



PRESS RELEASE

EU Ambassador unveils UNDP-supported Command and Control Centre in PDMA

Centre to provide critical communications in the event of a disaster

Lahore, 28th January 2012 – Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to Pakistan, inaugurated the Command and Control Centre at the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab today. This Centre has been established under the UNDP-supported One UN Disaster Risk Management Programme, which is an umbrella programme to support the Government of Pakistan at the federal, provincial and local levels to deal with natural and man-made disasters and risks. The One UN DRM Programme puts in place structures and systems to achieve sustainable social, economic and environmental development despite shocks from earthquakes, flooding and other disasters.

The Command and Control Centre is a key component of this Programme. The Centre will provide much needed coordination and centralized command mechanism through which mobile units including the police control room, 1122 control room, Railway Headquarters and District Commissioner's office in Lahore will be connected through a VHF network. This facility will also extend to all districts in Punjab through mobile squads and should facilitate a coordinated response in the event of a disaster.

The Control room will become operational during the flood period (June 15-Sept 15) and will become a permanent feature subsequently to deal with multiple hazards. It will have representatives from PDMA, Metrological and Irrigation Departments, Federal and Provincial Flood Commissions, the Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters and the Pakistan's Army Headquarter's 4 Corps Engineers, among others to ensure that key actors and stakeholders are on board and communications channels are fully functional when a disaster strikes.

"This is a good example of the European Union, the United Nations and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority in Punjab working together to improve Pakistan's ability to withstand major disasters such as flooding and earthquakes. The EU and

Pakistan are about to upgrade their relations through a Strategic Dialogue and a five year EU-Pakistan Engagement Plan has been recently agreed. It covers a wide range of areas from trade and development to political and security affairs.” said Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, Ambassador and Head of European Union Delegation to Pakistan.

Further reiterating the importance of this initiative, Mr. Khalid Sherdil DG PDMA, Punjab said, ‘The Centre is part of a comprehensive programme for formulating disaster risk management policies and plans in the province and will support PDMA as the implementing, coordinating and monitoring body for disaster management in Punjab.

Mr. Toshihiro Tanaka, UNDP Country Director, appreciated the support of the international community, “The European Union has been an important partner for UNDP over the years and supports an absolutely vital element of responding to disasters”, he said

For further information and media assistance, please contact,

Mehreen Saeed, Communication Analyst, Head Communications Unit, UNDP Pakistan
4th Floor Serena Office Complex, Islamabad, Pakistan
Tel: +92-51-8355650, Cell 0300 535 8225 or Email: mehreen.saeed@undp.org
Website: <http://www.undp.org.pk>



Ayesha Babar
Press and PR Officer, Delegation of the EU to Pakistan
Tel: +92-51-2271828
Email: Ayesha.Babar@eeas.europa.eu
Website: www.delpak.ec.europa.eu