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January 2007

The International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO), by resolution of its IX<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Geneva, has designated 1<sup>st</sup> March each year for the celebration of a World Civil Defence Day.

This is the birthday on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1972 of the ICDO as an intergovernmental organisation.

The ICDO General Assembly's aim in establishing this World Day is to arouse public awareness on the civil defence services' tasks: safeguarding life, property and the environment.

The theme for 2007 is

**“Civil Defence and Safety in the Workplace”**

National civil defence services should be able to prepare the celebration of this World Day on the basis of the attached material.

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Examples of events to be organised on this occasion:

- Press releases and publication of articles;
- Radio and TV messages and talks by national authorities responsible for civil defence;
- Organisation of conferences, symposia and debates;
- “Open day” on civil defence structures;
- Film projections and exhibitions to encourage awareness and inform the public;
- Disaster simulation and prevention exercises; ...



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**Message from Mr. Nawaf Al-Sleibi  
Secretary-General of the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO)  
on the occasion of  
World Civil Defence Day**

**1<sup>st</sup> March 2007**

***Civil Defence and Safety in the Workplace***

Each day millions of people go to their workplace in order to perform activities which, inevitably, are going to involve greater or lesser risks to themselves, their goods or their surrounding environment.

Faced with consequences which threaten productivity, workplace safety has become an indispensable element of all policies aiming for economically sustainable development.

Numerous promotional campaigns regarding workplace health and safety are therefore regularly put in place by governments and international organisations, particularly the International Labor Organisation, which works tirelessly in order that "safety will become a reflex in all workplaces".

The various actions which have been led in this area show that prevention is proven to be effective. The attacks on the World Trade Center are a tragic illustration of this. In effect, these days, thousands of human lives have been able to be saved due to the effectiveness of a preventative device perfectly assimilated by workers, namely, the evacuation plan.

Prevention begins, principally, through better coordination among the different actors concerned. The employer, the staff, the building's technical services, the public authorities and the aid teams, notably, need to unite their efforts in order to develop a culture of prevention and preparation for risks resulting from the exercise of professional activities.

Civil defence, as the organ leading the diverse operations for safeguarding lives, goods and the environment, would appear to be a natural liaison for establishing a risk prevention strategy in this context. Whether in the domain of training or information, the national civil defence structures supply the experience and expertise necessary for the development of action plans for safety, adapted to take account of the inherent risks in each workplace, as well as the size and operations of the entity in question.

For its part, the International Civil Defence Organisation, which for numerous years has worked to develop national structures for civil defence through, notably, its training, audit and consulting programmes, intends to provide the necessary support to its Member States in order to help them to analyse and plan actions in support of the prevention of risks in the workplace.

On the occasion of World Civil Defence Day this 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007, the International Civil Defence Organisation thanks all those participating in the celebration of this event and emphasizes the role of civil defence in the reinforcement of workplace safety.