

**EUR-OPA MAJOR
HAZARDS AGREEMENT**



Strasbourg, 19 April 2005

AP/CAT (2005) 26
Or. E.

OPEN PARTIAL AGREEMENT ON THE PREVENTION OF, PROTECTION AGAINST AND ORGANISATION OF RELIEF IN MAJOR NATURAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTERS

Report of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction

**UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION,
KOBE, JAPAN, 18-22 JANUARY 2005**

GE.04- (E)



United Nations

A/CONF.206/6



**World Conference on Disaster
Reduction**

Distr.: General
16 March 2005

**Kobe, Hyogo, Japan
18-22 January 2005**

Original: English

ADVANCE COPY

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Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 18-22 January 2005

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Chapter I

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held at Kobe City of Japan's Hyogo Prefecture from 18 to 22 January 2005, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 58/214 of 23 December 2003. During that period the Conference adopted three resolutions.

Resolutions Adopted by the Conference

Resolution 1

Hyogo Declaration

At its 9th plenary meeting, on 22 January 2005, the World Conference on Disaster Reduction adopted the Hyogo Declaration, which reads as follows:

Hyogo Declaration

We, delegates to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, have gathered from 18 to 22 January 2005 in Kobe City of Japan's Hyogo Prefecture, which has demonstrated a remarkable recovery from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 17 January 1995.

We express our sincere condolences and sympathy to, and solidarity with, the people and communities adversely affected by disasters, particularly those devastated by the unprecedented earthquake and tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004. We commend the efforts made by them, their Governments and the international community to respond to and overcome this tragedy. In response to the Special Leaders' Meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations on the Aftermath of Earthquake and Tsunami, held in Jakarta on 6 January 2005, we commit ourselves to assisting them, including with respect to appropriate measures pertinent to disaster reduction. We also believe that lessons learned from this disaster are relevant to other regions. In this connection, a special session on the recent earthquake and tsunami disaster, convened at the World Conference to review that disaster from a risk reduction perspective, delivered the Common Statement of the Special Session on Indian Ocean Disaster: Risk Reduction for a Safer Future as its outcome.

We recognize that the international community has accumulated much experience with disaster risk reduction through the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and the succeeding International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. In particular, by taking concrete measures in line with the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World, we have learned much, including about gaps and challenges since the 1994 Yokohama Conference. Nevertheless, we are deeply concerned that communities continue to experience excessive losses of precious human lives and valuable property as well as serious injuries and major displacements due to various disasters worldwide.

We are convinced that disasters seriously undermine the results of development investments in a very short time, and therefore, remain a major impediment to sustainable development and poverty eradication. We are also cognizant that development investments that fail to appropriately consider disaster risks could increase vulnerability. Coping with and reducing disasters so as to enable and strengthen nations' sustainable development is, therefore, one of the most critical challenges facing the international community.

We are determined to reduce disaster losses of lives and other social, economic and environmental assets worldwide, mindful of the importance of international cooperation, solidarity and partnership, as well as good governance at all levels. We reaffirm the vital role of the United Nations system in disaster risk reduction.

Thus, we declare the following:

1. We will build upon relevant international commitments and frameworks, as well as internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, to strengthen global disaster reduction activities for the twenty-first century. Disasters have a tremendous detrimental impact on efforts at all levels to eradicate global poverty; the impact of disasters remains a significant challenge to sustainable development.

2. We recognize the intrinsic relationship between disaster reduction, sustainable development and poverty eradication, among others, and the importance of involving all stakeholders, including governments, regional and international organizations and financial institutions, civil society, including non-governmental organizations and volunteers, the private sector and the scientific community. We therefore welcome all the relevant events that took place and contributions made in the course of the Conference and its preparatory process.

3. We recognize as well that a culture of disaster prevention and resilience, and associated pre-disaster strategies, which are sound investments, must be fostered at all levels, ranging from the individual to the international levels. Human societies have to live with the risk of hazards posed by nature. However, we are far from powerless to prepare for and mitigate the impact of disasters. We can and must alleviate the suffering from hazards by reducing the vulnerability of societies. We can and must further build the resilience of nations and communities to disasters through people-centered early warning systems, risks assessments, education and other proactive, integrated, multi-hazard, and multi-sectoral approaches and activities in the context of the disaster reduction cycle, which consists of prevention, preparedness, and emergency response, as well as recovery and rehabilitation. Disaster risks, hazards, and their impacts pose a threat, but appropriate response to these can and should lead to actions to reduce risks and vulnerabilities in the future.

4. We affirm that States have the primary responsibility to protect the people and property on their territory from hazards, and thus, it is vital to give high priority to disaster risk reduction in national policy, consistent with their capacities and the resources available to them. We concur that strengthening community level capacities to reduce disaster risk at the local level is especially needed, considering that appropriate disaster reduction measures at that level enable the communities and individuals to reduce significantly their vulnerability to hazards. Disasters remain a major threat to the survival, dignity, livelihood and security of peoples and communities, in particular the poor. Therefore there is an urgent need to enhance the capacity of disaster-prone developing countries in particular, the least developed countries and small island developing States, to reduce the impact of disasters, through strengthened national efforts and enhanced bilateral, regional and international cooperation, including through technical and financial assistance.

5. We, therefore, adopt, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters with its expected outcome, strategic goals, and priorities for action, as well as implementation strategies and associated follow-up, as a guiding framework for the next decade on disaster reduction.

6. We believe that it is critically important that the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters be translated into concrete actions at all levels and that achievements are followed up through the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in order to reduce disaster risks and vulnerabilities. We also recognize the need to develop indicators to track progress on disaster risk reduction activities as appropriate to particular circumstances and capacities as part of the effort to realize the expected outcome and strategic goals set in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of

Nations and Communities to Disasters. We underscore the importance of strengthening cooperative and synergistic interactions among various stakeholders and promoting voluntary partnerships for disaster reduction. We also resolve to further develop information sharing mechanisms on programmes, initiatives, best practices, lessons learnt and technologies in support of disaster risk reduction so that the international community can share the results of and benefits from these efforts.

