggestions on their briefing papers. These may usefully continue over lunch.

Explain to them at this point that from now onwards they are at liberty to move beyond their instructions as they negotiate with each other. For example they may choose not to accept an invitation for a discussion with another officials, or they may want to meet someone that was not suggested in their papers. Obviously, in taking a personal position, they may have to answer to their superiors for choosing to depart from their organisations' objectives.

Neither the Directing Staff nor the Observers are invited to attend these private meetings.

Whilst these discussions are proceeding, the Directing Staff will arrange name indicators around the meeting table in accordance with the instructions of the Chairperson. Please note this point, since it is important for the Exercise Observers to comment on the seating, noting any attempt to

break up people who might wish to consult with their neighbours, or more frequently positioning people on either side of the Chair so that the chairperson can gain maximum support. Staff should also provide the usual water, glasses, note pads and agendas for each place setting.

A large clock should be in the room in full view of all participants, and there should be flip-charts with marker pens, or blackboard and chalk available for possible use in the exercise.

5. Afternoon: Run the Exercise

[Total duration of all segments 2 hours 30 mins.)

Exercise:

Part 1. Meeting to Discuss Flood Protection 1 Hour 30 mins.

[Chaired by Meeting Chairperson)

Important note: Until the exercise is over there should not be any tea breaks, since they could seriously interrupt the continuity of the exercise. If necessary, arrange for refreshments to be brought to the meeting at the conclusion of the formal part of the meeting.

Managing The Meeting -the Role of Directing Staff

It is essential for the directing staff to be present throughout the exercise. If the meeting is going well with a good, constructive discussion then it is advisable for it to continue without interruption, since this could disturb the flow of ideas and proposals to achieve consensus.

However if it is not going well, with poor participation, indifferent chairmanship and no clear direction, then the Directing Staff will be wise to intervene with a rescue mission. The following ideas may be useful, but it is suggested that only one is used:

1. THE LEAKED LETTER

Have an envelope concealed in your pocket ready for use. It contains a leaked copy of Document No 3, the letter from the Minister of Planning to the UNDP Resident Representative inside it. Write on the outside of the envelope in obviously disguised handwriting: "To the Director of ANGO's (Consortium of Voluntary Organisations), from a friend who thinks this may help your meeting" Pass the letter to the administrative assistant with instructions to personally deliver it to the person concerned, not via the chairman.

2. PHONE CALL FROM WORLD BANK WASHINGTON DC

If there is a telephone in the meeting room arrange for someone with an unfamiliar voice, (perhaps one of the workshop resource persons) to call the Resident Co-ordinator of the FAP for the World Bank. The message would be from the Director of the South Asia division of the WORLD BANK, in Washington DC.

"Regret calling you from the meeting, but there has been an important development in the past hour regarding the Project. A joint letter has just been received from three Development Assistance Ministers of the primary project donors to the FAP. They state that they are informing their missions today that unless the present FAP is modified to reduce the structural works with a reallocation of 20 percent of funds

requested in the FAP for embankment building to flood preparedness measured they will reallocate the designated funds."

(The person making the call should then be prepared to discuss the issue further if the Resident Coordinator wishes to pursue the issue further.) (See Document 14)

3. CREATE A BREAK TO UNDERTAKE JOINT TASKS

The Chairman has a note passed to him with the following message:

"From the Cabinet Office, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister:
The PM is aware that your meeting is in progress and regrets the interruption, but wishes to emphasise that a firm product is required from your deliberations. He has been reconsidering the business of your FAP meeting, and has been under pressure from certain donors today. He believes that it is vital for your meeting to come up with a specific proposals that are unanimously agreed by the meeting, since this, more than anything, will silence the critics. He suggests that you break the meeting down into two working groups to see if they can come up with agreed positions in about 30 minutes on:

- (a) A compromise proposal on the mitigation package with more emphasis on preparedness (5 proposals only).
- (b) A compromise on the participation issue, with suggestions on how this can occur without delaying the project, or creating discord. Put another way, in what way can participation occur to satisfy our critics with no loss of time?" (5 proposals only) (See Document 15)

Part 2. Press Questions 10-15 mins

At the conclusion of the meeting a reporter who has observed the meeting from the Press Pool will be permitted to ask a single question to up to four persons. Later he or she is asked to design a set of Headlines that sum up the findings from the meeting.

