



### SUMMARY OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION: 8-13 MAY 2011

The Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was held from Sunday, 8 to Friday, 13 May 2011 at the Centre International de Conférences de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland. More than 2,600 participants attended the international conference, including representatives from over 168 governments, 65 non-governmental organizations and 25 intergovernmental organizations.

Given recent disasters, particularly the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan on 11 March 2011, the need for urgent action around DRR and building resilience is stronger than ever. As the primary multistakeholder forum for all parties involved in DRR, the Global Platform is an important 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.

Held under the theme “Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow – Increased Investment in Local Action,” the meeting built on the findings and recommendations of the Global Platform’s second session held in 2009, as well as the results of the Mid-term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action and the 2011 Global Assessment Report on DRR.

Following two days of preparatory meetings held on Sunday 8, and Monday, 9 May, participants met in plenary sessions from Tuesday, 10 to Friday 13 May, as well as roundtable and thematic sessions to discuss such issues as reconstruction and recovery, the economics of DRR, and synergies with the international climate change and development agenda. The Global Platform also included the first World Reconstruction Conference (WRC), hosted by the World Bank, creating even further opportunities to highlight and address development challenges in responding to disasters triggered by natural hazards.

This report provides a summary of a selection of the sessions convened during the Third Session of the Global Platform. The opening ceremony, themed plenary sessions and plenary statements are summarized first, followed by the: informal plenary; roundtables; a selection of the featured events; and the WRC sessions, excluding thematic sessions. The report then outlines the Global Platform and WRC joint outcomes and feedback session and concludes with the closing ceremony. More detailed information and photographs can be found at: <http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/gpdr/2011/>



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

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Natural hazards, such as floods, droughts, earthquakes and tsunamis, are becoming more regular and intense, and are having an increasing impact on people and communities. Compounding the situation, poor planning, poverty and a range of other underlying factors create conditions of vulnerability that result in insufficient capacity or measures to reduce the potentially negative consequences of natural hazards and disasters. Thus, vulnerability contributes as much to the

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magnitude of the disaster impacts as do the natural hazards themselves. Action to reduce risk has grown in importance on the international agenda and is seen by many as essential to safeguard sustainable development efforts and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

DRR includes all the policies, strategies and measures that can make people, cities and countries more resilient to hazards and reduce risk and vulnerability to disasters. Recognizing that natural hazards can threaten any one at any time, the UNISDR system builds on partnerships and takes a global approach to disaster reduction, seeking to involve every individual and community towards the goals of reducing the loss of lives, socio-economic setbacks and the environmental damages caused by natural hazards. The following highlights the development of DRR on the international agenda.

**INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION:** An increase in human casualties and property damage in the 1980s motivated the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1989 to declare the 1990s the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) (Resolution 44/236). The aim of the IDNDR was to address disaster prevention in the context of a range of hazards, including earthquakes, windstorms, tsunamis, floods, landslides, volcanic eruptions, wildfires, grasshopper and locust infestations, and drought and desertification.

**YOKOHAMA STRATEGY AND PLAN OF ACTION:** One of the main outcomes of the IDNDR was the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World and its Plan of Action, adopted in 1994 at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction held in Yokohama, Japan. The Yokohama Strategy set guidelines for action on prevention, preparedness and mitigation of disaster risk. These guidelines were based on a set of principles that stress the importance of risk assessment, disaster prevention and preparedness, the capacity to prevent, reduce and mitigate disasters, and early warning. The principles also stated that the international community should share technology to prevent, reduce and mitigate disasters, and demonstrate a strong political determination in the field of disaster reduction.

**INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION:** At its 54th session in 1999, the UNGA decided to continue the activities on disaster prevention and vulnerability reduction carried out during the IDNDR through the establishment of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). An Inter-Agency Secretariat and an Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) for the implementation of the ISDR were also established (Resolutions 54/219 and 56/195, respectively). Among its mandated tasks, the IATF/DR was to convene *ad hoc* expert meetings on issues related to disaster reduction.

**WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION:** The World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) was held from 18-22 January 2005 in Kobe, Japan. The aim of the conference was to increase the international profile of DRR, promote its integration into development planning and practice, and strengthen local and national capacities to address the causes of disasters that hamper development. The 168 States attending the conference adopted

the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and the Hyogo Declaration. The HFA was endorsed by the UNGA in Resolution 60/195, and committed governments to five priorities for action to: ensure that DRR is a national and local priority, with a strong institutional basis for implementation; identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning; use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels; reduce the underlying risk factors; and strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

**GLOBAL PLATFORM:** In 2006, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs launched a consultative process to consider practical ways of strengthening the ISDR system to support governments in meeting their commitments to implement the HFA. As outlined in the UN Secretary-General's reports on the implementation of the ISDR, the main aims were to extend participation of governments and organizations, raise the profile of disaster reduction, and construct a more coherent international effort to support national disaster reduction activities. A result of the consultations was the proposal to convene the Global Platform for DRR as an expanded and reformed successor to the IATF/DR. The Global Platform was envisaged to serve as the primary multistakeholder forum for all parties involved in DRR in order to raise awareness on DRR, share experience and guide the ISDR system.

**FIRST SESSION OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DRR:** The First Session of the Global Platform was held from 5-7 June 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland. It included a high-level dialogue on DRR challenges and opportunities, a series of workshops on DRR as a national priority and integrating DRR into sector agendas, and plenary sessions on assessing and implementing the HFA. Discussions resulted in a Chair's Summary that was included in the UN Secretary-General's report to the UNGA on the implementation of the ISDR.

**SECOND SESSION OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DRR:** The Second Session of the Global Platform was held from 16-19 June 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to assess progress made on DRR since the Global Platform's first session, and to increase commitment and measurable actions to implement the HFA. In particular, participants focused on increasing investment in DRR, reducing disaster risk in a changing climate and enabling community resilience through preventive action. The Chair's Summary that emerged from the meeting helped set the agenda for the global DRR community to prepare for the UN climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009, as well as for the Mid-term Review of the HFA.

**INFORMAL THEMATIC DEBATE OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UNGA ON DRR:** This informal thematic debate took place at UN headquarters in New York, US, on 9 February 2011. Organized under the auspices of the office of the UNGA President, with support from UNISDR, the debate consisted of two panel discussions: the first panel focused on promoting investment for DRR, while the second panel addressed the challenges of DRR in urban settings and





L-R: Shozo Azuma, Senior Vice Minister for Disaster Management, Japan; Gjorge Ivanov, President, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General; Asha-Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary-General; Ajaratou Isatou Njie-Saidy, Vice President, The Gambia; and Peter Maurer, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Swiss Confederation

how to build resilience in cities. The outcomes of the debate contributed to the agenda of the Third Session of the Global Platform for DRR.

#### MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE HFA 2005-2015:

The Mid-term Review, released in March 2011, highlights progress in DRR, critically analyzing the extent to which implementation of the HFA has progressed, as well as identifying ways to assist countries and their institutional partners to increase commitment, resourcing and efforts in its further implementation. According to the review, progress in DRR is occurring, especially institutionally in the passing of national legislation, establishment of early warning systems, and strengthening of disaster preparedness and response. However, it raises concerns about: the lack of systematic multihazard risk assessments and early warning systems, factoring in social and economic vulnerabilities; the poor integration of DRR into sustainable development policies and planning at national and international levels; and the insufficient level of implementation of the HFA at the local level.

