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| **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION** **DURING AN EUCP MISSION** |

EUCP Missions are excellent opportunities to share positive stories about the EU and inform the public about our actions. Civil protection operations are usually spectacular, fast-paced and efficient. They portray EU solidarity in action, and usually happen when media interest is at its highest.

1. MANAGING MEDIA RELATIONS

**DG ECHO spokesperson speaks on behalf of the Commission**. He is briefed on a daily basis through **Lines to Take (LTTs)** drafted by Unit D2, in consultation with the ERCC, the geographical desk officer and communication officers in units B1/C1 when relevant.

**The Team Leader** of the EUCP teamsupervises media relations and communication during the mission. The **ERCC Liaison Officer** also plays an important role. When the **Regional Information Officer** is present, he is in charge of communication activities.

When speaking to the media, members of the EUCP Team **speak on behalf of the mission**, not on behalf of the EU, Participating States or the Commission.

Before a team member speaks to the media, the spokesperson has to agree and the ERCC should be informed. A **media request form** must be filled in with as much detail as possible, **prior to an interview**. This form will be sent from the ERCC to the spokesperson and the Communication Adviser in Cabinet. It is sometimes possible to get a "blanket authorisation" for the entire duration of the mission, in a non-politically sensitive context (ANNEX).

The EUCP Team should **report back to the ERCC any contacts with the media** (who, when, what) and provide article or video links. The ERCC should forward this information to the communication and geographical units.

The **EU Delegation** staff can be extremely helpful, as they know the local political context and the media landscape. Get in touch with the Delegation's press officer to make sure they relay your work on their local platforms and that you agree together on a "line to take".

*Tips when speaking to the media*:

* Express **positive** **messages** about the mission and the EU
* Distribute the **info pack** and DG ECHO **factsheets** to journalists (ANNEX)
* Explain your work, the role of the Mechanism, give **concrete examples**
* Use **simple language** that is easy for anyone to understand: no technical jargon
* Stick to the **facts**, say if you cannot answer a question
* Speak exclusively about the mission, **do not enter in controversies**

Prepare the media strategy plan: mapping of stakeholders, who does what? (ANNEX)

Read the media pocket card (ANNEX)

2. ENHANCING VISIBILITY

Each team should **designate who will be responsible for external communication**. The ERCC Liaison Officer is a good candidate.

**Photos** **and videos** are excellent tools to communicate on EUCP missions. They can be used for articles, Twitter, Facebook and photo stories. Photos are stored on DG ECHO's photo database on **Flickr**, and video on DG ECHO's **youtube channel**.

*Guidelines for photos*:

* Need a **wide variety** of photos: different locations, angles, people, actions
* **No people posing/smiling**: need action-oriented, spontaneous-looking pictures
* **No date and time** on the photos
* Highest **quality** possible: blurry photos from a phone cannot be used
* Always provide **credit** for the pics ("EU/ECHO" if the pic is taken by the EUCPT)
* Try to capture **EU visibility** (flags or any form of EU logo) in your photos as much as possible
* Photos of **beneficiaries** are particularly valuable
* Add relevant **copyright information** to the photos

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| **What are photo stories?**Photo stories are good ways to portray positive EU action and concrete results. They are published on the DG **ECHO website**. A photo story is composed of an introductory paragraph (scene setter, background info on the mission) and a **series of 6 to 9 photos**. Each photo is accompanied by a small descriptive text. The photo story follows a **narrative** and includes very different, strong and preferably action-oriented pics. When you send pictures to the ERCC, please always remember to answer the following: "**when, where, what and who**"? |

Members of the EUCP Team should **wear** **DG ECHO jackets** and make sure the **EU flag/logo** is visible.

Visibility/communications **lessons-learned** should be included in the final report (what went well, what could be improved?).

3. CHECKLIST: COMMUNICATION DURING EUCP EMERGENCY RESPONSE

*The ERCC, communication unit, geographic desks and EUCP Team cooperate closely. The following checklist highlights which actor is responsible for a specific task, but other actors also contribute to these tasks.*

**Joint work**

* Press release (local + Brussels) or chapeau
* Contact the Regional Information Officer asap to keep her/him in the loop
* Organise visibility events (farewell ceremony, greeting at airport, with Commissioner when feasible)

**ERCC**

* Regular updates to management (email)
* CP Messages to Participating States
* Daily flash, daily map
* ECHO intranet + My Intracomm articles
* Media request forms - to be sent to SPP

**Communication Unit**

* Lines To Take for spokesperson (in consultation with ERCC, the geographical desk officer and the communication officers in units B1/C1)
* Twitter, Facebook posts, photo stories on the website
* Upload photos on Flickr
* Press review

**EUCP Team**

* Draft a media strategy plan, to be agreed with HQ and EU Del
* Send photos and videos to HQ (get a professional photographer on the ground if possible)
* Communicate with Member States present in the country of operation (exchange info and visibility materials)
* Request support from EU Delegation (political and press officers), local press review