



### GLOBAL PLATFORM HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 10 MAY 2011

On Tuesday, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opened the Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), which is being attended by approximately 3,000 participants, including representatives from over 170 governments, 20 ministers and 30 mayors, and 100 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Throughout the day, participants met in high-level plenary sessions, roundtables on preparedness, nuclear emergencies, local action and wildfire risk, as well as a dialogue with parliamentarians and mayors and a briefing on the 2011 Global Assessment Report.



Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, speaks in the opening plenary.

### BRIEF HISTORY

Building on previous sessions, the Third Session of the Global Platform is being organized around the overall theme: Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow – Increased Investment in Local Action. As the primary multistakeholder forum for all parties involved in DRR, the Global Platform is an opportunity for leaders, decision-makers, practitioners and experts to share their experiences, commit to action and further guide the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) system. The Session was preceded by two days of preparatory meetings and a key feature of this year's Global Platform will be the World Reconstruction Conference.

IISD Reporting Services (IISD RS) will be reporting on a selection of the proceedings from the Global Platform.

### OPENING CEREMONY

During the opening ceremony, chaired by UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiros, Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, called for accelerating efforts in building resilience and a "coalition for action" for DRR. In a video message, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who received UNISDR's Global Champion for Disaster Award, emphasized the importance of having a culture of safety and risk preparedness, as well as the use of local knowledge. Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Managing Director, World Bank, noted the need for an adaptive framework for post-disaster recovery, improving access to financing and integrating risk mitigation and climate adaptation.

Peter Maurer, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Swiss Confederation, highlighted Switzerland's role in providing support for DRR. Gjorge Ivanov, President, Former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia, noted the value of a coordinated approach to DRR and highlighted the South-East European Summit initiative to strengthen regional cooperation. Ajaratou Isatou Njie-Saidy, Vice-President, The Gambia, called for building capacity and resilience of local communities to enhance ownership and sustainability. Shozo Azuma, Senior Vice Minister for Disaster Management, Japan, provided an overview of the consequences of the earthquakes and tsunamis in Japan and noted his country's intention to host a high-level DRR conference in 2012 to share experiences and lessons.

### PLENARY: INVEST TODAY FOR A SAFER TOMORROW - INCREASED INVESTMENT IN LOCAL ACTION

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlined important steps, including: conducting risk assessments of critical infrastructure; raising awareness; and developing broader coalitions of action that include local government and communities.

Moderating the session, Zeinab Badawi, BBC Journalist, recalled her own experiences with disaster mitigation and reduction from northern Sudan. Prema Gopalan, Executive Director, Swayam Shikshan Prayog, said local communities have the capacity to handle risks and build resilience. Marcelo Luis Ebrard Casaubón, Mayor of Mexico City, noted that while local authority capacities are important, additional expertise and technical and financial support are also needed. John Carter, Minister for Civil Defence, New Zealand, said educating and preparing individuals to promote individual responsibility is critical.

Badawi asked panelists how to ensure local-level action, with Luo Pingfei, Vice Minister, Ministry of Civil Defence, China, highlighting the importance of public awareness

and coordination between central and local government to realize synergies. Abdou Sane, Member of Parliament, Senegal, favored integrated approaches and developing a risk prevention culture. Robert Glasser, Secretary General, CARE International, emphasized the challenges to integrate risk reduction policies within the wider development framework. Several panelists underlined the importance to tailor DRR mechanisms and activities to local needs.

Sandra Wu, President and CEO, Kokusai Kogyo, Japan, recommended leveraging the expertise of the private sector to engage responsibly in DRR. Gopalan said grassroots women's groups are critical for raising local communities' awareness of risk. Casaubón said national funds are insufficient, calling for global funding initiatives. Sane noted the need for political will to allocate financial resources.



Sandra Wu, President and CEO, Kokusai Kogyo, Japan

## PLENARY STATEMENTS

Masuku Themby Nhlanganiso, Deputy Prime Minister, Swaziland, noted a number of undertakings to align Swaziland's policies with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), including: establishing a disaster management centre; creating a centre for emergency preparedness; and incorporating DRR into school curricula. Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Tan Sri Abdul Aziz, Minister at the Prime Minister Department, Malaysia, said that incorporating DRR into the country's development plans has encouraged civil society participation. Ahmed Zaki, Deputy Minister of Housing and Environment, Maldives, outlined recent DRR activities: preparing a disaster and climate risk profile; improving monitoring services at the Department of Meteorology; and establishing a multi-departmental committee on early warning and emergency communications.