### REPORT OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

#### OPENING CEREMONY

On Tuesday afternoon, Asha-Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary-General, chaired the official opening of the Third Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon delivered the keynote address, noting that the aim of the conference was to reduce disaster risk through technology, knowledge and economic tools. He called for accelerating efforts in building resilience and a “coalition for action” for DRR, especially as global climate change, increasing weather-related hazards and nuclear safety add an even greater sense of urgency. The UN Secretary-General added that, despite the economic challenges for countries and communities to invest in DRR measures, small investments in building, planning and training could yield remarkable results. He urged participants to work together to make the world better and safer for all.

In a video message, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who received the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)’s Global Champion

for Disaster Award, emphasized the importance of having a culture of safety and risk preparedness, as well as the use



Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Managing Director, World Bank

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 tsunami in Japan and noted his country’s intention to host a high-level DRR conference in 2012 to share experiences and lessons.

#### PLENARY SESSIONS

Participants met in three plenary sessions on Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning entitled: Invest for a Safer Tomorrow – Increased Investment in Local Action; The Economics of Disaster – Effective Financial Instruments to Reduce Risk; and Climate Change Adaptation.

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

On Tuesday afternoon, in this plenary session, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlined important steps in DRR, 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 in 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 authorities' capacity is 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.



**Zeinab Badawi, BBC Journalist**

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 DRR policies within the wider development



**Abdou Sane, Member of Parliament, Senegal**

framework. Sandra Wu, President and CEO, Kokusai Kogyo, Japan, recommended leveraging the expertise of the private sector to engage responsibly in DRR.

Several panelists underlined the importance to tailor DRR mechanisms and activities to local needs. 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.

**THE ECONOMICS OF DISASTER – EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS TO REDUCE RISK:** On Wednesday afternoon, Asha-Rose Migiros chaired this session on the economics of disaster. Moderated by Raghida Dergham, Al Hayat News Agency, panelists discussed national, local and corporate spending, and the most effective instruments to ensure that investments reduce risk from natural hazards. They also provided recommendations, *inter alia*, to mainstream DRR into international and national development agendas, engage the private sector and empower local authorities.

On country-level DRR efforts, Seri Mohamed Aziz, Minister at the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia, discussed his country's stormwater



**Seri Mohamed Aziz, Minister at the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia**

project to mitigate urban floods and real-time flood forecasting information exchange. Kristalina Georgieva, Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, EU, explained that disaster risks can undermine development and highlighted the importance of working with disaster-prone countries to make sure that investments in those countries can resist disasters.

Woochong Um, Deputy Director-General, Asian Development Bank, emphasized the importance of generating financing for DRR and harnessing the knowledge of the private sector. Oscar Ortiz, Mayor of Santa Tecla, El Salvador, saw disaster as an opportunity to rebuild infrastructure and noted the importance of leadership and building local capacity. Nirankar Saxena, Director, Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, highlighted the importance of leveraging greater financial resources and technologies. On building resilience and maintaining awareness, Ortiz stressed the role of education and collective memory.

In response to questions from participants on whether to make DRR a conditionality or a safeguard, Um suggested DRR is already part of rapid assessments. Georgieva called for greater knowledge sharing. Saxena emphasized the positive role of microfinance in DRR.

**CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION:** On Thursday morning, the plenary on climate change adaptation and DRR was chaired by Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and moderated by Raghida Dergham, Al Hayat News Agency. Panelists discussed opportunities to harmonize DRR and adaptation in national policies and in the design and implementation of resilience-building programmes.



**Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, WMO**

Socorro Flores Liera, Minister and Special Advisor for Climate Change, Mexico, called for more specific information to understand how to adapt to climate change and its impacts on agriculture, hydrology and species conservation. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Parliamentarian, Bangladesh, highlighted the importance of looking at the impacts of climate change on livelihoods. He said that in his country, projects, such as early warning systems, increasing the capacity of rivers to avoid floods or raising homesteads, are showing the value of integrating DRR and climate change.

Mamadou Traoré, Secretary-General, Mali Red Cross, emphasized the role of civil society in responding to climate change. Cheikh Mamadou Abiboulaye Dieye, Mayor of St.



Moderated by Raghida Dergham (center), Al Hayat News Agency, panelists in the plenary on economics of disaster discussed national, local and corporate spending, and the most effective instruments to ensure that investments reduce risk from natural hazards



Louis, Senegal, described his city's efforts in setting up climate change observation centers and running training programmes as well as the role of teachers as a "brigade for climate change." Jan Egeland, Director, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, lamented that a lot of knowledge about climate change adaptation is not reaching those who need it the most. He added that as many as 70 countries do not have the capacity to understand and implement information on climate change adaptation.

Jack Dangermond, Founder, Environmental Research Institute, US, highlighted the importance of geographic understanding in DRR and climate change adaptation and the role of education through geospatial visualization. He said that the lack of open-data sharing policies is an obstacle to greater awareness, including social obstacles to using climate change information. Marcus Oxley, Chairman, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), UK, said that there are many projects, each requiring a separate regime taking up institutional and financial resources, which are virtually trying to achieve the same thing.

In an ensuing discussion, participants from Bolivia and Cuba stressed the need for additional climate adaptation resources, while a participant from Switzerland emphasized the importance of linking knowledge with decision-makers and the role of leadership. In the closing remarks, Chowdhury stressed the focus on mitigation as "otherwise it is looking at the symptoms and not the causes" of climate change.

## PLENARY STATEMENTS

On Tuesday afternoon and throughout the day on Wednesday and Thursday, participants heard statements by representatives of governments, IGOs and NGOs.

Participants highlighted a number of important issues in their official statements to the Global Platform. On education, John Carter, Minister of Civil Defence, New Zealand, Motloheloa Phooko, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Lesotho, and Stephen Ramroop, Ministry of National Security, Trinidad and Tobago, noted it was important to include DRR in education curricula. Alfonso del Alamo, Madrid City Council, Spain, with Elroy Africa, Director-General, Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, South Africa, said that knowledge, training and exchange of best practices



Cheikh Mamadou Abiboulaye Dieye, Mayor of St. Louis, Senegal



Jack Dangermond, Founder, Environmental Research Institute, US

are important components of DRR. Mohammed Sani Sidi, Director-General, National Emergency Management Agency, Nigeria, highlighted the use of DRR programmes at university level to increase capacity.

Ato Mitiku Kassa, State Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ethiopia, said that the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) ensured that Ethiopia's DRR management is aligned with development policies. 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. Minjur Dorji, Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan, highlighted the importance of integrating disaster management with cultural heritage, including traditional knowledge. Loti Yates, Director, National Disaster Management Office, Solomon Islands, said her country has worked to ensure that DRR is gender sensitive. Ahmed Rezaq, Director-General of Civil Defense, Palestinian Authority, said that volunteer groups are implementing wide-scale DRR awareness campaigns throughout many towns and cities. Pande Lazarevski, Director, Crisis Management Centre, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, noted that DRR is a lifestyle change.