7. We now call for action from all stakeholders, seeking the contributions of those with relevant specific competences and experiences, aware that the realization of the outcomes of the World Conference depends on our unceasing and tireless collective efforts, and a strong political will, as well as a shared responsibility and investment, to make the world safer from the risk of disasters within the next decade for the benefit of the present and future generations.

8. We express our most profound appreciation to the Government and people of Japan for hosting the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, and thank particularly the people of Hyogo Prefecture for their hospitality.

Resolution 2

Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters

At its 9th plenary meeting, on 22 January 2005, the World Conference on Disaster Reduction adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, which reads as follows:

Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters

I. Preamble

1. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held from 18 to 22 January 2005 in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, and adopted the present Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (here after referred to as the “Framework for Action”). The Conference provided a unique opportunity to promote a strategic and systematic approach to reducing vulnerabilities¹ and risks to hazards.² It underscored the need for and identified ways of building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters³

A. Challenges posed by disasters

2. Disaster loss is on the rise with grave consequences for the survival, dignity and livelihood of individuals, particularly the poor, and hard-won development gains. Disaster risk is increasingly of global concern and its impact and actions in one region can have an impact on risks in another, and vice versa. This, compounded by increasing vulnerabilities related to changing demographic, technological and socio-economic conditions, unplanned urbanization, development within high-risk zones, under-development, environmental degradation, climate variability, climate change, geological hazards, competition for scarce resources, and the impact of epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, points to a future where disasters could increasingly threaten the world’s economy, and its population and the sustainable development of developing countries. In the past two decades, on average more than 200 million people have been affected every year by disasters.

3. Disaster risk arises when hazards interact with physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. Events of hydrometeorological origin constitute the large majority of disasters. Despite the growing understanding and acceptance of the importance of disaster risk reduction

¹ Vulnerability is defined as: “The conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards”. UN/ISDR. Geneva 2004.

² Hazard is defined as: “A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. Hazards can include latent conditions that may represent future threats and can have different origins: natural (geological, hydrometeorological and biological) or induced by human processes (environmental degradation and technological hazards)” UN/ISDR. Geneva 2004.

³ The scope of this Framework for Action encompasses disasters caused by hazards of national origin and related environmental and technological hazards and risks. It thus reflects a holistic and multi-hazard approach to disaster risk management and the relationship, between them which can have a significant impact on social, economic, cultural and environmental systems, as stressed in the Yokohama Strategy (section I, part B, letter I, p. 8).

and increased disaster response capacities, disasters and in particular the management and reduction of risk continue to pose a global challenge.

4. There is now international acknowledgement that efforts to reduce disaster risks must be systematically integrated into policies, plans and programmes for sustainable development and poverty reduction, and supported through bilateral, regional and international cooperation, including partnerships. Sustainable development, poverty reduction, good governance and disaster risk reduction are mutually supportive objectives, and in order to meet the challenges ahead, accelerated efforts must be made to build the necessary capacities at the community and national levels to manage and reduce risk. Such an approach is to be recognized as an important element for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

5. The importance of promoting disaster risk reduction efforts on the international and regional levels as well as the national and local levels has been recognized in the past few years in a number of key multilateral frameworks and declarations.⁴

B. The Yokohama Strategy: lessons learned and gaps identified

6. The Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action (“Yokohama Strategy”), adopted in 1994, provides landmark guidance on reducing disaster risk and the impacts of disasters.

7. The review of progress made in implementing the Yokohama Strategy⁵ identifies major challenges for the coming years in ensuring more systematic action to address disaster risks in the context of sustainable development and in building resilience through enhanced national and local capabilities to manage and reduce risk.

8. The review stresses the importance of disaster risk reduction being underpinned by a more pro-active approach to informing, motivating and involving people in all aspects of disaster risk reduction in their own local communities. It also highlights the scarcity of resources allocated specifically from development budgets for the realization of risk reduction objectives, either at the national or the regional level or through international cooperation and financial mechanisms, while noting the significant potential to better exploit existing resources and established practices for more effective disaster risk reduction.

9. Specific gaps and challenges are identified in the following five main areas:

- (a) Governance: organizational, legal and policy frameworks;
- (b) Risk identification, assessment, monitoring and early warning;
- (c) Knowledge management and education;
- (d) Reducing underlying risk factors;
- (e) Preparedness for effective response and recovery.

These are the key areas for developing a relevant framework for action for the decade 2005–2015.

⁴ Some of these frameworks and declarations are listed in the annex to this document.

⁵ *Review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World (A/CONF.206/L.1).*

II. World Conference on Disaster Reduction: objectives, expected outcome and strategic goals

A. Objectives

10. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was convened by decision of the General Assembly, with five specific objectives:⁶

- (a) To conclude and report on the review of the Yokohama Strategy and its Plan of Action, with a view to updating the guiding framework on disaster reduction for the twenty-first century;
- (b) To identify specific activities aimed at ensuring the implementation of relevant provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development on vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management;
- (c) To share good practices and lessons learned to further disaster reduction within the context of attaining sustainable development, and to identify gaps and challenges;
- (d) To increase awareness of the importance of disaster reduction policies, thereby facilitating and promoting the implementation of those policies;
- (e) To increase the reliability and availability of appropriate disaster-related information to the public and disaster management agencies in all regions, as set out in relevant provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

B. Expected outcome

11. Taking these objectives into account, and drawing on the conclusions of the review of the Yokohama Strategy, States and other actors participating at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (hereinafter referred to as “the Conference”) resolve to pursue the following expected outcome for the next 10 years:

The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.

The realization of this outcome will require the full commitment and involvement of all actors concerned, including governments, regional and international organizations, civil society including volunteers, the private sector and the scientific community.

C. Strategic goals

12. To attain this expected outcome, the Conference resolves to adopt the following strategic goals:

- (a) The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction;
- (b) The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience⁷ to hazards;

⁶ As per General Assembly resolution 58/214 of 23 December 2003.

⁷ Resilience: “The capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure This is

(c) The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.