Syamsul Maarif, Chief, National Agency for Disaster Management, Indonesia, outlined efforts to promote DRR and a culture of safety awareness. Minjur Dorji, Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan, highlighted the importance of integrating disaster management with cultural heritage, including traditional knowledge. George Zedginidze, Deputy Minister of Environment Protection, Georgia, called on the global community to renew its commitments to address DRR, and described a joint project with UNICEF incorporating DRR into school curricula.

Hasan Ghadami, Deputy Minister of the Interior, Iran, noted challenges to DRR, including the lack of: effective investment; institutional and technical capacities; and cooperation and partnership between relevant stakeholders. Dang Quang Minh, Deputy Director Disaster Reduction

Centre, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Vietnam, said strong community involvement is crucial for DRR and climate change adaptation.

Manuel Dengo, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica, emphasized the need to mainstream DRR at sectoral and local levels. Toni Frisch, Head, Humanitarian Aid Department, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, said disaster preparedness is an integral part of the development agenda, and called for increased investment in risk prevention and preparedness. Attila Nyikos, National Directorate General for Disaster Management, Hungary, on behalf of the EU, called for concrete actions and mobilizing new donors for DRR, supported initiatives such as risk sharing, and urged enhanced DRR practices at subregional and local levels, with special emphasis on vulnerable communities.

Jan Knutsson, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Sweden, proposed that the outcomes of the Global Platform be part of a global action plan for implementing the HFA at local, national and regional levels and define measurable targets for gaps identified in the HFA's mid-term review. Einar Hebogaard Jensen, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, said that DRR is based on common sense and is the first line of defense against disasters. He expressed hope that the Global Platform will be a vehicle and inspiration for investors and policy-makers to understand that not investing in DRR today will have expensive consequences in the long term.

Laurent Michel, Director-General, Risk Prevention, Ministry for the Environment, Energy, Sustainable Development and Regional Planning, France, proposed consideration of a collective work to reflect on major disasters, their needs and available capacities. He advocated the strengthening of scientific approaches and promoting multidisciplinary within DRR.

Vicente Núñez, Director, National Emergency Office, Chile, said that since the earthquake in 2010, Chile has worked on strengthening early warning systems, increased interagency cooperation and integrating DRR within education. He lamented the lack of available funding for prevention and mitigation policies and the need to increase private sector involvement and volunteers. Gabriel Fuks, Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Argentina, described experiences in integrating DRR policies in land-use planning. Representatives from Public Private Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction said the private sector has an important role to play in managing disaster risk and building resilience, noting that for every US\$ 1 invested in resilience and prevention, between US\$ 4-7 are saved in response.

## ROUNDTABLES

**NUCLEAR EMERGENCIES:** Ban Ki-moon opened the roundtable discussion on strengthening national and international preparedness for nuclear and technological emergencies. He said that the recent accident at Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant exposed gaps in how a country and the international system deal with safety breaches, and that more needs to be done to address the nexus between natural disasters and nuclear safety. The UN Secretary-General announced a high-level meeting on the issue, scheduled for 22 September 2011 during the UN General Assembly.

Session moderator Rashid Khalikov, Director, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said that the international community needs to work together to reduce the impact of nuclear disasters, particularly through consolidating response systems, integrating environmental risks in preparedness activities and ensuring accurate communications following an accident.



L-R: Kenichi Suganuma, Japan, Laurent Michel, France, Tibor Tóth, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Yuri Brazhnikov, Russia, Rashid Khalikov, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva (Moderator), Elena Buglova, International Atomic Energy Agency, and Maria Neira, World Health Organization

Kenichi Suganuma, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the UN, Geneva, briefed participants on the current situation at the Fukushima nuclear plant, stressing that the government was doing its utmost to move from the emergency response phase to the stabilization action phase, and that outcomes of an investigation into the accident will be shared with the international community to contribute to better global safety standards. Yuri Brazhnikov, Head, Russian National Emergency Response Corps., said that past nuclear accidents, including Chernobyl, should serve as the basis for preparedness and that multilateral mechanisms should be put in place to respond quickly when the next accident occurs. Laurent Michel called for better coordination between countries, improved exchange of information and best crisis management practices to ensure high safety levels. Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, asked participants to think about how to improve safety and investments, and to involve the private sector, especially as they are often owners and managers of such risk-prone facilities as nuclear plants.

