

# TAMPERE CONVENTION

SAVING LIVES

THROUGH

EMERGENCY  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS



International  
Telecommunication  
Union

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## **WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES...**

§ **Communications links are almost always disabled and disrupted during the first hours of a major disaster. When disaster relief workers arrive on the scene, there is an urgency to establish effective and comprehensive communication links between the affected area and national disaster response facilities, and with the larger international community.**

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**WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES...**



**Existing infrastructures may have been destroyed and relief managers will need to obtain rapid and up-to-date information from workers in the field. In complex emergencies, existing national telecommunications are used wherever possible;**

**Existing public networks are used whenever possible in disaster relief operations if they are intact. ....**

# **Telecommunications save lives!**

.....However, with the centralization of modern networks and the increasing use of new types of technology such as satellite links for international telecommunications, damage to a single piece of equipment may mean total breakdown of communications and a loss of all connection to the outside world. Emergency telecommunications then become the lifeline for thousands of people.

## Barriers to effective work

**The trans-border use of telecommunications required in humanitarian relief operations is still too often restricted in certain countries.**

Existing national regulations covering the introduction and use of telecommunications equipment are not automatically waived in the event of a natural disaster

Some present limitations to disaster communications include:

- a) Organizational barriers which impede the flow of information among the various elements of the international disaster response network.
- b) Uncertainty over the availability and location of communications equipment which could be made accessible for disaster use.
- c) Regulatory barriers which slow down the importation and operation of communications equipment.
- d) High costs which inhibit the effective use of communications equipment during disasters.

The lack of an international legal instrument which can provide the use of telecommunications equipment in the service of humanitarian assistance was needed



**WTDC-06 Resolution 34:** *"The role of telecommunications/ICT in early warning and mitigation of disasters and humanitarian assistance."*

§ requesting the BDT "to support administrations in their work towards the implementation of the Tampere Convention," and ITU-D should strengthen the link between telecommunication development and disaster.

**PP-06 Resolution 36:** *"Telecommunications/ICT in the service of humanitarian assistance"*

§ inviting Member States "to work towards their accession to the Tampere Convention as a matter of priority" and also, "to take all practical steps for the application of the Tampere Convention."

**PP-06 Resolution 136:** *"The use of ICT for monitoring and management in emergency and disaster situations for early warning, prevention, mitigation and relief."*

§ To support technical studies through ITU study Groups

§ Support the development of robust, comprehensive, all-hazards emergency and disaster early warning, mitigation and relief systems

**International support for  
telecommunications resources for  
disaster mitigation and relief  
operations**

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# Tampere Convention

The Intergovernmental Conference on Emergency Telecommunications (ICET-98), convened by the Government of Finland, that took place on 16 - 18 June 1998 in Tampere, Finland, adopted the *Tampere Convention* on the provision of Telecommunications for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, an international treaty, deposited with the United Nations Secretary-General. The Convention has so far been signed and ratified by 48 and 8 Member States respectively.





## The Tampere Convention

Over the past 11 years, Tampere has become a synonym for the facilitation of the application of Telecommunications in Humanitarian Assistance:

In 1991, the city hosted the International Conference on Disaster Communications which adopted the Tampere Declaration.

This statement of experts from the major humanitarian organizations, regulatory authorities and the private sector became the foundation for all the subsequent work towards an international treaty to allow the un-hindered use of telecommunication technology in international disaster response.



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# Tampere Convention

- Provides the legal framework for the use of telecommunications in international humanitarian assistance
- Reduces regulatory barrier
- Fully protects the interests of the States requesting and receiving assistance. The host government retains the right to supervise the assistance.
- Foresees the establishment of bilateral agreements between the provider(s) of assistance and the State requesting/receiving such assistance.

The **Preamble** of the Convention notes the essential role of telecommunications in humanitarian assistance and the need for its facilitation, and **recalls the major legal instruments**, such as respective Resolutions of *United Nations* and of the *International Telecommunication Union*, which prepared the way for the Tampere Convention.