III. Priorities for action 2005–2015

A. General considerations

13. In determining appropriate action to achieve the expected outcome and strategic goals, the Conference reaffirms that the following general considerations will be taken into account:

(a) The Principles contained in the Yokohama Strategy retain their full relevance in the current context, which is characterized by increasing commitment to disaster reduction;

(b) Taking into account the importance of international cooperation and partnerships, each State has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and for taking effective measures to reduce disaster risk, including for the protection of people on its territory, infrastructure and other national assets from the impact of disasters. At the same time, in the context of increasing global interdependence, concerted international cooperation and an enabling international environment are required to stimulate and contribute to developing the knowledge, capacities and motivation needed for disaster risk reduction at all levels;

(c) An integrated, multi-hazard approach to disaster risk reduction should be factored into policies, planning and programming related to sustainable development, relief, rehabilitation, and recovery activities in post-disaster and post-conflict situations in disaster-prone countries⁸;

(d) A gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training;⁹

(e) Cultural diversity, age, and vulnerable groups should be taken into account when planning for disaster risk reduction, as appropriate;

(f) Both communities and local authorities should be empowered to manage and reduce disaster risk by having access to the necessary information, resources and authority to implement actions for disaster risk reduction;

(g) Disaster-prone developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States, warrant particular attention in view of their higher vulnerability and risk levels, which often greatly exceed their capacity to respond to and recover from disasters;

(h) There is a need to enhance international and regional cooperation and assistance in the field of disaster risk reduction through, inter alia:

- The transfer of knowledge, technology and expertise to enhance capacity building for disaster risk reduction
- The sharing of research findings, lessons learned and best practices
- The compilation of information on disaster risk and impact for all scales of disasters in a way that can inform sustainable development and disaster risk reduction

determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself to increase this capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures.” UN/ISDR. Geneva 2004.

⁸ The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002, paragraphs 37 and 65.

⁹ As reaffirmed at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly on the topic “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”.

- Appropriate support in order to enhance governance for disaster risk reduction, for awareness-raising initiatives and for capacity-development measures at all levels, in order to improve the disaster resilience of developing countries
- The full, speedy and effective implementation of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, taking into account the impact of disasters on the debt sustainability of countries eligible for this programme
- Financial assistance to reduce existing risks and to avoid the generation of new risks

(i) The promotion of a culture of prevention, including through the mobilization of adequate resources for disaster risk reduction, is an investment for the future with substantial returns. Risk assessment and early warning systems are essential investments that protect and save lives, property and livelihoods, contribute to the sustainability of development, and are far more cost-effective in strengthening coping mechanisms than is primary reliance on post-disaster response and recovery;

(j) There is also a need for proactive measures, bearing in mind that the phases of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction following a disaster are windows of opportunity for the rebuilding of livelihoods and for the planning and reconstruction of physical and socio-economic structures, in a way that will build community resilience and reduce vulnerability to future disaster risks;

(k) Disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting issue in the context of sustainable development and therefore an important element for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. In addition, every effort should be made to use humanitarian assistance in such a way that risks and future vulnerabilities will be lessened as much as possible.

B. Priorities for action

14. Drawing on the conclusions of the review of the Yokohama Strategy, and on the basis of deliberations at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and especially the agreed expected outcome and strategic goals, the Conference has adopted the following five priorities for action:

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
4. Reduce the underlying risk factors.
5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

15. In their approach to disaster risk reduction, States, regional and international organizations and other actors concerned should take into consideration the key activities listed under each of these five priorities and should implement them, as appropriate, to their own circumstances and capacities.

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation

16. Countries that develop policy, legislative and institutional frameworks for disaster risk reduction and that are able to develop and track progress through specific and measurable indicators have greater capacity to manage risks and to achieve widespread consensus for, engagement in and compliance with disaster risk reduction measures across all sectors of society.

*Key activities:**(i) National institutional and legislative frameworks*

(a) Support the creation and strengthening of national integrated disaster risk reduction mechanisms, such as multi sectoral national platforms¹⁰, with designated responsibilities at the national through to the local levels to facilitate coordination across sectors. National platforms should also facilitate coordination across sectors, including by maintaining a broad based dialogue at national and regional levels for promoting awareness among the relevant sectors.

(b) Integrate risk reduction, as appropriate, into development policies and planning at all levels of government, including in poverty reduction strategies and sectors and multi sector policies and plans.

(c) Adopt, or modify where necessary, legislation to support disaster risk reduction, including regulations and mechanisms that encourage compliance and that promote incentives for undertaking risk reduction and mitigation activities.

(d) Recognize the importance and specificity of local risk patterns and trends, decentralize responsibilities and resources for disaster risk reduction to relevant sub-national or local authorities, as appropriate.

(ii) Resources

(e) Assess existing human resource capacities for disaster risk reduction at all levels and develop capacity-building plans and programmes for meeting ongoing and future requirements.

(f) Allocate resources for the development and the implementation of disaster risk management policies, programmes, laws and regulations on disaster risk reduction in all relevant sectors and authorities at all levels of administrative and budgets on the basis of clearly prioritized actions.

(g) Governments should demonstrate the strong political determination required to promote and integrate disaster risk reduction into development programming.

(iii) Community participation

(h) Promote community participation in disaster risk reduction through the adoption of specific policies, the promotion of networking, the strategic management of volunteer resources, the attribution of roles and responsibilities, and the delegation and provision of the necessary authority and resources.

2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

17. The starting point for reducing disaster risk and for promoting a culture of disaster resilience lies in the knowledge of the hazards and the physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities to disasters that most societies face, and of the ways in which hazards and vulnerabilities are changing in the short and long term, followed by action taken on the basis of that knowledge.

¹⁰ The establishment of national platforms for disaster reduction was requested in Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 and in General Assembly resolutions 56/195, 58/214, and 58/215. The expression “national platform” is a generic term used for national mechanisms for coordination and policy guidance on disaster risk reduction that need to be multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary in nature, with public, private and civil society participation involving all concerned entities within a country (including United Nations agencies present at the national level, as appropriate). National platforms represent the national mechanism for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

*Key activities:**(i) National and local risk assessments*

(a) Develop, update periodically and widely disseminate risk maps and related information to decision-makers, the general public and communities at risk¹¹ in an appropriate format

(b) Develop systems of indicators of disaster risk and vulnerability at national and sub-national scales that will enable decision-makers to assess the impact of disasters¹² on social, economic and environmental conditions and disseminate the results to decision-makers, the public and populations at risk.