Part 3 Observer(s) Report 30 - 45 mins

The observer has to introduce general discussion on three very important topics. These should involve the participants as well as the Directing Staff:

- Discuss organisational skills. What was revealed in the meeting, such as: cooperative teamwork, an overall desire to coordinate, listening, problem analysis, rapid synthesis, assertiveness, being flexible whilst maintaining direction;
- Discuss chairmanship skills. How did the chairperson organise the seat layout? Did he or she display impartiality? Was participation by all present encouraged? How were over talkative members dealt with whilst drawing out the quiet participants? How were blackboards/flip-charts etc. used to clarify rival positions? What skills on the part of the chairperson were demonstrated in resolving conflicts and forming a consensus? How far did the meeting achieve its specific aims?
- Discuss mitigation issues. How were they handled in the meeting? Was there any substantive discussion on such issues as: the range and nature of mitigation measures (environmental, structural and non-structural); the costs of protection in social, economic and financial terms and the linkages of development to mitigation and vice-versa?

The responsibility of observers is high, since they have the task of reinforcing issues and drawing attention to gaps that they perceive in the handling of the exercise. Even when roles in the meeting are poorly performed, key issues missed and chairmanship is weak, it is possible for a perceptive observer to salvage a rich set of lessons for mutual benefit. But observers need to be tactful, supportive people, never under any circumstances criticising a participant in negative terms without finding something positive to say about his or her performance.

Since some observers may lack experience of either or both the management or the subject matter of the meeting, it will be helpful for the directing staff to also contribute to this feed-back session. However this must also be handled with sensitivity, not given in a manner that makes the observer's report appear to be weak or inadequate.

Part 4 Directing Staff Report

If the exercise has been used by staff who are being trained to become trainers it is also important that a further, longer de-briefing take place to discuss the value and conduct of the exercise as a training/learning experience. This discussion should include a consideration of aims, roles, paperwork, timing, management of exercise, technical content of exercise, relationship of exercise to the overall workshop, etc. Probably this will be best timed to occur a day or so after the exercise when staff have had time to reflect on possible lessons and improvements that could strengthen the exercise. This could include a statement of what *actually* transpired in a "similar situation." However, in the case of this exercise this information is unavailable at present.

Post Script

Finally, a word of encouragement....

Our experiences of simulation exercises have been mixed. Many have been successful whilst others went decidedly wrong. However, it is worth remembering that even when they fail to achieve all that is expected, a poor exercise can often be of more value than a well delivered lecture. Reasons include the value of negative as well as positive lessons, higher levels of participant interest than when they are merely listening to others and the certainty that simulations test and develop skills and focus on attitudes that are not even addressed in more passive teaching modes.

...a simulation game is like a kiss, interesting to read about but much more interesting to participate in. And those that do tend to repeat the experience

Institute of Higher Education, Research and Services
University of Alabama

ANNEX No.1. LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE DISTRIBUTED FOR THE EXERCISE:

Directing Staff and Observers to read before exercise:

Document 1. INTRODUCTION AND BRIEFING

The following documents are to be distributed the evening before the exercise:

Document 2. FLOOD ACTION PROGRAMME SIT. REP.

Document 3. LETTER OF INVITATION TO MEETING
With Annex No.1. List of Invited Participants and Annex No.2.
Agenda for the Meeting.

Document 4. POSITION OF MINISTER OF PLANNING

Document 5. POSITION OF UN RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Document 6. POSITION OF UN DEPUTY RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Document 7. POSITION OF UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE,

Document 8. POSITION OF RESIDENT COORDINATOR OF THE FAP FOR
THE WORLD BANK, AND THE FAP CONSULTANTS

Document 9. POSITION OF INTERNATIONAL DONORS: USA, CANADA,
NETHERLANDS

Document 10. POSITION OF INTERNATIONAL DONOR: UK

Document 11. POSITION OF INTERNATIONAL DONOR: JAPAN

Document 12. POSITION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS
NGOs: NATIONAL RED CROSS

Document 13. POSITION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS
NGOs: DIRECTOR OF ANGO,s and OXFAM

The following messages are for possible use during the meeting, at the discretion of the Directing Staff:

