

**UNITED NATIONS
(OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR)
and
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

Memorandum of understanding on the harmonization of the activities of the World Health Organization and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator for the relief co-ordination of, preparedness for, and prevention of disasters. Signed at Geneva on 9 March 1979

Authentic text: English.

Filed and recorded by the Secretariat on 9 March 1979.

**ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES
(BUREAU DU COORDONNATEUR
DES NATIONS UNIES
POUR LES SECOURS EN CAS DE CATASTROPHE)
et
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ**

Mémorandum d'accord sur l'harmonisation des activités de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé et celles du Bureau du Coordonnateur des Nations Unies pour les secours en cas de catastrophe en matière de coordination des secours, de capacité opérationnelle et de prévention dans l'éventualité de catastrophes. Signé à Genève le 9 mars 1979

Texte authentique : anglais.

Classé et inscrit au répertoire par le Secrétariat le 9 mars 1979.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING¹ BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGAN- IZATION AND THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR

WHEREAS the World Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as WHO) by articles 2 and 28 of its Constitution² is empowered to furnish, within the limits of its resources, appropriate technical co-operation and necessary aid in cases of epidemics and emergencies, and assist in measures of prevention and mitigation of hazards in disasters; and

WHEREAS the General Assembly of the United Nations, by resolution 2816 (XXVI),³ endorsed the Secretary-General's proposals for the establishment of an adequate permanent office in the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as UNDRO) to be the focal point in the UN system for disaster relief matters, and which would be headed by a Disaster Relief Co-ordinator; and

WHEREAS by paragraph 3 of article IV of the Agreement between the United Nations and WHO, WHO affirmed its intention of co-operating in measures necessary to make co-ordination of the activities of the specialized agencies and those of the United Nations fully effective; and

WHEREAS since 1948 WHO has been rendering assistance to victims of disasters and epidemics, and since the establishment of UNDRO in 1972, WHO and UNDRO have been collaborating closely and effectively in matters of common concern;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Director-General of WHO and the UN Disaster Relief Co-ordinator have agreed to the following arrangements:

1. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNDRO AND WHO

(i) It is the responsibility of UNDRO to co-ordinate disaster emergency assistance, as well as to promote disaster preparedness and disaster prevention; UNDRO's role within the terms of the General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI) is that of an over-all co-ordinator of all disaster-related assistance.

(ii) WHO is the focal point for all health problems and will continue to exercise its operational prerogatives and responsibilities for all emergency and preventive health assistance.

(iii) UNDRO will continue to co-ordinate WHO's assistance with other emergency assistance which may be given by other donor agencies or organizations. UNDRO is also responsible for providing information to the international community on the emergency situation as a whole, and its responsibilities remain whether the disaster be sudden, such as an earthquake or slow in developing, such as a drought.

¹ Came into force on 9 March 1979 by signature, in accordance with section 9.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 14, p. 185; vol. 377, p. 380; vol. 990, p. 360, and vol. 1035, p. 315.

³ *Ibid.*, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/8429)*, p. 85.