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Dear Colleagues,

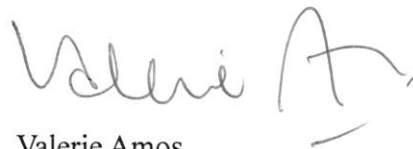
I am pleased to share with you the updated Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Non-Binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys, dated 27 February 2013. The guidelines are endorsed by the IASC Principals and are immediately applicable wherever armed escorts are already in use, or under consideration. Please note these guidelines supersede the 2001 Discussion Paper and Non-Binding Guidelines on the Use of Military or Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys.

A armed escort can affect the actual and perceived neutrality, independence and impartiality of a humanitarian actor, and indeed the humanitarian community as a whole. It is for this reason that armed escorts should not be used to facilitate the movement of humanitarian supplies, goods and assets. The updated guidelines take into consideration the current complexities of the humanitarian operating environment to provide a framework for determining if and when humanitarian actors should consider using an armed escort, the consequences and alternatives, decision making authority, and associated procedures and practical considerations for their use. I fully encourage familiarization with the content and further dissemination to relevant stakeholders.

Implementation of the guidelines will be monitored over a 12-month period, in order to evaluate their effectiveness and applicability at the operational level. Substantive changes will be collated and considered by the IASC Task Force on Humanitarian Space and Civil-Military Relations. All feedback is to be channeled through the OCHA Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS), email to [cmcs@un.org](mailto:cmcs@un.org). CMCS can also be contacted should support be required in the implementation of these guidelines.

Finally, I should like to thank the IASC Task Force for undertaking this update, with special thanks to Ms. Jules Frost of World Vision International for leading this process.

Yours sincerely,



Valerie Amos  
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs  
and Emergency Relief Coordinator