**PREPAREDNESS:** David Nabarro, Senior UN System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, chaired the roundtable. Christine Marin, Member of Parliament, France, favored linking political, financial and aid networks. Vicente Núñez outlined national preparedness initiatives, stressing the importance of integrating disaster response planning into the government's agenda. Drawing on lessons from recent years, Rashid Khalikov, OCHA, said building and sustaining preparedness capacity is essential, and noted that more funding is being allocated to preparedness activities. Geoffrey Love, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), emphasized the importance of adopting a multi-hazard approach, building relationships in advance and working with the media. Bruce Aylward, World Health Organization (WHO), recommended an all-society approach, and said lessons learned need to be incorporated into policy, programming and practice. Ronald Waldman, USAID, outlined experiences on business continuity planning, simulation exercises and private sector preparedness.

In the ensuing discussion, one participant said that tools developed by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency to support coordination of a certain disaster response have proved to be generic. Another participant outlined funding mechanisms for preparedness in India, stressing the need for preparedness indicators. Some favored integrating preparedness activities into sustainable development programmes and involving all stakeholders, while others highlighted the importance of scientific knowledge, mitigation plans and the implementation of simplified customs regulations. One participant noted that preparedness activities have net benefits in the present and called for further

organizational innovations, while another underlined the merits to simulation exercises and strengthened institutional preparedness.

**LOCAL ACTION:** Andrew Bidnell, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), moderated the roundtable on ensuring a return on investment in local action. Marcus Oxley, GNDR, said reducing disaster loss requires local risk governance and enabling return on investments, highlighting as critical issues: transparency and accountability; inclusion and participation; and local capability. Haydee Rodriguez, President, Union of Cooperatives of Las Brumas, Nicaragua, described frameworks for organizing local women groups and grassroots organizations for resilience building, emphasizing programmes to qualify local women's capacity for creating community risk maps.

Keith Hinds, Major of Portmore, Jamaica, said local governments should act as developer of the local economy, suggesting housing and school development as areas to align local risk reduction with investor returns through public-private partnerships or innovative funding mechanisms. Abdou Sane, Member of Parliament, Senegal, described progress that his country has made in developing a culture of risk prevention, highlighting: national priority setting for resource distribution; a local authorities network; awareness raising on risks and risk responses; and improvement of risk communication. David Cadman, President, ICLEI-Local governments for sustainability, said more than 3,500 cities have formulated climate protection strategies but can only make a difference within appropriate national frameworks.

Yoka Brandt, Director-General for Development Cooperation, the Netherlands, called for innovative ways of funding local risk governance, including through leveraging private sector funding and coordinating international funding efforts across policy areas. Philip Verges, Small Equity Initiative, said building capacity and frameworks in developing countries can enable large investment flows as these countries offer high returns to investors willing to take on higher risks.

**ADDRESSING WILDLAND FIRE RISK:** During this roundtable discussion, chaired by Paola Deda, UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Pilar Gallego, Ministry of Interior, Spain, discussed an integrated management approach in preventing and fighting of forest fires, including an alerts dissemination tool. Alexander Chupriyan, Deputy Minister for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Natural Disasters, Russian Federation, highlighted his country's response to wildfires in Russia in 2010.

One participant asked what preventive measures were taken to tackle fires in Russia, with Chupriyan noting that the implementation of those measures did not prevent the fires. Phil Cottle, ForestRe Ltd., recommended fire risk modeling for firefighting resource planning and noted that the key to



Shozo Azuma, Japan

avoiding significant losses is to prevent large catastrophic fire events. In a video link with South Africa, Sundar Sharma, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Nepal, said that fire has traditionally been used as a tool for land management in his region. He also highlighted new community-based wildfire management models. Kholiwe Luvuno, Working on Fire, South Africa, described South Africa's FireWise Communities Programme, a fire awareness and prevention project. Another participant noted that in Togo, firebreaks and early-warning systems are used to limit the impacts of fire.