Document 14. TEXT OF TELEPHONE MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF THE
SOUTH ASIA DIVISION OF WORLD BANK IN
WASHINGTON TO RESIDENT CO-ORDINATOR OF WORLD
BANK ATTENDING MEETING

Document 15. NOTE TO CHAIRMAN FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE
PRIME MINISTER

ANNEX No. 2. LIST OF MEETING PARTICIPANTS

(This is repeated for the benefit of participants as an annex to Document No. 3)

Note to Directing Staff:

- If there are at least 24 participants, allocate all roles as noted below.
- If there are 16 participants, allocate all roles as noted below, but delete roles with * marked alongside their name.
- If there are 11 participants, allocate all roles as noted below, but delete roles with * * marked alongside their name.

LISTING OF INVITED PARTICIPANTS TO FAP INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATIVE GROUP:

1. Minister of Planning, Chairman
2. UNDP Resident Representative, Deputy Chairman

Government Representatives:

- 3.** Minister of Agriculture
- 4.* Minister of Flood Control
5. Minister of Relief
- 6.* Director of Water Resources Bureau

UN Agencies:

- 7.** UNPD Deputy Representative
- 8.* UNDP Programme Officer
9. UNICEF Representative
- 10.* FAO Representative
11. Resident Coordinator of the FAP for the World Bank

Representatives of Donor Countries:

12. Aid Secretary, Government of the Netherlands
- 13.** Aid Secretary, Government of the United Kingdom, Overseas Aid Administration (ODA)
14. Country Director, USAID
15. First Secretary, Government Of Japan
- 16.* Country Director, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Government of Canada

Representatives of FAP Consultant Team:

- 17.** Technical Advisor on Structural Mitigation and Environmental Works
- 18.* Technical Advisor on Integrated Flood and Cyclone Preparedness Programme

Representatives of Non Governmental Organisations NGOs:

19. Director of ANGO's, (Consortium of Voluntary Organisations)
- 20.* Regional Field Director, OXFAM
21. Director, National Red Cross Society

Representatives of National Research Institutes:

- 22.* Professor in Water Resources, School of Natural Environmental Sciences, National University
23. Director: Institute for Social Justice, School of Social and Development Studies, State University

Press Reporter:

- 24.** Reporter from the Press Pool, (permitted under the constitution to observe government meetings and by tradition allowed to ask a single question to up to four persons at the conclusion of the meeting)

Document 2. FLOOD ACTION PROGRAMME SIT. REP.

Distribution to:

- All Participants in Exercise
- Press Reporter
- Directing staff of Exercise
- Exercise Observers

SITUATION REPORT ON FLOOD ACTION PROGRAMME

From: Public Affairs Division, Ministry Of Information

To: All concerned parties

CONTEXT:

In the late 1980s our country, perhaps more than any within the entire Indian Subcontinent, suffered the most severe inland flooding in the past 200 years. Statistics tell the story vividly:

- Approximately 15 million out of the nation's population of 100+ million were displaced by flood waters
- 1.2 million were evacuated and resettled
- 2,379 persons lost their lives
- 82,000 km.2 land area was affected
- 2.4 million houses were destroyed

Financial assistance flowed into the area from both domestic and international sources. Amongst the contributions the World Bank contributed a total of US \$282.8 million to rehabilitate the infrastructure damaged in the flooding.

REVIEW OF FLOOD ACTION PROGRAMME:

There was widespread international concern to reduce the risks facing this country, and through the World Bank a 'Flood Action PROGRAM'(FAP) was launched. Approximately US \$100 million was devoted to a comprehensive set of studies to firstly analyze the problem and then make recommendations to reduce the flood problem through the implementation of structural and non-structural measures.

The First Report on the FAP has now been made public. This outlines a series of ambitious measures, which are of a 'structural' as well as 'non-structural' nature. The responsibility for the next stages in implementing the FAP lies in the hands of the Ministry of Planning, who are advised by an 'International Consultative Group'.