Ato Mitiku Kassa, State Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ethiopia

A number of countries outlined national DRR efforts. Me Ousmane Ngom, Minister of the Interior, Senegal, noted the construction of the Great Atlantic Wall to combat coastal erosion and the Great Green Wall to combat desertification. Seitkazhe Okasov, Ministry for Emergency Situations, Kazakhstan, highlighted signing a memorandum of understanding for a Central Asian center to respond to natural disasters. Ahmed Zaki, Deputy Minister of Housing and Environment, Maldives, noted his country is preparing a disaster and climate risk profile, improving monitoring services, and establishing a multi-departmental committee on early warning and emergency communications. José Luís Guterres, Vice Prime Minister, Timor-Leste, underscored their DRR policy allowing, *inter alia*, the development of contingency plans and the establishment of necessary infrastructure. Masuku Themby Nhlanguiso, Deputy Prime Minister, Swaziland, noted establishing a disaster management center and creating a center for emergency preparedness.

Vicente Núñez, Director, National Emergency Office, Chile, said that since the earthquake in 2010, Chile has worked on strengthening early warning systems and increased interagency cooperation. Gustavo Leal, General Coordinator, National System for Emergencies, Uruguay, said that his country has moved from a system of disaster response to integrated disaster risk management. Margaret Davidson, Director, Coastal Services Center, U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said that DRR should be the cornerstone of adaptation policies. Henrique Vicêncio, National Authority for Civil Protection, Portugal, and Pilar Gallego Berrueto,



Stephen Ramroop, Ministry of National Security, Trinidad and Tobago

Director-General, Civil Protection and Emergencies, Spain, announced the establishment of their National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Partnerships and cooperation were highlighted as important steps for formulating and implementing DRR. Roger Tchoungui, Assistant Secretary-General, the Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS), said that ECCAS is embarking on a number of partnerships with multilateral organizations to implement DRR effectively. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the UN, Geneva, with Luisa Tuiafitu Malolo, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Tonga, called for increased multisectoral partnerships for DRR. María del Pilar Cornejo R. de Grunauer, National Secretary, Risk Management, Ecuador, said it is essential for central government to work with local communities. Laurent Michel, Director-General, Risk Prevention, Ministry for the Environment, Energy, Sustainable Development and Regional Planning, France, cited strengthening scientific approaches and promoting multidisciplinary within DRR. Yahya Abdul Rahman, Director, National Disaster Management Centre Brunei Darussalam, Brunei, and José Ernesto Betancourt Lavastida, Deputy Head, Civil Defence, Cuba, said their countries had experience success with using a multisectoral approach for DRR. Mohamed Fawzi, Director of Crisis, Disaster Management and DRR Sector, Egypt, underscored the importance of cooperation at the international level.

On local-level action and capacity, Alan March, AusAID, noted that DRR is a shared responsibility. Matthias Schmale, Under-Secretary-General, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, called for governments to strengthen the role of communities and high-risk people in DRR. Dang Quang Minh, Deputy Director, Disaster Reduction Center, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam, said strong community involvement is crucial for DRR and climate change adaptation. Corazon Juliano-Soliman, Minister of Social Welfare and Development, the Philippines, with Jennie Richmond, Head, Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Policy Group, and Kim Yong-Kyun, Director, National Emergency Management Agency, Republic of Korea, called for increased capacity building at the local level.

Manuel Dengo emphasized the need to mainstream DRR at sectoral and local levels. Attila Nyikos, National Directorate General for Disaster Management, Hungary, on behalf of the EU, supported initiatives such as risk sharing, and urged enhanced DRR practices at subregional and local levels, with special emphasis on vulnerable communities.

Hege Hertzberg, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, underscored the importance of competent national institutions, with A.E. Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, India, noting a process to strengthen institutions at all levels. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Disaster Management, Sri Lanka, and Jorge Antonio Meléndez, Director-General, Civil Protection, El Salvador, advocated investing in improvements in health, and, with Obaid Salem Al Zaabi, Ambassador, United Arab Emirates, in education. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Member of Parliament, Bangladesh, highlighted the establishment of parliamentary oversight for DRR.

Elizabeth Wright-Koteka, Director, Central Policy and Planning Office, Cook Islands, announced the establishment of a disaster risk management trust fund in her country, which she hoped would mobilize local and international funds. Latifa Benazza, Ambassador and Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Algeria, lamented the lack of financial and technical resources. Eltayeb Osman, General Directorate for Civil Defense, Sudan, said that preparedness and response is required for disasters but is a great burden on their budget. Muhammad Saidur Rahman, Director, Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre, called for clarity on the modalities of DRR spending as there is little effect from using trickle-down approaches.

Einar Hebogaard Jensen, Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, expressed hope that the Global Platform will be a vehicle and inspiration for investors and policy-makers in understanding that not investing in DRR today will have expensive consequences in the long term. Representatives from Public Private Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction said the private sector has an important role to play in managing DRR and building resilience, noting that for every US\$1 invested in resilience and prevention, between US\$4-7 are saved in response. Mufeed Al-Halemi, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Water and Environment, Yemen, cited weak institutional infrastructure, inadequacy of public awareness and, with Nada Yamout, Councillor of Beirut City, Lebanon, and Prasith Detphommatheth, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao PDR, cited limited financial resources as factors hindering DRR progress.



**Elizabeth Wright-Koteka**, Director, Central Policy and Planning Office, Cook Islands



**Mufeed Al-Halemi**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Water and Environment, Yemen

## INFORMAL PLENARY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE HFA MID-TERM REVIEW



**Co-Chair Margareta Wahlström**, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction

Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, co-chaired two informal plenary sessions on the implementation of the outcomes of the HFA Mid-term Review, together with Kenzo Oshima, Senior Vice President of Japan International Cooperation Agency, on Wednesday afternoon and Manuel Dengo, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN, Geneva, on Thursday afternoon.

**INFORMAL PLENARY 1:** On Wednesday, Co-chair Wahlström said the aim of the first informal plenary was to reflect on the Mid-term Review of the HFA and ways





L-R: Co-Chairs **Margareta Wahlström**, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, and **Kenzo Oshima**, Senior Vice President of Japan International Cooperation Agency

forward, focusing on local, national and regional levels, local communities and cross-cutting issues. Co-chair Oshima called for innovative approaches to mainstreaming DRR



**Letizia Rossano**, Senior Coordinator of the HFA Mid-term Review

into sustainable development and climate change adaptation. Letizia Rossano, Senior Coordinator of the HFA Mid-term Review, presented the Review's main findings, noting that progress in DRR is taking place, especially from an institutional point of view, by the passing of national legislation, setting up of early warning systems, and establishment of cooperation

agreements and joint plans of action at the regional level. She noted that issues in need of further attention include: holistic and strategic ways of implementation; cross-cutting issues; and cost-benefit analysis. Co-chair Wahlström opened the floor for comments.

Many participants agreed that cost-benefit analysis and tools for assessing losses are very important to measure effectiveness and encourage investments in DRR, while others emphasized the need for baseline data to better assess progress. Co-chair Wahlström noted that national investments are often insufficiently measured, and one participant said the economic benefits of DRR need more focus. Several participants noted that not enough attention is placed on vulnerability and resilience, with one participant calling for improved integration of resilience into DRR policy and plans, and normative instruments, and another emphasizing the need for advocacy efforts to build resilience. Some participants proposed that countries present annual reports on their implementation of the HFA.

Participants also raised the significance of local level involvement and empowerment to respond effectively to disasters. The discussion also focused on improved involvement of the private sector, and further investments in preparedness and prevention, as well as involving indigenous communities in the HFA process.

Some participants discussed the need to keep the HFA a voluntary tool, and others stressed the importance of developing DRR standards for better guidance, supporting the National Platforms, and setting targets at the national level. In closing the session, Co-chair Oshima proposed the creation of an inter-global platform mechanism to help advance HFA implementation.