**STRENGTHENING LOCAL RECOVERY:** As part of the World Reconstruction Conference taking place within the Global Platform, Chair David Taylor, World Vision International, asked panelists to identify simple, workable actions to strengthen local recovery. Shozo Azuma, Senior Vice Minister for Disaster Management, Japan, said priorities after the earthquake in Japan included the construction of temporary housing and revitalization of local economies. He described good practices, including movement of settlements to higher grounds and evacuation drills for school children. Syamsul Maarif, National Agency for Disaster Management, Indonesia, said external assistance during recovery can lead to dependency on assistance providers, which harms the social capital and capabilities of affected populations. Robert Glasser, CARE International, emphasized the importance of local ownership for: decision-making close to affected populations; sustainable outcomes; cost-effectiveness; use of appropriate technology, material and skills; and empowerment. He lamented that donor driven agendas tend to favor visible programmes and short-term interventions.

Abdul Shakoor Sindhu, Rural Development Policy Institute, Pakistan, called for capacity building to improve human resources and local systems. Guiteau Jean-Pierre, National Red Cross Society, Haiti, described quality standards for recovery, highlighting: training engineers for building assessment; and involvement and remuneration of local population. Aimee Ansari, Oxfam, cautioned that improvements from a government perspective do not automatically match the needs and priorities of affected populations. Richard Rumsey, World Vision International, said local level engagement saves lives and livelihoods and supports good business practices. Mario Flores, Habitat for Humanity International, advocated on-site reconstruction and use of local skills and materials. Wrapping up, Chair Taylor said messages to communicate to the high-level panels are the need for inclusiveness and participation, recovery frameworks and financial support.

## FEATURED EVENTS

**GLOBAL ASSESSMENT REPORT BRIEFING:** Margareta Wahlström chaired the session on the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and

Agriculture, African Union, noted that the Report provides insights on reducing vulnerabilities by strengthening risk governance capacity. Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN, said that declining ecosystems is one of the main drivers of global risk and that disaster risk management should focus on the relationship between nature and disasters.

Andrew Maskrey, UNISDR, highlighted key findings of the report, including evidence that: economic loss risk continues to increase across all regions, whereas mortality risk is lower compared to 20 years ago; drought is a hidden risk caused by poor water and land-use management; governments are liable for a significant part of expected losses but do not have the contingency financing to match the liabilities incurred; and risk can be mitigated by reducing vulnerabilities, and through ecosystem-based disaster-risk management.

Geoffrey Love, WMO, highlighted that drought is a complex phenomenon not always associated with rainfall. Tricia Holly Davis, Willis Group, emphasized that disasters impact development activities. One participant highlighted the importance of collaboration between private enterprises and local communities.

**DIALOGUE WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS AND MAYORS:** Mel Senen Sarmiento, House of Representatives, the Philippines, moderating the session, noted that DRR is critical in bridging the gap between local communities and national governments. Xie Ruiwu, Vice Mayor of Chengdu, Sichuan, China, outlined actions undertaken following the earthquake in 2008, noting that recovery efforts centered on the well-being of the population. Xie said that both public and private sectors undertook reconstructions tasks. Saumura Tiulong, International Parliamentarian Union Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, Cambodia, summarized the importance of DRR, stressing that disaster preparedness is imperative. She called for parliamentarians to play a bigger role in awareness raising.

Underscoring the importance of relevant legislation, oversight and budget appropriation for DRR, Alex Byarugaba, Member of Parliament, Uganda, called for increased capacity within countries for disaster preparedness and recovery. Nelly Gray de Cerdán, Senator of Mendoza, Argentina, advocated for DRR to be incorporated into legislation governing urban planning. She also stressed that political views need to be transcended when engaging in DRR. Khalifa Sall, Mayor of Dakar, Senegal, encouraged future collaboration with both private and public sectors in efforts to plan and implement DRR. Peter Williams, Chief Technology Officer, IBM, noted the importance of a common understanding of all aspects of DRR for effective planning and implementation.

In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted: accessing funds at national, regional and international level; the involvement of all sectors in DRR; and legislation to compel preparedness.



Andrew Maskrey, UNISDR