(c) Record, analyse, summarize and disseminate statistical information on disaster occurrence, impacts and losses, on a regular bases through international, regional, national and local mechanisms.

(ii) Early warning

(d) Develop early warning systems that are people centered, in particular systems whose warnings are timely and understandable to those at risk, which take into account the demographic, gender, cultural and livelihood characteristics of the target audiences, including guidance on how to act upon warnings, and that support effective operations by disaster managers and other decision makers.

(e) Establish, periodically review, and maintain information systems as part of early warning systems with a view to ensuring that rapid and coordinated action is taken in cases of alert/emergency.

(f) Establish institutional capacities to ensure that early warning systems are well integrated into governmental policy and decision-making processes and emergency management systems at both the national and the local levels, and are subject to regular system testing and performance assessments.

(g) Implement the outcome of the Second International Conference on Early Warning held in Bonn, Germany, in 2003¹³, including through the strengthening of coordination and cooperation among all relevant sectors and actors in the early warning chain in order to achieve fully effective early warning systems.

(h) Implement the outcome of the Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the sustainable development of small island developing States, including by establishing and strengthening effective early warning systems as well as other mitigation and response measures.

(iii) Capacity

(i) Support the development and sustainability of the infrastructure and scientific, technological, technical and institutional capacities needed to research, observe, analyse, map and where possible forecast natural and related hazards, vulnerabilities and disaster impacts.

(j) Support the development and improvement of relevant databases and the promotion of full and open exchange and dissemination of data for assessment, monitoring and early warning purposes, as appropriate, at international, regional, national and local levels.

(k) Support the improvement of scientific and technical methods and capacities for risk assessment, monitoring and early warning, through research, partnerships, training and technical

¹¹ See footnotes 1, 2 and 3 for the scope of this Framework for Action.

¹² See footnotes 1, 2 and 3.

¹³ As recommended in General Assembly resolution 58/214.

capacity- building. Promote the application of *in situ* and space-based earth observations, space technologies, remote sensing, geographic information systems, hazard modelling and prediction, weather and climate modelling and forecasting, communication tools and studies of the costs and benefits of risk assessment and early warning.

(l) Establish and strengthen the capacity to record, analyze, summarize, disseminate, and exchange statistical information and data on hazards mapping, disaster risks, impacts, and losses; support the development of common methodologies for risk assessment and monitoring.

(iv) *Regional and emerging risks*

(m) Compile and standardize, as appropriate, statistical information and data on regional disaster risks, impacts and losses.

(n) Cooperate regionally and internationally, as appropriate, to assess and monitor regional and trans-boundary hazards, and exchange information and provide early warnings through appropriate arrangements, such as, *inter alia*, those relating to the management of river basins.

(o) Research, analyse and report on long-term changes and emerging issues that might increase vulnerabilities and risks or the capacity of authorities and communities to respond to disasters.

3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

18. Disasters can be substantially reduced if people are well informed and motivated towards a culture of disaster prevention and resilience, which in turn requires the collection, compilation and dissemination of relevant knowledge and information on hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities.

Key activities:

(i) *Information management and exchange*

(a) Provide easily understandable information on disaster risks and protection options, especially to citizens in high-risk areas, to encourage and enable people to take action to reduce risks and build resilience. The information should incorporate relevant traditional and indigenous knowledge and culture heritage and be tailored to different target audiences, taking into account cultural and social factors.

(b) Strengthen networks among disaster experts, managers and planners across sectors and between regions, and create or strengthen procedures for using available expertise when agencies and other important actors develop local risk reduction plans.

(c) Promote and improve dialogue and cooperation among scientific communities and practitioners working on disaster risk reduction, and encourage partnerships among stakeholders, including those working on the socioeconomic dimensions of disaster risk reduction.

(d) Promote the use, application and affordability of recent information, communication and space-based technologies and related services, as well as earth observations, to support disaster risk reduction, particularly for training and for the sharing and dissemination of information among different categories of users.

(e) In the medium term, develop local, national, regional and international user-friendly directories, inventories and national information-sharing systems and services for the exchange of information on good practices, cost-effective and easy-to-use disaster risk reduction technologies, and lessons learned on policies, plans and measures for disaster risk reduction.

(f) Institutions dealing with urban development should provide information to the public on disaster reduction options prior to constructions, land purchase or land sale.

(g) Update and widely disseminate international standard terminology related to disaster risk reduction, at least in all official United Nations languages, for use in programme and institutional development, operations, research, training curricula and public information programmes.

(ii) *Education and training*

(h) Promote the inclusion of disaster risk reduction knowledge in relevant sections of school curricula at all levels and the use of other formal and informal channels to reach youth and children with information; promote the integration of disaster risk reduction as an intrinsic element of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2015).

(i) Promote the implementation of local risk assessment and disaster preparedness programmes in schools and institutions of higher education.

(j) Promote the implementation of programmes and activities in schools for learning how to minimize the effects of hazards.

(k) Develop training and learning programmes in disaster risk reduction targeted at specific sectors (development planners, emergency managers, local government officials, etc.).

(l) Promote community-based training initiatives, considering the role of volunteers, as appropriate, to enhance local capacities to mitigate and cope with disasters.

(m) Ensure equal access to appropriate training and educational opportunities for women and vulnerable constituencies; promote gender and cultural sensitivity training as integral components of education and training for disaster risk reduction.

(iii) *Research*

(n) Develop improved methods for predictive multi-risk assessments and socioeconomic cost–benefit analysis of risk reduction actions at all levels; incorporate these methods into decision-making processes at regional, national and local levels.

(o) Strengthen the technical and scientific capacity to develop and apply methodologies, studies and models to assess vulnerabilities to and the impact of geological, weather, water and climate-related hazards, including the improvement of regional monitoring capacities and assessments.

(iv) *Public awareness*

(p) Promote the engagement of the media in order to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience and strong community involvement in sustained public education campaigns and public consultations at all levels of society.