**INFORMAL PLENARY 2:** On Thursday, the second informal plenary focused on strengthening institutions, defining how to advance HFA implementation and the role of the international community. Co-chair Manuel Dengo, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN, Geneva, noted the need to strengthen institutions, standardize evaluation and accountability systems, and promote knowledge and motivation to build more resilient communities. Rossano reported on additional outcomes of the Mid-term Review, including: growing multilateral political momentum for DRR; the need to mainstream DRR in development programming and funding; and the need for common standards and guidance tools. She said suggestions for accelerating HFA implementation include monitoring accountability and conducting comprehensive risk assessments.

Participants engaged in discussions on the need to: establish results-oriented standards and tools; support the work of National Platforms; utilize outcomes of regional DRR fora; and quantify risks. To increase accountability and transparency, participants favored: peer reviews; financial tracking systems; and involving all stakeholders. One participant shared experiences of regional evaluation frameworks to minimize the reporting burden of individual countries.

Participants also outlined successful HFA implementation at the local level that could be replicated in other areas, with others noting the importance to link DRR to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20). Highlighting the momentum created by UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient Campaign, one participant suggested creating a Resilient Communities Campaign.

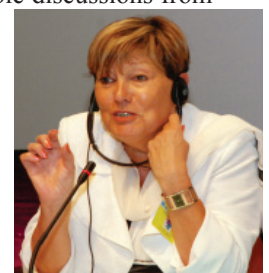
Several participants recommended discussing the changing role of the UNISDR, keeping in mind the close links between DRR and development issues. Others noted the importance of strengthening UNISDR and stepping up its cooperation with regional IGOs. On ways forward, participants supported the creation of an inter-global platform mechanism to enhance HFA implementation, taking advantage of the priority placed on DRR by, among others, the UN Secretary-General and the World Bank.

Co-chair Wahlström summarized the discussion, and noted the consensus to extend the HFA Mid-term Review advisory group to synthesize recommendations on standards, tools and baselines. She also suggested that the UN Secretary-General set up a high-level expert group focusing on how to carry the HFA forward.

## ROUNDTABLES

Participants convened in 11 roundtable discussions from Tuesday to Thursday focusing on a variety of topics related to DRR.

**PREPAREDNESS:** On Tuesday morning, David Nabarro, Senior UN System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, chaired the roundtable on preparedness. Christine Marin, Member of Parliament, France, favored linking political, financial and aid networks. Vicente Núñez outlined



**Christine Marin**, Member of Parliament, France

national preparedness initiatives, stressing the importance of integrating disaster response planning into the government's agenda. Drawing on lessons from recent years, Rashid Khalikov, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (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



Bruce Aylward, WHO

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 of simulation exercises and strengthened institutional preparedness.

**NUCLEAR EMERGENCIES:** On Tuesday morning, UN Secretary-General 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 UNGA.

Session moderator Khalikov 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.

Kenichi Suganuma 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 asked participants to consider 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.

**LOCAL ACTION:** On Tuesday afternoon, Andrew Bidnell, GNDR, moderated the roundtable on ensuring a return on investment in local action. Marcus Oxley 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, Mayor of Portmore, Jamaica, said local governments should act as developers of the local economy, suggesting housing and school development as areas to align local DRR with investor returns through public-private partnerships or innovative funding mechanisms. Abdou Sane 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



L-R: Kenichi Suganuma, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN, Geneva; Laurent Michel, Director-General, Risk Prevention, Ministry for the Environment, Energy, Sustainable Development and Regional Planning, France; Tibor Tóth, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; Yuri Brazhnikov, Head, Russian National Emergency Response Corps; Moderator Rashid Khalikov, OCHA; Elena Buglova, International Atomic Energy Agency; and Maria Neira, WHO



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, 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.

**WILDLAND FIRE RISK:** On Tuesday afternoon, Paola Deda, UN Economic Commission for Europe, chaired the roundtable on addressing wildland fire risk. Pilar Gallego, Director-General on Civil Protection and Emergencies, Spain, discussed an integrated management approach in preventing and fighting forest fires, including an alerts' dissemination tool. Alexander Chupriyan, Deputy Minister for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Natural Disasters, Russian Federation, highlighted his country's response to wildfires in Russia in 2010.

Phil Cottle, ForestRe Ltd., recommended fire risk modeling for firefighting resource planning and noted that avoiding significant losses through preventing large catastrophic fire events is key. In a video link, Sundar Prasad 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.

**PUBLIC INVESTMENT:** On Wednesday morning, Ivan Morales, Executive Secretary, Coordination Center for the



Ivan Morales, Executive Secretary, Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America

Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America, chaired this session, noting that public investment is key to linking DRR with development and allowing sustained investment.

Stressing that public investment requires a more holistic series of interventions, Luis Miguel

Castilla Rubio, Vice Minister for Finance, Peru, outlined a cross-cutting vision to identify risks and implement a standardized framework on prevention. Manuel Dengo said Costa Rica's Ministry of Planning plays a central role in incorporating DRR management into national plans and policies to ensure that all sectors benefit from public investment. Manuk Mkrtchyan, Deputy Minister for Education, Armenia, emphasized that the state is an important investor in DRR, and noted the need to strengthen school education programmes on DRR.

Senendra Upreti, Chief of the Curative Division, Ministry of Health, Nepal, described the National Strategy for Disaster



Senendra Upreti, Chief of the Curative Division, Ministry of Health, Nepal

Risk Management that puts priority on building safer schools and hospitals. Salim Al-Moghrabi, Commissioner for Environment and Sustainable Development, Jordan, described the governance model in the Aqaba special economic zone that facilitates the local government's role in risk management planning, including investments in hospitals and schools. Ivo Menzinger, Managing

Director, Swiss Re, noted that risk financing and transfer could help governments protect DRR investments, recommending pre-emptive planning and funding.

In the ensuing discussion, some participants noted that public investment is insufficient, with Castilla Rubio stressing that proper policies and planning are also important. On the hazard of desert locust invasions in the Sahel, one participant said prevention measures are essential, while another noted that many governments facing urgent daily problems are not capable of investing in future DRR. Several



Manuel Dengo, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN, Geneva

participants underlined the importance of long-term investments, with Menzinger highlighting that successful government risk transfer schemes show that pre-financing makes sense. On the allocation of responsibilities, Castilla Rubio noted that clear delineation between

various state bodies is important. Dengo said accountability is key to institutionalizing DRR.

**PRIVATE SECTOR:** On Wednesday morning, Rowan Douglas, CEO, Global Analytics, chaired the roundtable discussion on engaging the private sector. Sandra Wu, President, Kokusai Kogyo, described Japan's disaster



L-R: Sandra Wu, President, Kokusai Kogyo, and Rowan Douglas, CEO, Global Analytics

framework that combines hard infrastructure development with a network of soft measures. José Luis Barbier, Ministry of Interior, Argentina, called for engaging the private sector to link national development models with disaster preparedness. Régis Thepot, Director-General, Grands Lacs de Seine, France, urged the public sector to support companies in building risk-awareness and preparedness.

