Social Computing and Crisis in the New Information Age

Event Summary

8-9 October 2013
Brussels, Belgium

ISC
Intelligence in Science

From October 8th to 9th, participants of the "Social Computing and Crisis in the New Information Age" seminar explored the role that social media and IT has had on disaster and crises situations as social media has become more prominent as a tool for communication. New social media and IT has redefine the way crises are understood on the ground as people have new communication tools and platforms, such as posting information about the situation and response efforts.

To do this, the two day seminar discussed various IT progress in the recent years and how this could lead to a new implications for disaster coordination by using for social media tools and crowdsourcing platforms. The discussions explored ways how these social tools can assist communities and individuals on the scene, particularly how IT advancements can provide better coordination tools and techniques.

In a press release concerning the launch of the new EU Cyber Security Strategy on the 7th of February 2013, Representative Catherine Ashton commented on the need for supporting social media use to "link up" individuals and communities persecuted or in danger on a global scale. She cautioned, however, that international systems for combating potential threats to security must also be in place to ensure that media and information exchanges facilitate crisis management. As Ashton noted, these social computing tools are not completely understood and need to be further explored, especially with regards to the implications for governmental and intergovernmental agencies.

The presentations and discussions at the conference pointed to specific ways that IT can provide useful tools to preventing crises and how to better coordinate disaster situations and can be extremely useful for disaster relief operations provided by the European Union. The wide-range of presentations went from "Phase 0" to humanitarian operations, to cybersecurity, socio-technical behaviour, the perspective from industry, and the way to move forward. Specific presentations, including the agenda can be found on our website:
http://www.iscintelligence.com/event.php?id=107

The potential that IT and social media holds can led to a reduction of the severity of many disaster and crises situations, from preventing the situation, coordination during the event, and post-disaster management. The "virtual flow" that is now available should be harnessed and used as effectively as possible to further enhance capabilities in the field and global cooperation in this coordination will further enhance the efforts made.

To learn more about the seminar, please go to our website www.iscintelligence.com or contact Elizabeth at elizabeth.boorman@iscintelligence.com.