**Article 1** defines the **terms used in the Convention**. Of particular significance are the definitions of *non-governmental organizations* and *non-State entities*, as the Tampere Convention is the first treaty of its kind which attributes **privileges and immunities** to their personnel.

**Article 2** describes the **operational coordination**, to be carried out by the *United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator* (i.e. through the *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA*).

**Article 3** defines the overall **framework for the cooperation** among States Parties and all other partners in international humanitarian assistance, including *non-State entities*.



## Tampere Convention

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**Article 4** describes the **procedures** for request and provision of telecommunications assistance, specifically recognizing the right of a State Party to direct, control and coordinate assistance provided under this Convention within its territory.

**Article 5** defines the **privileges, immunities and facilities** to be provided by the *Requesting State Party*, again emphasizing that nothing in this Article shall prejudice rights and obligations pursuant to international agreements or international law.

**Articles 6, 7 and 8** define **specific elements** and aspects of the provision of telecommunication assistance, such as Termination of Assistance, Payment or Reimbursement of Costs or Fees, and establishment of a Telecommunications Assistance Inventory.

**Article 9** can be considered as the core element of the Tampere Convention, as the **Removal of Regulatory Barriers** has been the primary aim of the work towards this treaty since 1990.

The remaining **Articles, 10 to 17**, contain the **standard provisions** concerning Convention's Relationship to Other International Agreements, Dispute Settlement, Entry into Force, Amendments, Reservations, Denunciation, and state that the Secretary-General of the United Nations is the depositary of the Convention.



# Ratification Process

**A State may express its consent to be bound by the convention by any of the following means:**

**a) by definitive signature;**

**b) by signature subject to ratification, acceptance or approval followed by deposit of an instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval;**

**c) by deposit of an instrument of ratification.**



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Oman	19 Aug 1999	16 Apr 2003
Pakistan		30 Jan 2009
Panama	20 Sep 2001	5 Mar 2003

Tajikistan	18 Jun 1998	
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3 Dec 1998	
Tonga		8 May 2003 a
Uganda	28 Oct 1998	5 Sep 2002
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland		18 Jun 2003 s
United States of America	17 Nov 1998	
Uruguay	13 May 2003	
Uzbekistan	6 Oct 1998	
Venezuela	3 Apr 2003	13 May 2005

Sudan	4 Dec 1998	
Sweden	10 Jun 2003	13 Sep 2004
Switzerland	18 Jun 1998	24 Apr 2002

Nepal	23 Apr 1999	
Netherlands	19 Dec 2000	6 Jul 2001 A
Nicaragua	18 Jun 1998	18 Nov 1999
Niger	18 Jun 1998	

## Implementation challenges

**The ITU urges all the countries to modify their regulations, so they can take into account the Tampere Convention.**

**It can save lives!!**

## Tampere Convention

1. Include the guidelines on the use of ICTs for Disaster Management in the National ICTs policy.
2. Include Emergency Telecommunication in their licensing regime or framework.
3. Include develop regulator framework that supports emergency telecommunications.
4. Develop a comprehensive inventory of equipment and human resources available for deployment in emergencies.
6. Develop a Database of frequencies that can be used for disaster management.
6. Continuously seek ITU guidance and assistance in reforming the regulatory framework and use of the Tampere Convention in disaster mitigation.

**What can Governments do to create an enabling environment**



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## Available ITU resources

*Handbook on Emergency Telecommunications*

*Compendium of ITU's work on Emergency Telecommunications*

*Best Practice on Emergency Telecommunications*

*Handbook on Disaster Communications*



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[www.itu.int/itu-d/emergencytelecoms](http://www.itu.int/itu-d/emergencytelecoms)



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# Thank you

## Maritza Delgado

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COUNTRIES AND SMALL DEVELOPING STATES*



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