Thomas Loster, Chairman, MunichRe Foundation, said the banking sector could support both recovery and preparedness, highlighting risk assessment. John Tobin-de la Puente, Credit Suisse, suggested that microfinance provides an opportunity for disseminating information on preparedness and resources for recovery. Jan Mumenthaler, International Finance Corporation, emphasized that risk management is not about slowing down business, but is a performance indicator. Peter Grütter, CISCO Internet Business Solutions Group, said technology could sense, predict, analyze and mitigate risks. Peter Williams, IBM, suggested using companies' supply chains or technology networks for supplying emergency material and information.

Juan-Gabriel Aguiriano, DuPont Sustainable Solutions, suggested that best practices in the industrial sector could be leveraged for DRR and prevention. Margareta Wahlström encouraged the public and private sectors to be more explicit about mutual expectations.

In the ensuing discussion, participants identified the need to: harmonize DRR and adaptation; distribute existing risk prevention knowledge and technologies to developing countries; place food and energy at the center of the DRR agenda; enhance financial support to women for disaster recovery; build children's resilience; and develop markets at the local level.

#### MANAGING WATERSHEDS FOR URBAN

**RESILIENCE:** On Thursday morning, Siththy Marina Mohamed, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management, Sri Lanka, chaired this session, explaining the session aimed at raising awareness about sustainable watershed management and gaining a better understanding of urban-rural dynamics.

Noting a steep increase in water-related disasters, Mark Smith, Director, Water Programme, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), suggested that integrated water resources management (IWRM) is strongly related to the HFA



Mark Smith, Director, Water Programme, IUCN

and enhances watershed resilience by improving local coordination, landscape restoration, social entrepreneurship, municipal-provincial relations and disaster planning.

Aisea Tuidraki, Special Administrator, Nadi, Sigatoka Town Councils, Fiji, said flood risk reduction in his municipality has improved economic and social development, rural productivity and watershed management. He emphasized the creation of a committee for



Siththy Marina Mohamed, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management, Sri Lanka



L-R: Marcelo Rivera Arancibia, Mayor of Hualpén, Chile, and Aisea Tuidraki, Special Administrator, Nadi, Sigatoka Town Councils, Fiji

IWRM to raise community awareness, integrate the business sector, and enhance the use of risk studies. Jean-Claude Eude, Director-General, Loire River Basin Authority, France, described his organization as a tool for subsidiarity, stakeholder involvement and conflict resolution at the river basin level. He cautioned against global solutions, favoring a set of reaction measures that would allow for more inclusiveness.



J. EUDE  
Jean-Claude Eude, Director-General, Loire River Basin Authority, France

Marcelo Rivera Arancibia, Mayor of Hualpén, Chile, said ensuring sustainability of water management and constant availability was a challenge in his country, lamenting that large water resources are met by a lack of investment in proper use and weak legislation. Mahesh Narvekar, on behalf of Shradha Shridhar Jadhav, Mayor of Mumbai, India, described measures to prevent urban inundation, including: the widening and deepening of riverbeds; retaining walls; installation of early warning systems that use rainfall and upstream water flow information; and pumps to move water to the sea when river floodgates are closed.

**CHILDREN FOR RESILIENCE:** On Thursday morning, Sian Gardner, International Consultant, facilitated this session



Sian Gardner, International Consultant

and emphasized the importance of discussing children's involvement in DRR. Suzanne Dvorak, CEO, Save the Children Australia, introduced the Children's Charter, an action plan developed by children listing their priorities for DRR. She noted that children are actors, not victims. Dhar Chakrabarti, Director, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Disaster Management Centre, India, presented the regional "Framework for Care, Protection and Participation of Children in Disasters," which focuses on: assessing vulnerabilities; education and schools safety; and participation of children in DRR.

Tricia, youth delegate, the Philippines, described her personal experiences from dealing with disasters, stressing the importance of education and risk assessment. She said children know a lot about DRR. Andre, youth delegate, the Philippines, outlined activities of the local Red Cross Youth





L-R: Alan March, Humanitarian Coordinator, Assistant Director General, AusAID, and Johnson, youth delegate, Kenya

Council, including: coordination with village officials; education on DRR; establishing warning systems; hazard mapping; and planting trees. He urged participants to commit to the Children's Charter. Johnson, youth delegate, Kenya, highlighted local community involvement and education, and the need to recognize children's DRR priorities.

Alan March, Humanitarian Coordinator, Assistant Director General, AusAID, noted the need to incorporate children into DRR programmes, to mitigate vulnerabilities and build knowledge resilience, and said current activities must be scaled up. Martin Owor, Commissioner for Disaster Preparedness and Management, Uganda, described practical steps in Uganda to educate teachers and children and construct schools accounting for local risks.

Many participants said children are vulnerable and have a right to participate, stressing the need for education and empowerment; others raised concerns about engaging children that cannot access formal school structures. March emphasized demystifying the DRR concepts and engaging trusted interlocutors, and Andre said they conduct community films on DRR to educate people.

**DRR AND GENDER:** On Thursday afternoon, Lorena Aguilar, Global Senior Gender Adviser, IUCN, chaired this roundtable discussion, asserting that engagement with gender issues is not about political correctness but about implementing DRR effectively. Margareta Wahlström asked for concrete

suggestions to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the HFA, describing empowered women as a "completely untapped resource for turning things around" in DRR.

Lily Caravantes, Presidential Secretary for Food Safety and Nutrition, Guatemala, called for empowerment from the central to the local level, emphasizing that participation of women is indispensable for linking the public and private spheres. Dhar Chakrabarti welcomed that the gender gap in literacy and education in India is quickly closing, and lamented that millions of women take decisions in disaster recovery at the grassroots, but not at the national level. Laura Gurza Jaidar, General Coordinator for Civil Protection, Ministry of Interior, Mexico, advocated a long-term vision that sees risks for women not as a product of nature, but as exposure to disadvantaged social, economic and institutional contexts.

Polotu Fakafanua Paunga, Ministry of Education, Women's Affairs and Culture, Tonga, noted active participation of women organizations in Tonga's disaster risk management planning, including with UN organizations, describing this as an opportunity to improve gender equality. Saumura Tioulong, International Parliamentarian Union Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, Cambodia, described cross-party coalitions of women parliamentarians to advocate gender perspectives in law making, emphasizing that DRR and gender policies are efficient long-term investments.

Interventions from the floor were then made on: a rights-based approach to DRR; gender specific disaster relief programmes; the lack of accountability mechanisms in the HFA, DRR policies and adaptation programmes; the role of disaster migration for gender inequalities; and women banks and credit programmes.

**DRR SAFETY NETS:** On Thursday afternoon, Alfredo Lazarte-Hoyle, Director, Crisis Response, Prevention and Recovery, International Labour Organization, chaired this roundtable session, stressing that social protection systems offer mechanisms to reduce the impact of disasters on the most vulnerable populations. Providing social safety nets to the poor, he added, requires a great deal of partnerships, which include alliances between the government, NGOs and the private sector.



L-R: Laura Gurza Jaidar, General Coordinator for Civil Protection, Ministry of Interior, Mexico; Dhar Chakrabarti, Director, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Disaster Management Centre, India; Lily Caravantes, Presidential Secretary for Food Safety and Nutrition, Guatemala; Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction; Lorena Aguilar, Global Senior Gender Adviser, IUCN; Saumura Tioulong, International Parliamentarian Union Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, Cambodia; and Polotu Fakafanua Paunga, Ministry of Education, Women's Affairs and Culture, Tonga





L-R: Alfredo Lazarte-Hoyle, Director, Crisis Response, Prevention and Recovery, International Labour Organization; Milton Rondo-Filho, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil; Ruben Hofliger Topete, Director-General, Natural Disasters' Fund, Mexico; and Carlos Scaramella, Coordinator, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, World Food Programme

Ato Mitiku Kassa described his country's safety net protection programme, which supports a mix of safety net transfers, including food, cash and food, and just cash. With 31% of his country's population living under the poverty line, Aslam Alam, Deputy Minister and Secretary in Charge of Disaster Management and Relief, Bangladesh, said that his government devotes 2.5% of its GDP to social protection services, which includes food and cash transfers.