4. Reduce the underlying risk factors

19. Disaster risks related to changing social, economic, environmental conditions and land use, and the impact of hazards associated with geological events, weather, water, climate variability and climate change, are addressed in sector development planning and programmes as well as in post-disaster situations.

*Key activities:**(i) Environmental and natural resource management*

(a) Encourage the sustainable use and management of ecosystems, including through better land-use planning and development activities to reduce risk and vulnerabilities.

(b) Implement integrated environmental and natural resource management approaches that incorporate disaster risk reduction, including structural and non-structural measures,¹⁴ such as integrated flood management and appropriate management of fragile ecosystems.

(c) Promote the integration of risk reduction associated with existing climate variability and future climate change into strategies for the reduction of disaster risk and adaptation to climate change, which would include the clear identification of climate-related disaster risks, the design of specific risk reduction measures and an improved and routine use of climate risk information by planners, engineers and other decision-makers.

(ii) Social and economic development practices

(d) Promote food security as an important factor in ensuring the resilience of communities to hazards, particularly in areas prone to drought, flood, cyclones and other hazards that can weaken agriculture-based livelihoods.

(e) Integrate disaster risk reduction planning into the health sector; promote the goal of “hospitals safe from disaster” by ensuring that all new hospitals are built with a level of resilience that strengthens their capacity to remain functional in disaster situations and implement mitigation measures to reinforce existing health facilities, particularly those providing primary health care.

(f) Protect and strengthen critical public facilities and physical infrastructure, particularly schools, clinics, hospitals, water and power plants, communications and transport lifelines, disaster warning and management centres, and culturally important lands and structures through proper design, retrofitting and re-building, in order to render them adequately resilient to hazards.

(g) Strengthen the implementation of social safety-net mechanisms to assist the poor, the elderly and the disabled, and other populations affected by disasters. Enhance recovery schemes including psycho-social training programmes in order to mitigate the psychological damage of vulnerable populations, particularly children, in the aftermath of disasters.

(h) Incorporate disaster risk reduction measures into post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes¹⁵ and use opportunities during the recovery phase to develop capacities that reduce disaster risk in the long term, including through the sharing of expertise, knowledge and lessons learned.

(i) Endeavour to ensure, as appropriate, that programmes for displaced persons do not increase risk and vulnerability to hazards.

(j) Promote diversified income options for populations in high-risk areas to reduce their vulnerability to hazards, and ensure that their income and assets are not undermined by development policy and processes that increase their vulnerability to disasters.

¹⁴ “Structural measures refer to any physical construction to reduce or avoid possible impacts of hazards, which include engineering measures and construction of hazard-resistant and protective structures and infrastructure. Non-structural measures refer to policies, awareness, knowledge development, public commitment, and methods and operating practices, including participatory mechanisms and the provision of information, which can reduce risk and related impacts”, UN/ISDR Geneva, 2004.

¹⁵ According to the principles contained in General Assembly resolution 46/182.

(k) Promote the development of financial risk-sharing mechanisms, particularly insurance and reinsurance against disasters.

(l) Promote the establishment of public-private partnerships to better engage the private sector in disaster risk reduction activities; encourage the private sector to foster a culture of disaster prevention, putting greater emphasis on, and allocating resources to, pre-disaster activities such as risk assessments and early warning systems.

(m) Develop and promote alternative and innovative financial instruments for addressing disaster risk.

(iii) *Land-use planning and other technical measures*

(n) Incorporate disaster risk assessments into the urban planning and management of disaster-prone human settlements, in particular highly populated areas and quickly urbanizing settlements. The issues of informal or non-permanent housing and the location of housing in high-risk areas should be addressed as priorities, including in the framework of urban poverty reduction and slum-upgrading programmes.

(o) Mainstream disaster risk considerations into planning procedures for major infrastructure projects, including the criteria for design, approval and implementation of such projects and considerations based on social, economic and environmental impact assessments.

(p) Develop, upgrade and encourage the use of guidelines and monitoring tools for the reduction of disaster risk in the context of land-use policy and planning.

(q) Incorporate disaster risk assessment into rural development planning and management, in particular with regard to mountain and coastal flood plain areas, including through the identification of land zones that are available and safe for human settlement.

(r) Encourage the revision of existing or the development of new building codes, standards, rehabilitation and reconstruction practices at the national or local levels, as appropriate, with the aim of making them more applicable in the local context, particularly in informal and marginal human settlements, and reinforce the capacity to implement, monitor and enforce such codes, through a consensus-based approach, with a view to fostering disaster-resistant structures.

5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

20. At times of disaster, impacts and losses can be substantially reduced if authorities, individuals and communities in hazard-prone areas are well prepared and ready to act and are equipped with the knowledge and capacities for effective disaster management.

Key activities:

(a) Strengthen policy, technical and institutional capacities in regional, national and local disaster management, including those related to technology, training, and human and material resources.

(b) Promote and support dialogue, exchange of information and coordination among early warning, disaster risk reduction, disaster response, development and other relevant agencies and institutions at all levels, with the aim of fostering a holistic approach towards disaster risk reduction.

(c) Strengthen and when necessary develop coordinated regional approaches, and create or upgrade regional policies, operational mechanisms, plans and communication systems to prepare for and ensure rapid and effective disaster response in situations that exceed national coping capacities.

(d) Prepare or review and periodically update disaster preparedness and contingency plans and policies at all levels, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable areas and groups. Promote regular disaster preparedness exercises, including evacuation drills, with a view to ensuring rapid and effective disaster response and access to essential food and non-food relief supplies, as appropriate, to local needs.

(e) Promote the establishment of emergency funds, where and as appropriate, to support response, recovery and preparedness measures.

(f) Develop specific mechanisms to engage the active participation and ownership of relevant stakeholders, including communities, in disaster risk reduction, in particular building on the spirit of volunteerism.

IV. Implementation and follow-up

A. General considerations

21. The implementation of and follow-up to the strategic goals and priorities for action set out in this Framework for Action should be addressed by different stakeholders in a multi-sectoral approach, including the development sector. States and regional and international organizations, including the United Nations and international financial institutions, are called upon to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into their sustainable development policy, planning and programming at all levels. Civil society, including volunteers and community-based organizations, the scientific community and the private sector are vital stakeholders in supporting the implementation of disaster risk reduction at all levels.