Document 3. LETTER OF INVITATION TO MEETING

Distribution to:

- All Participants in Exercise;
 - Press Reporter;
 - Directing staff of Exercise;
 - Exercise Observers.
-

The Secretary of State for National Planning
Ministry of Planning
Government Offices

Dear Sir or Madam,

FLOOD ACTION PROGRAMME, INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATIVE GROUP REVIEW MEETING NO.8

I am writing to invite you to contribute to a further meeting of the International Consultative Group that has been monitoring the progress of the Flood Action Programme (FAP). I trust you will permit me to explain the present context.

Perhaps I may start by informing the new members of the Consultative Group that I have the honour to be the designated Minister of our Government vested with the responsibility of implementing the National FAP. In view of the generous support that our nation has received from various international sources to undertake this ambitious task, the Vice Chairman of our group is the Resident Representative of UNDP in our country.

At the recent cabinet meeting that considered the first report of the FAP, it was decided that I, with the full support of my Vice Chairman, should now call a meeting of the Consultative Group who have shown a commitment to the reduction of flood risk ever since the appalling disaster of four years ago. We believe that this is a critical time for our nation, and I trust that you will make every effort to be present for this important meeting. Perhaps I may be permitted to review the present situation.

The purpose of this meeting is to consider the two most contentious issues which have arisen, which are highlighted in the First Review of the FAP, which as you are aware was published just two months ago. These issues have important technical, economic, social and environmental implications.

Whilst the Government recognises that in a programme of this magnitude it is inevitable that there will be a wide range of opinions, the Prime Minister has made it very clear that the current division of opinion is damaging to our national commitment to resolve this flood problem once and for all, and it is certain to be viewed in a negative light by potential international donors who may conclude that funding will not be appropriate until there is broad agreement within our country.

Therefore, I am calling this meeting of the Consultative Group, since it would appear from recent statements that the members may not all share the Government's position on this matter. I believe that a frank exchange of views will indicate whether compromise is possible. The Government hopes that this will put a stop to an increasingly damaging public argument which is being conducted with the enthusiastic assistance of sections of the media with their own familiar axe to grind on the issues.

I will try to summarise the varied positions on the two issues:

ISSUE 1. FLOOD PROTECTION MEASURES

To discuss the positions being taken in response to the outline proposals in the FAP, to see if there is any possibility of a consensus being formed between the conflicting views:

Position A

The Government's clear conviction, well supported by the FAP is that it is necessary to undertake major engineering works to combat future floods. These measures include structural and major environmental works.

Position B

We are aware that some believe that there is a need to avoid major engineering works at all costs, in view of 'negative effects' that they believe could follow. Apparently this group believes that our long-suffering citizens will have to continue: 'to live with the floods'! They believe that measures are required which include changes in behaviour and through the use of non-structural measures.

Position C

A compromise view has also come to the attention of Government. This group take the view that the two views expressed above come from a 'polarisation' that has been based (I will quote from their recent press release) '...on ignorant rhetoric rather than a close understanding of the complexities of the proposals'. Evidently, they believe that some engineering work is essential, but this will need to be complemented with a major public awareness programme and a series of non-structural measures.

ISSUE 2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

To discuss conflicting concerns on the necessity of seeking popular participation in decision making on flood reduction measures.

Position A

The flood issues are complex, urgent and of national strategic importance. Therefore, it is neither appropriate nor feasible for the Government to initiate a lengthy and potentially divisive process of local participation.

Position B

You must be aware that a protest has been made by a vocal minority, and here I will quote from a typical sample of their emotive slogans: '...our Government intends to steam roller this socially and economically damaging project through, without consulting those who will have to suffer its adverse consequences'.

Position C

The third position takes a middle ground position. These people share the Government's view that enhanced flood protection is urgent and long overdue. However they also believe that whilst participation is vital it must not be a prolonged exercise that risks losing the political momentum at both national and international levels. These people falsely claim that 'political will' is already in sharp decline as we approach the fifth anniversary of the great flood.

I remain very hopeful that we will be able to have a frank exchange on the above issues. Perhaps I can remind our new members of the composition of the Consultative group:

- relevant Ministries of Government
- the involved UN agencies
- representatives of certain Donor Countries, who are generously contributing to the financing of the flood mitigation study, and it is our sincere hope, to its future implementation
- representatives of the consultants developing the project
- NGO groups
- academic/ research groups

I will look forward to meeting you, and thank you for your kind attention to these matters.

Yours sincerely

The Secretary of State for National Planning.