Milton Rondo-Filho, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil, said that access to water, food and land should be viewed as rights. Ruben Hofliger Topete, Director-General, Natural Disasters' Fund, Mexico, described FONDEN, a government fund, which provides disaster relief and finances reconstruction efforts, especially for vulnerable communities affected by a disaster.

Relinda Sosa, President, National Confederation of Women Organised for Life and Integrated Development, Peru, stressed the important role civil society, especially women, plays in disaster resilience. Carlos Scaramella, Coordinator, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, World Food Programme, said that social protection is an important aspect of DRR and should feature higher on the international development agenda.

**MOUNTAINS OF RISKS:** On Thursday afternoon, this roundtable discussion, chaired by Andreas Schild, Director-General, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Nepal, focused on the impact of climate change on mountain communities and the unique contribution of such communities to DRR and resilience. Panelists highlighted: that a discussion on mountains should be more prominent within the Global Platform, as well as inform the agenda of UNCSD; the need for an institutional platform for transboundary cooperation on mountain DRR; and that climate change is an "add-on" to existing mountain-related challenges.



L-R: Thomas Probst, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland; Minjur Dorji, Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan; and Andreas Schild, Director-General, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Nepal

Minjur Dorji, Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan, introduced a presentation by Tashi Jamtsho, Bhutan Climate Summit Secretariat, on his country's vulnerabilities to climate change, reflected, for example, in accelerated melting of glaciers and, in species, like tigers, shifting to higher elevation. Maria del Pilar Cornejo discussed the impacts of retreat of glaciers in the Andes. Ed Barrow, IUCN, highlighted local knowledge systems, as well as IUCN and partners' efforts in harnessing them. Thomas Probst, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland, discussed adaptation strategies in his country. Walter Amman, President, Global Risk Forum, proposed a multi-risk approach.



Tashi Jamtsho, Bhutan Climate Summit Secretariat

## FEATURED EVENTS

A number of featured events took place over the course of the week. A summary of a selection of these events is provided here.

**GLOBAL ASSESSMENT REPORT BRIEFING:** On Tuesday morning, Margareta Wahlström chaired the session on the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, 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, Director-General, 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: risk of economic loss 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 DRR management.

Geoffrey Love 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:** On Tuesday morning, Mel Senen Sarmiento, House of Representatives, the Philippines, moderated the session, noting 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 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 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.

**ECONOMICS OF EFFECTIVE PREVENTION:** On Wednesday afternoon, Apurva Sanghi, Senior Economist, World Bank, introduced the findings of a new UN-World Bank report entitled “Natural Hazards, UnNatural Disasters: The Economics of Effective Prevention.” He explained that they include: prevention is often possible and cost-effective; many measures, taken by the private and public sectors, must work synergistically for effective prevention; and exposure to hazards will rise in cities, but greater exposure need not increase vulnerability if well managed. According to Sanghi, the lead author, the main take-away from the report is that prevention pays if it is done right, and building stronger institutions and networks and making information more accessible is part of the solution.



Apurva Sanghi, Senior Economist, World Bank

Jordan Ryan, UN Development Programme (UNDP), added that prevention does matter, especially as hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost and trillions of dollars worth of damage done as a result of natural disasters over the past 40 years. He also said that preventing disasters should be part of the development agenda.

Vanessa Rosales Ardón, President, National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response, Costa Rica, said that the report could be useful in convincing decision-makers



Vanessa Rosales Ardón, President, National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response, Costa Rica

to start thinking about “paying more now for preparedness activities so you pay less later,” but said that more focus should be dedicated to social perspectives, including human rights and gender issues. Seri Mohamed Aziz explained that because his country faced perennial natural hazards, especially floods, it is not difficult to convince the government to invest in DRR. Kenichi Suganuma also said that prevention measures pay, citing that many lives were saved in the March 11 earthquake and tsunami as a result of DRR investments.



Representatives from Santa Fe, Argentina; San Francisco, the Philippines; and North Vancouver, Canada receiving their 2011 Sasakawa Awards for Disaster Risk Reduction

**UN SASAKAWA AWARD:** On Thursday evening, the winners of the biennial UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction, which is given to institutions or individuals that have carried out outstanding and internationally recognized actions in DRR, were announced. They are: the cities of San Francisco (Philippines), Santa Fe (Argentina) and North Vancouver (Canada). San Francisco, a small coastal city prone to typhoons, won US\$25,000, and was chosen for its innovative use of the Purok system, a traditional method of self-organization within villages where members voluntarily contribute to a money bank used by those in need of emergency funds after a disaster.

One of two cities receiving US\$12,500 was Santa Fe, a city frequently hit by floods, which was recognized for effectively communicating risk to everyday citizens. The District of North Vancouver, which experienced a landslide in 2005, also received US\$12,500.

## WORLD RECONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE

The WRC, organized by the World Bank and the UN, was held from 10-13 May 2011 within the Third Global Platform for DRR. During the week, participants met in a number of WRC events, including a high-level policy panel, thematic sessions and roundtables. This section provides a summary of a selection of these sessions.

**STRENGTHENING LOCAL RECOVERY:** On Tuesday morning, David Taylor, Executive Advisor, World Vision International, chaired this WRC roundtable. Taylor 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 could lead to dependency on assistance providers, which harms the social capital and capabilities of affected populations. Robert Glasser 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.

**HIGH-LEVEL POLICY PANEL:** On Wednesday morning, this panel – Responding to Natural Disasters: A Long Ignored Development Challenge? – was chaired by Asha-Rose Migiro, UN Deputy Secretary-General, and moderated by Tim Sebastian, Chairman, Doha Debates. The panel explored the following issues: recovery and reconstruction, and whether lessons of the past have been learned; ensuring that communities receive commitments and promises; and the need for more investment in prevention.

On recovery and reconstruction, Ato Mitiku Kassa noted that disaster risk management lacks coordination, which affects the way that people are assisted. Kristalina Georgieva said that agencies have to come together and be clear about who does what and highlighted the new EU European Emergency Response system initiative. Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Managing Director, World Bank, called for a stronger framework to coordinate disaster activities and greater transparency in the process.



Nadeem Ahmad, Former Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority, Pakistan

Marcus Oxley noted that the level of emergency response has improved and that disasters provide an opportunity to learn from the past. He stressed that a post-disaster strategy needs a careful assessment of the damage and of how to rebuild. Nadeem Ahmad, Former Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority, Pakistan, called for the



L-R: Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Managing Director, World Bank, and Tim Sebastian, Chairman, Doha Debates

establishment of institutions dedicated to reconstruction, and also suggested that the UN take the lead in coordinating DRR activities in poor developing countries. Ludger Arnoldussen, Member of Board, Munich Re, noted that low insurance density is the reason why reconstruction is not as efficient.