22. While each State has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, an enabling international environment is vital to stimulate and contribute to developing the knowledge, capacities and motivation needed to build disaster resilient nations and communities. States and regional and international organizations should foster greater strategic coordination among the United Nations, other international organizations, including international financial institutions, regional bodies, donor agencies and non-governmental organizations engaged in disaster risk reduction, based on a strengthened International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. In the coming years, consideration should be given to ensuring the implementation and strengthening of relevant international legal instruments related to disaster risk reduction.

23. States and regional and international organizations should also support the capacities of regional mechanisms and organizations to develop regional plans, policies and common practices, as appropriate, in support of networking advocacy, coordination, exchange of information and experience, scientific monitoring of hazards and vulnerability, and institutional capacity development and to deal with disaster risks.

24. All actors are encouraged to build multi-stakeholder partnerships, at all levels, as appropriate, and on a voluntary basis, to contribute to the implementation of this Framework for Action. States and other actors are also encouraged to promote the strengthening or establishment of national, regional and international volunteer corps, which can be made available to countries and to the international community to contribute to addressing vulnerability and reducing disaster risk.¹⁶

25. The Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States underscores that small island developing States are located among the most vulnerable regions in the world in relation to the intensity and frequency of

¹⁶

In compliance with General Assembly resolution 58/118 and OAS General Assembly resolution 2018 (xxxiv-0/04).

natural and environmental disasters and their increasing impact, and face disproportionately high economic, social and environmental consequences. Small island developing States have undertaken to strengthen their respective national frameworks for more effective disaster management and are committed, with the necessary support of the international community, to improve national disaster mitigation, preparedness and early-warning capacity, increase public awareness about disaster reduction, stimulate interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral partnerships, mainstream risk management into their national planning process, address issues relating to insurance and reinsurance arrangements, and augment their capacity to predict and respond to emergency situations, including those affecting human settlements stemming from natural and environmental disasters.

26. In view of the particular vulnerabilities and insufficient capacities of least developed countries to respond to and recover from disasters, support is needed by the least developed countries as a matter of priority, in executing substantive programmes and relevant institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the Framework for Action, including through financial and technical assistance for and capacity building in disaster risk reduction as an effective and sustainable means to prevent and respond to disasters.

27. Disasters in Africa pose a major obstacle to the African continent's efforts to achieve sustainable development, especially in view of the region's insufficient capacities to predict, monitor, deal with and mitigate disasters. Reducing the vulnerability of the African people to hazards is a necessary element of poverty reduction strategies, including efforts to protect past development gains. Financial and technical assistance is needed to strengthen the capacities of African countries, including observation and early warning systems, assessments, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

28. The follow-up on the World Conference on Disaster Reduction will, as appropriate, be an integrated and coordinated part of the follow-up to other major conference in fields relevant to disaster risk reduction.¹⁷ This should include specific reference to progress on disaster risk reduction taking, into account agreed development goals, including those found in the Millennium Declaration.

29. The implementation of this Framework for Action for the period 2005-2015 will be appropriately reviewed.

B. States

30. All States should endeavour to undertake the following tasks at the national and local levels, with a strong sense of ownership and in collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders, within the bounds of their financial, human and material capacities, and taking into account their domestic legal requirements and existing international instruments related to disaster risk reduction. States should also contribute actively in the context of regional and international cooperation, in line with paragraphs 33 and 34.

(a) Prepare and publish national baseline assessments of the status of disaster risk reduction, according to the capabilities, needs and policies of each State, and, as appropriate, share this information with concerned regional and international bodies;

(b) Designate an appropriate national coordination mechanism for the implementation and follow up of this Framework for Action, and communicate the information to the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

(c) Publish and periodically update a summary of national programmes for disaster risk reduction related to this Framework for Action, including on international cooperation;

¹⁷

As identified in General Assembly resolution 57/270 B.

(d) Develop procedures for reviewing national progress against this Framework for Action, which should include systems for cost benefit analysis and ongoing monitoring and assessment of vulnerability and risk, in particular with regards to regions exposed to hydrometeorological and seismic hazards, as appropriate;

(e) Include information on progress of disaster risk reduction in the reporting mechanisms of existing international and other frameworks concerning sustainable development, as appropriate;

(f) Consider, as appropriate, acceding to, approving or ratifying relevant international legal instruments relating to disaster reduction, and, for State parties to those instruments, take measures for their effective implementation;¹⁸

(g) Promote the integration of risk reduction associated with existing climate variability and future climate change into strategies for the reduction of disaster risk and adaptation to climate change; ensure that the management of risks associated with geological hazards, such as earthquakes and landslides, are fully taken into account in disaster risk reduction programmes.

C. Regional organizations and institutions

31. Regional organizations with a role related to disaster risk reduction are called upon to undertake the following tasks within their mandates, priorities and resources:

(a) Promote regional programmes, including programmes for technical cooperation, capacity development, the development of methodologies and standards for hazard and vulnerability monitoring and assessment, the sharing of information and effective mobilization of resources, in view of supporting national and regional efforts to achieve the objectives of this Framework for Action;

(b) Undertake and publish regional and sub-regional baseline assessments of the disaster risk reduction status, according to the needs identified and in line with their mandates;

(c) Coordinate and publish periodic reviews on progress in the region and on impediments and support needs, and assist countries, as requested, in the preparation of periodic national summaries of their programmes and progress;

(d) Establish or strengthen existing specialized regional collaborative centers, as appropriate, to undertake research, training, education and capacity building in the field of disaster risk reduction;

(e) Support the development of regional mechanisms and capacities for early warning to disasters, including for tsunami.¹⁹

D. International organizations

32. International organizations, including organizations of the United Nations system and international financial institutions, are called upon to undertake the following tasks within their mandates, priorities and resources:

(a) Engage fully in supporting and implementing the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and cooperate to advance integrated approaches to building disaster-resilient nations and communities, by encouraging stronger linkages, coherence and integration of disaster risk

¹⁸ Such as the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations (1998), which entered into force 8 January 2005.

