

No. 983

**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 Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and the World Health Organization for the relief co-ordination of, preparedness for and prevention of disasters. Signed at Geneva on 23 December 1987

Authentic text: English.

Filed and recorded by the Secretariat of the United Nations on 23 December 1987.

**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 du Bureau du Coordonnateur des Nations Unies pour les secours en cas de catastrophe et celles de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé en matière de coordination des secours, de capacité opérationnelle et de prévention dans l'éventualité de catastrophes. Signé à Genève le 23 décembre 1987

Texte authentique : anglais.

Classé et inscrit au répertoire par le Secrétariat de l'Organisation des Nations Unies le 23 décembre 1987.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING¹ BETWEEN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR

WHEREAS, the mandate of the World Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as WHO) stems from its Constitution, which states that one of the functions of the Organization shall be to furnish appropriate technical assistance and, in emergencies, necessary aid upon the request or acceptance of Governments (Article 2.d); the Constitution authorizes the Executive Board to take emergency measures within the functions and financial resources of the Organization to deal with events requiring immediate action and to undertake studies and research on emergency problems (Article 28.i); furthermore, the Constitution² establishes a special fund to meet emergencies and unforeseen contingencies (Article 58); and

WHEREAS, the World Health Assembly resolutions emphasize the need to strengthen the Organization's capacity to promote approaches for prevention of adverse health effects and for preparedness of the Member States as well as for coordination of aid (WHA34.26);³ and the necessity of an integrated response linking emergency measures with long-term development, and the need to intensify WHO's technical cooperation at the country level to enable the Member States to enhance their emergency preparedness (WHA38.29);⁴ and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the United Nations, by Resolution 2816 (XXVI),⁵ endorsed the Secretary-General's proposals for the establishment of an adequate permanent office in the United Nations to be the focal point in the United Nations system for disaster relief matters (hereinafter referred to as UNDRO), 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,⁶ WHO affirmed its intention of cooperating in measures necessary to make coordination 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 disaster and epidemics, and since the establishment of UNDRO in 1972, WHO and UNDRO have been collaborating closely and effectively in matters of common concern; and

WHEREAS, in the spirit of close collaboration, the Director-General of WHO and the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordination signed a Memorandum of Understanding in March 1979,⁷ which may be amended by mutual agreement.

NOW THEREFORE, based on a review of the developments in the field of emergency preparedness and response and aiming to improve the collaboration from experience gained, the contracting parties have agreed to the following arrangements:

¹ Came into force on 23 December 1987 by signature, in accordance with section 8.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 14, p. 185.

³ World Health Organization, *Handbook of resolutions and decisions of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board*, vol. II (1973-1984), p. 31.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. III, 2nd edition (1985-1989), p. 16.

⁵ United Nations, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 29 (A/8429)*, p. 85.

⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 19, p. 193.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1129, p. 277.