On ensuring commitments and promises, Oxley said the key is to connect macro-level inputs with outputs and lamented the gap between policies and legislation. He suggested that three actions are needed to translate policy into practice: participation and inclusion; accountability and transparency; and institutional capacity at the local level to implement policies. Ahmad said that flexible funding mechanisms and capacity-building programmes are needed. Arnoldussen suggested investing donor funds into insurance.

On investment in prevention, Oxley emphasized that it is not only a question of investment but also a “hard” strategy to execute a vision that trusts dialogue, mutuality and partnerships. One participant lamented the lack of funding to support capacity-building programmes.

**REBUILDING AND PROTECTING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE:** On Wednesday afternoon, Richard Andrews, former Director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, US, chaired the WRC roundtable on rebuilding and protecting critical infrastructure, which aimed to define strategies to assess and address risks to critical infrastructure as well as draw on experience from Japan and other countries.

Kenichi Suganuma, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN, Geneva, said Japan has promoted a society that resists earthquakes and has implemented measures that helped preserve much of its critical infrastructure. He also reported on the creation of a national council to discuss a vision for reconstruction and creation of a more resilient society. Hirokazu Tatano, Kyoto University, Japan, described implications for critical infrastructure of the earthquake in Japan, emphasizing cascading effects throughout supply chains. He suggested that disaster knowledge and coping capacity are intrinsically limited, and recommended building a robust and flexible system of countermeasures. Charles Scawthorn, Kyoto University, Japan, suggested that minimizing risk to critical infrastructure must combine a macro perspective, including risk assessments of seismic hazards and network analysis, with assessment of infrastructure at the micro level like pumps, pipes and tanks, and the human operators of these systems.

Murat Bursa, CEO, Zorlu Energy Group, said that it is crucial that governments set and enforce standards for constructing, buying and assembling critical infrastructure. Pablo Allard Serrano, National Urban Reconstruction Program Coordinator, Chile, shared experience on rebuilding critical infrastructure in a context where most infrastructures have been privatized. He emphasized emergency frameworks to uphold telecommunication services and electricity supply post-disaster. Otto Kocsis, Head of Business Resilience Practice, Zurich Insurance Company, said site risk assessments by insurance companies are crucial for raising risk awareness within businesses. He recommended moving beyond asset insurance to business resilience, assessing company risks in interdependence with other organizations and processes.



**THE WAY FORWARD:** On Thursday afternoon, Alan March chaired this session, while Christoph Pusch, World Bank, outlined the emerging themes, namely: how to develop an effective global framework for DRR; improving systems and instruments for recovery and reconstruction; and establishing a global reconstruction and recovery knowledge practice. Max Dilley, UNDP, noted that there has been a shift in thinking, which can allow preparedness to be forward thinking and far reaching to provide immediate relief. Shanaz Arshad, World Bank, Pakistan, suggested that in post-disaster situations a results framework should be included in plans to ensure that stakeholders are aware of targets.

In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted a number of issues including the increasingly important role of civil society. One participant said that investing in building government officials' capacity might not be as efficient as investing in a community's capacity, as government officials have limited terms. Other participants noted that these funds should be closely linked to DRR, with some suggesting that post-disaster reconstruction financing should be predictable, additional and easy to access for local and national governments as well as civil society actors. Some highlighted investing in infrastructure for DRR that has multipurpose functions, while others noted the importance of training local bodies to ensure construction codes are adhered to. In closing, participants underscored that: reconstruction is a development issue; output-based approaches should be undertaken; prevention always pays; and there is a need to build on existing networks across the world to build a global reconstruction and recovery knowledge practice.

## GLOBAL PLATFORM AND WRC JOINT SUMMARY OUTCOMES

On Friday morning in plenary, Margareta Wahlström and Zoubida Allaoua, Director for Finance, Economics and Urban Development, World Bank, co-chaired the plenary session on the Global Platform and WRC Joint Outcomes. Co-chair Wahlström introduced the Chair's Summary, welcoming the "very strong consensus" on a turning point being reached in DRR. She said the next challenge is to assist countries and communities in implementing DRR. Co-chair Allaoua presented outcomes of the WRC, suggesting that one main challenge is to align short-term reconstruction efforts with long-term development. She said important steps forward are to ensure access to reliable reconstruction finance, establish a global reconstruction knowledge practice and provide access to data.

**CHAIR'S SUMMARY:** Co-chair Wahlström said the Chair's Summary aimed to highlight the consensus points from the discussions that had taken place over the course of the week. She emphasized that there has been significant progress on implementing the HFA since 2005, and that the existing body of knowledge allows further progress to

be made to achieve the targets set out at the Second Global Platform. She also reiterated the UN Secretary-General's call for a coalition of action for DRR, welcomed the renewed commitment from the mayors and private sector, and noted the participation of Youth representatives for the first time at the Global Platform.

Co-chair Wahlström outlined critical steps to be taken, including:

- accounting for disaster losses in a consistent and standardized manner;
- tracking investments in DRR, including in risk reducing development, to provide clear evidence of the cost and benefits;
- encouraging and increasing dedicated budget allocations for DRR;
- providing clear guidance and criteria to improve the effectiveness of National Platforms;
- developing standards and indicators for measuring the effectiveness of DRR at all levels;
- increasing investment in DRR at the local level;
- raising public awareness of disaster risks;
- encouraging the adaptation of innovative social protection mechanisms to reduce disaster impacts;
- anticipating emerging risks;
- promoting mechanisms and partnerships that integrate climate change adaptation and DRR into development planning;
- using regional summits and ministerial meetings to capitalize on the momentum achieved at the Third Global Platform;
- re-establishing the Advisory Group to guide the follow up to the Mid-term Review of the HFA;
- recommending to the UN Secretary-General that a group of eminent DRR experts report to the Fourth Session of the Global Platform; and
- requesting the UNISDR be strengthened and resourced to support effectively the implementation of all relevant recommendations emerging from this Platform.

On the WRC, she noted the poor coordination of support offered to countries overwhelmed by the scale or cost of reconstruction after disasters, and that previous experience provides important lessons. Wahlström further noted that participants had committed to developing improved systems and instruments for recovery and reconstruction finance, and an effective recovery and reconstruction framework. They also endeavored to establish a global reconstruction and recovery knowledge practice.

**FEEDBACK SESSION:** During the session on feedback and take-away messages from stakeholders at the Third Session of the Global Platform, participants heard presentations from key stakeholder groups. A participant representing national platforms said DRR should be decentralized and the role of local governance reinforced, stressing the involvement of communities, civil society, academia and the private sector in the implementation of the HFA. Parliamentarians suggested further strengthening their oversight role of DRR implementation, and requested government agencies to report to parliaments on DRR.



Zoubida Allaoua, Director for Finance, Economics and Urban Development, World Bank

To enhance capabilities of local government to build resilience, local governments recommended increased commitment to the Making Cities Resilient Campaign, scaling-up its best practices. Regional organizations emphasized the important role of regional IGOs in fostering regional DRR cooperation to contribute to HFA implementation. Scientific, academic community and technical institutions said a more integrated DRR process based on scientific and technical evidence and knowledge is essential. Cautioning against top-down processes, community practitioners called for multistakeholder partnerships involving local communities and grassroots groups.

NGOs and civil society organizations said the Chair's Summary lacks focus on concrete actions at the community level and advocated aligning local and indigenous with external knowledge. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement said immediate support is needed for increasing investment to strengthen the adaptive capacity of the most vulnerable groups. The private sector group emphasized the business case for DRR and resilience, saying that stability and resilience provide the basis for economic growth and activities.