¹⁹ The United Nations Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation established by the Secretary-General made an urgent appeal to halve loss of human life caused by major water related disasters, including tsunami, by 2015.

reduction elements into the humanitarian and sustainable development fields as set out in this Framework for Action;

(b) Strengthen the overall capacity of the United Nations system to assist disaster-prone developing countries in disaster risk reduction through appropriate means and coordination and define and implement appropriate measures for regular assessment of their progress towards the achievement of the goals and priorities set out in this Framework for Action, building on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

(c) Identify relevant actions to assist disaster-prone developing countries in the implementation of this Framework for Action; ensure that relevant actions are integrated, as appropriate, into each organization's own scientific, humanitarian and development sectors, policies, programmes and practices and that adequate funding is allocated for their implementation;

(d) Assist disaster-prone developing countries to set up national strategies and plans of action and programmes for disaster risk reduction and to develop their institutional and technical capacities in the field of disaster risk reduction, as identified through the priorities in this Framework for Action;

(e) Integrate actions in support of the implementation of this Framework into relevant coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (on humanitarian action), including at the national level and through the Resident Coordinator system and the United Nations Country teams. In addition, integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into development assistance frameworks, such as the Common Country Assessments, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and poverty reduction strategies;

(f) In close collaboration with existing networks and platforms, cooperate to support globally consistent data collection and forecasting on natural hazards, vulnerabilities and risks and disaster impacts at all scales. These initiatives should include the development of standards, the maintenance of databases, the development of indicators and indices, support to early warning systems, the full and open exchange of data and the use of *in situ* and remotely sensed observations;

(g) Support States with the provision of appropriate, timely and well coordinated international relief assistance, upon request of affected countries, and in accordance with agreed guiding principles for emergency relief assistance and coordination arrangements.²⁰ Provide this assistance with a view to reducing risk and vulnerability, improving capacities and ensuring effective arrangements for international cooperation for urban search and rescue assistance.²¹ Ensure that arrangements for prompt international response to reach affected areas are being developed at national and local levels and that appropriate linkages to recovery efforts and risk reduction are strengthened;

(h) Strengthen the international mechanisms with a view to supporting disaster stricken States in the transition phase towards sustainable physical, social and economic recovery and to reducing future risks. This should include support for risk reduction activities in post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes and sharing of good practices, knowledge and technical support with relevant countries, experts and United Nations organizations;

(i) Strengthen and adapt the existing inter-agency disaster management training programme based on a shared, inter-agency strategic vision and framework for disaster risk management that encompasses risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery.

²⁰ Defined by General Assembly resolution 46/182.

²¹ Work towards the consistent implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/150.

E. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

33. The partners in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in particular, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and its members, in collaboration with relevant national, regional, international and United Nations bodies and supported by the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, are requested to assist in implementing this Framework for Action as follows, subject to the decisions taken upon completion of the review process²² of the current mechanism and institutional arrangements:

(a) Develop a matrix of roles and initiatives in support of follow-up to this Framework for Action, involving individual members of the Task Force and other international partners;

(b) Facilitate the coordination of effective and integrated action within the organizations of the United Nations system and among other relevant international and regional entities, in accordance with their respective mandates, to support the implementation of this Framework for Action, identify gaps in implementation and facilitate consultative processes to develop guidelines and policy tools for each priority area, with relevant national, regional and international expertise;

(c) Consult with relevant United Nations agencies and organizations, regional and multilateral organizations and technical and scientific institutions, as well as interested States and civil society, with the view to developing generic, realistic and measurable indicators, keeping in mind available resources of individual States. These indicators could assist States to assess their progress in the implementation of the Framework of Action. The indicators should be in conformity with the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

Once that first stage has been completed, States are encouraged to develop or refine indicators at the national level reflecting their individual disaster risk reduction priorities, drawing upon the generic indicators.

(d) Ensure support to national platforms for disaster reduction, including through the clear articulation of their role and value added, as well as regional coordination, to support the different advocacy and policy needs and priorities set out in this Framework for Action, through coordinated regional facilities for disaster reduction, building on regional programmes and outreach advisors from relevant partners;

(e) Coordinate with the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development to ensure that relevant partnerships contributing to implementation of the Framework for Action are registered in its sustainable development partnership database;

(f) Stimulate the exchange, compilation, analysis, summary and dissemination of best practices, lessons learned, available technologies and programmes, to support disaster risk reduction in its capacity as an international information clearinghouse; maintain a global information platform on disaster risk reduction and a web-based register "portfolio" of disaster risk reduction programmes and initiatives implemented by States and through regional and international partnerships;²³

(g) Prepare periodic reviews on progress towards achieving the objectives and priorities of this Framework for Action, within the context of the process of integrated and

²² A review process regarding the institutional arrangements within the United Nations pertaining to disaster reduction is currently being carried out and will be completed, following the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, with an evaluation of the role and performance of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

²³ To serve as a tool for sharing experience and methodologies on disaster reduction efforts. States and relevant organizations are invited to actively contribute to the knowledge-building process by registering their own effort on a voluntary basis in consideration of the global progress of the Conference outcomes.

coordinated follow-up and implementation of United Nations conferences and summits as mandated by the General Assembly,²⁴ and provide reports and summaries to the Assembly and other United Nations bodies, as requested or as appropriate, based on information from national platforms, regional and international organizations and other stakeholders, including on the follow-up to the implementation of the recommendations from the Second International Conference on Early Warning (2003).²⁵

F. Resource mobilization

34. States, within the bounds of their financial capabilities, regional and international organizations, through appropriate multilateral, regional and bilateral coordination mechanisms, should undertake the following tasks to mobilize the necessary resources to support implementation of this Framework for Action:

(a) Mobilize the appropriate resources and capabilities of relevant national, regional and international bodies, including the United Nations system;

(b) Provide for and support, through bilateral and multilateral channels, the implementation of this Framework for Action in disaster-prone developing countries, including through financial and technical assistance, addressing debt sustainability, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, and public-private partnerships, and encourage North-South and South-South cooperation;

(c) Mainstream disaster risk reduction measures appropriately into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes including those related to poverty reduction, natural resource management, urban development and adaptation to climate change;

(d) Provide adequate voluntary financial contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction, in the effort to ensure the adequate support for the follow-up activities to this Framework for Action. Review the current usage and feasibility for the expansion of this fund, *inter alia*, to assist disaster-prone developing countries to set up national strategies for disaster risk reduction.

