

## VOICE event

# What to consider before using armed escorts in humanitarian aid?

*Tuesday 28 May 2013, 18.00 - 19.00*

Fondation Universitaire, rue d'Egmont 11, 1000 Brussels (Métro 'Trône' or 'Porte de Namur')

As the fundamental underpinning of humanitarian action, the principle of humanity is to save lives and alleviate suffering wherever needed. To achieve this, full and unimpeded humanitarian access to populations in need is imperative. However, multiple constraints can limit access and in many places around the globe it is becoming increasingly difficult to operate due to insecurity. Humanitarian actors then face a difficult choice whether to leave these areas, or operate differently and perhaps even use armed escorts to still be able to reach the affected populations. This dilemma is a very important issue for NGOs.

In 2001, members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) endorsed the ***Non-Binding Guidelines on the "Use of Military or Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys"*** and these were updated in 2012-2013. These updated guidelines remain non-binding and are intended to assist humanitarian actors to fully consider the implications of using armed escorts to facilitate humanitarian operations. They provide humanitarian organisations with a framework for determining *if* and *when* to use armed escorts and, secondly, *how* to do so effectively.

The guidelines will be presented by **Jules Frost, Senior Advisor on Civil-Military Relations for World Vision International**, and previously Global Field Operations Director, Strategy and Planning for World Vision International. Ms Frost led the process of updating the guidelines together with UNOCHA. Also several VOICE members have been involved by giving input to the process, as it is an issue of great importance and debate for the entire humanitarian community. This event aims to give participants a better understanding of the guidelines and how to use them. After the presentation, there will be space for questions and answers.

You are cordially invited to join us after the session for a networking **reception** which will now start at 19.00.

If you are interested to attend, please **register [HERE](#) by Thursday 23 May.**

VOICE (*Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies*) is a network representing 82 European NGOs active in humanitarian aid worldwide. VOICE is the main NGO interlocutor with the EU on emergency aid and disaster risk reduction. It represents and promotes the values and specific features of humanitarian NGOs.



*This event is supported by the European Commission through its Humanitarian Aid department*