Noting children's vulnerability to disasters, children and youth highlighted the right of children to participate in the planning of DRR activities. Several countries said children are key when addressing DRR, suggesting a separate paragraph reflecting this fact. On budget allocations, national platforms and developing standards, representatives from Bangladesh and Argentina proposed emphasizing the role of parliamentarians. Bolivia said additional resources for increased investment in DRR should come from international cooperation and aid. The Netherlands and others called for greater emphasis on local-level implementation, taking into account local perspectives and experiences, and suggested building on the momentum of current disasters to make the case for building back better and integrating DRR into development.

The Russian Federation and Japan called for a clarification on the roles of and relationship between the advisory group and the expert group, and their respective involvement in the post-HFA architecture, with the Russian Federation noting that recommendations in this respect should be presented to the UNGA. Norway proposed including text on factors driving risk, including building institutions and legal frameworks, and with Argentina, the key role of women. The Gambia and Brazil stressed the importance of investing more in prevention measures to minimize recovery costs.

UNICEF and the WHO recommended the targets from the Second Global Platform be mentioned more explicitly. Turkey stressed mainstreaming of DRR in national development and urban planning. Fiji and Vanuatu emphasized the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States to natural disasters. GNDR, supported by ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, urged to be more explicit on what investments are needed and how to enable them.

Chair Wahlström concluded by noting that commitments to addressing climate change and investment through the perspective of local action should be better reflected in the Chair's Summary.

## CLOSING CEREMONY

On Friday morning in the closing ceremony, Co-chair Zoubida Allaoua, Director for Finance, Economics, and Urban Development, World Bank, described her impressions of the Third Session of the Global Platform, noting that the discussions over the week had contributed to moving the DRR agenda forward. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Parliamentarian, Bangladesh, highlighted that the Platform provided remarkable networking opportunities and called for building a coalition and culture of prevention. Co-chair Wahlström closed the plenary, emphasizing that the Platform now has an action plan and is "ready for the leap." She gavelled the meeting to a close at 12:21pm.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Sixteenth World Meteorological Congress:** Delegates to the Congress will approve general policies, regulations, budget and membership to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). **dates:** 16 May–3 June 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** WMO Secretariat **phone:** +41 22 730 8111 **e-mail:** [cnf@wmo.int](mailto:cnf@wmo.int) **www:** [http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/lsp/congress/index\\_en.php](http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/lsp/congress/index_en.php)

**Resilient Cities 2011:** Convened by ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, the City of Bonn and the World Mayors Council on Climate Change, the Second World Congress on Cities and Adaptation to Climate Change, or Resilient Cities 2011, will focus on urban adaptation planning and practice, urban risk assessment, costs and financing of urban climate change adaptation, socio-economic and institutional dimensions of climate change adaptation, and strategy, policy integration and mainstreaming of climate change. **dates:** 3-5 June 2011 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** Congress Secretariat **phone:** +49 228 976 29936 **e-mail:** [bonn2011@iclei.org](mailto:bonn2011@iclei.org) **www:** <http://resilient-cities.iclei.org/bonn2011>

**World Conference on Disaster Management:** Meeting under the theme "Innovative Solutions for a Modern World," this conference will focus on mitigating, preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies and disaster. **dates:** 19-22 June 2011 **location:** Toronto, Canada **contact:** World Conference on Disaster Management Team **phone:** +1-888-443-6786 **e-mail:** [emails@wcdm.org](mailto:emails@wcdm.org) **www:** <http://www.wcdm.org>

**Solutions to Coastal Disasters 2011:** This conference series was developed to provide a venue for the exchange of information, tools and ideas relating to coastal hazards. **dates:** 26-29 June 2011 **location:** Anchorage, US **contact:** Coasts, Oceans, Ports and Rivers Institute (COPRI) **phone:** +1 800 548 2723 **www:** <http://content.asce.org/conferences/cd2011/call.html>



### International Conference on Building Resilience:

Focusing on interdisciplinary approaches to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and the development of sustainable communities, this conference will be held in association with UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction's 2010-2011 World Disaster Reduction Campaign: Making Cities Resilient. **dates:** 20-22 July 2011 **location:** Kandalama, Sri Lanka **contact:** Conference Technical Director **email:** k.p.keraminiyage@salford.ac.uk **www:** <http://www.disaster-resilience.salford.ac.uk/resilientcities/>

**High-level meeting on Nuclear Safety:** The UN Secretary General has announced a high-level meeting on the safe use of nuclear power to be held during the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session. **dates:** 22 September **location:** New York **www:** <http://www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=5259>

**ICFM5:** The 5th International Conference on Flood Management provides an opportunity for experts and specialists to exchange ideas and experiences on flood management. **dates:** 27-29 September 2011 **location:** Tsukuba, Japan **contact:** ICFM5 Secretariat **phone:** +81 29 879 6815 **e-mail:** [info@ifi-home.info](mailto:info@ifi-home.info) **www:** <http://www.ifi-home.info/icfm-icharm/>

**ECSS 2011:** The European Conferences on Severe Storms (ECSS) convenes the international scientific community every two years to exchange the newest developments in severe storm research. **dates:** 3-7 October 2011 **location:** Palma de Mallorca, Spain **contact:** ECSS Secretariat **e-mail:** [ecss2011desk@essl.org](mailto:ecss2011desk@essl.org) **www:** [http://www.essl.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=59](http://www.essl.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=59)

**IRDR Conference 2011:** Hosted jointly by the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) International Programme Office and the China Association for Science and Technology, this event will convene under the theme "Disaster Risk: Integrating Science and Practice." **dates:** 31 October-2 November 2011 **location:** Beijing, China **contact:** IRDR 2011 Secretariat **fax:** +86-10-6894-9229 **email:** [jingma@cicst.org.cn](mailto:jingma@cicst.org.cn) **www:** <http://www.irdrinternational.org/conference2011.php>

**IDRC-4:** The 4th International Disaster and Risk Conference, organized by the Global Risk Forum (GRF) Davos, will convene under the theme "Integrative Risk Management in a Changing World." **dates:** 26-30 August 2012 **location:** Davos, Switzerland **contact:** GRF Davos **phone:** +41 81 414 1600 **e-mail:** [info@grforum.org](mailto:info@grforum.org) **www:** [http://idrc.info/pages\\_new.php/IDRC-Davos-2012/831/1/](http://idrc.info/pages_new.php/IDRC-Davos-2012/831/1/)

**Fifth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction:** The focus of this conference is "Strengthening Local Capacities in DRR." **dates:** October 2012 **location:** Yogyakarta, Indonesia **contact:** Indonesian National Agency for Disaster Management **phone:** +62-21-345-8400 **fax:** +62-21-245-8500 **email:** [posko@bnpb.go.id](mailto:posko@bnpb.go.id) **www:** <http://www.bnpb.go.id>

**Fourth Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction:** The Fourth Session of the Global Platform is expected to convene in 2013. **dates:** 2013 **location:** the **contact:** UNISDR Secretariat **phone:** +41 229178907-8 **e-mail:** [isdr@un.org](mailto:isdr@un.org) **www:** <http://www.unisdr.org>

## GLOSSARY

DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
UNCSD	UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization



Alphorn musicians during Wednesday's reception hosted by Switzerland