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**Guidance on the Use of Foreign Military Assets to Support Humanitarian Operations  
in the Context of the Current Crisis in North Africa**

- On 3 March 2011, OCHA disseminated ‘Guidance on the use of Military Air / Sea Craft to Support the Evacuation of Third Country Nationals (TCN) in the Context of the Current Crisis in North Africa’. The requirement for TCN evacuation has now significantly diminished.
- In view of UN Security Council Resolution 1973 of 17 March 2011 and subsequent military operations, the present document is issued to guide considerations in the provision of, request for, or use of military assets to support operations undertaken by humanitarian organisations.
- Any foreign military assets in the vicinity of Libya, whether or not provided by parties to the ongoing military operations, could be perceived as associated with the military operations. In light of the current dynamics and in order to preserve the humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian action, all civilian alternatives must be fully explored and exhausted before considering the use of military assets to support humanitarian operations.
- As stated in the 3 March 2011 guidance, if as a matter of last resort, there is a need to utilise military assets in support of humanitarian operations, this should be done according to the principles and criteria set out in the Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) to Support United Nations Activities in Complex Emergencies, in particular:
  - MCDA must complement civilian capabilities;
  - MCDA must be used to meet a very specific requirement;
  - MCDA must be used for limited duration only;
  - MCDA must provide unique advantages in terms of capability and timeliness.
- Any use of foreign military assets to support humanitarian operations in the context of the current crisis should be done in consultation with the ERC and under the direction of the Humanitarian Coordinator, in close consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team. Usage should be based on humanitarian criteria and address identified needs and gaps, and the assets should be provided at no cost to the humanitarian budgets of either Member States or humanitarian organisations. Should there arise a requirement for foreign military assets to support humanitarian operations, OCHA will communicate this to Member States.
- In accordance with Inter Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on the Use of Military or Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys, only under the most exceptional circumstances should humanitarian actors request or use military or armed escorts.
- In order to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian actors and access to populations in need of humanitarian assistance, lines of communication between humanitarian actors and Member States and their military actors, including those who are party to ongoing military operations, must be maintained. OCHA has been tasked by the humanitarian community to fulfill this responsibility, to facilitate required information flow, and to establish appropriate liaison, where and when necessary, between humanitarian and military actors.