(e) Develop partnerships to implement schemes that spread out risks, reduce insurance premiums, expand insurance coverage and thereby increase financing for post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation, including through public and private partnerships, as appropriate. Promote an environment that encourages a culture of insurance in developing countries, as appropriate.

²⁴ General Assembly resolution 57/270B, follow-up to United Nations conferences, and the General Assembly resolutions on Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, which request the Secretary-General to report to the second committee of the General Assembly under “Sustainable development” (54/219, 56/195, 57/256 58/214, 58/215, 59/231).

²⁵ General Assembly resolution 58/214.

Annex

Some multilateral developments related to disaster risk reduction

Among the multi-lateral frameworks and declarations that are of relevance to this document there are the following:²⁶

- The International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,²⁷ held in Mauritius in January 2005, calls for increased commitments to reducing the vulnerability of small island developing States, due to their limited capacity to respond to and recover from disasters.
- The Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2003 includes a goal and actions to “reduce the risk and impact of disasters and improve preparedness and response mechanisms”.
- The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,²⁸ held in 2002, paragraph 37 requests actions under the chapeau: “An integrated, multi-hazard, inclusive approach to address vulnerability, risk, assessment and disaster management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, is an essential element of a safer world in the 21st century”, supporting the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as the first action. The theme of “vulnerability, risk reduction and disaster management” is included in the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2014-2015, and as a cross-cutting theme throughout the programme.
- The third Action Programme for Least Developed Countries,²⁹ adopted in 2001, requests action by development partners in view of giving priority attention to these countries in the substantive programme and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.
- The Millennium Declaration³⁰ of September 2000, identified key objectives of “Protecting the vulnerable” and “Protecting our common environment”, which resolve to “intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters”. A comprehensive review of the progress made in the fulfillment of all the commitments contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration will be held in July 2005.³¹

²⁶ For a more comprehensive listing of relevant frameworks and declarations, see information document: Extracts Relevant to Disaster Risk Reduction From International Policy Initiatives 1994-2003, Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, ninth meeting 4-5 May 2004.

²⁷ General Assembly resolution 58/213. Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

²⁸ A/CONF.199/20.

²⁹ A/CONF.191/11.

³⁰ General Assembly resolution 55/2.

³¹ General Assembly resolution 58/291.

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- The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction was launched in 2000³² by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly as an inter-agency framework and mechanism (inter-agency task force on disaster reduction and an inter-agency secretariat) to serve as a focal point within the United Nations system with the mandate to promote public awareness and commitment, expand networks and partnerships, and improve knowledge about disaster causes and options for risk reduction, building on the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action and as follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.
 - The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,³³ held in 2002, requested the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to “improve techniques and methodologies for assessing the effects of climate change, and encourage the continuing assessment of those adverse effects...”. In addition, the General Assembly³⁴ has encouraged the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,³⁵ and the parties to its Kyoto Protocol³⁶ (entering into force in February 2005) to continue to address the adverse effects of climate change, especially in those developing countries that are particularly vulnerable. The United Nations General Assembly³⁷ also encouraged the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to continue to assess the adverse effects of climate change on the socio-economic and natural disaster reduction systems of developing countries.
 - The Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations of 1998 entered into force on 8 January 2005.
 - The Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action³⁸ (1994), was adopted at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, building on the mid-term review of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.
 - The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,³⁹ was adopted in 1994 and entered into force in 1996. The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity⁴⁰ was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1993.
 - The General Assembly⁴¹ (1991) requested strengthening of the coordination of emergency and humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, in both complex emergencies natural disasters. It recalled the International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (resolution 44/236, 1989), and set out guiding principles for humanitarian relief, preparedness, prevention and on the continuum from relief to rehabilitation and development.

³² General Assembly resolution 58/291.

³³ A/CONF.199/20, paragraph 37 e).

³⁴ General Assembly resolutions on natural disasters and vulnerability (59/233, and 58/215).

³⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

³⁶ FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

³⁷ General Assembly resolutions on natural disasters and vulnerability (59/233, and 58/215).

³⁸ A/CONF.172/9.

³⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

⁴⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

⁴¹ General Assembly resolution 46/182.

Resolution 3

Report of the Credentials Committee

At its 9th plenary meeting, on 22 January 2005, the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, on the recommendation of the Credentials Committee, adopted the following resolution:

“The World Conference on Disaster Reduction,

“*Having considered* the report of the Credentials Committee⁴² and the recommendation contained therein,

“*Approves* the report of the Credentials Committee.”

Chapter II

Attendance and organization of work

A. Date and place of the Conference

1. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held at Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005. During that period, the Conference held nine plenary meetings.

B. Attendance

2. The following States were represented at the Conference:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Republic, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Niue, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine,

⁴² A/CONF.206/5.

United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The secretariats of the following regional commissions were represented: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. The following United Nations bodies and programmes were represented:

Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Centre for Regional Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, World Food Programme, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, United Nations University, United Nations Volunteers.

5. The secretariats of the following Conventions were represented:

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.

6. The following specialized agencies and related organizations were represented:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, International Maritime Organization, International Organization for Migration, International Telecommunication Union, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, World Meteorological Organization.

7. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented:

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, Asian Committee on Disaster Management, Asian Development Bank, Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, Association of Caribbean States, Caribbean Community Secretariat, Caribbean Development Bank, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, Council of Europe, Council of Europe Development Bank, European Commission, European Community, European Space Agency, Inter American Development Bank, Ibero-American Association for Civil Protection, Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction/Organization of American States, Inter-American Bank, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Secrétariat Intérimaire du Volet Environnement, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission.

8. A large number of non-governmental organizations attended the Conference.

9. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, having received a standing invitation, participated as an observer.

C. Opening of the Conference

10. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was opened on 18 January 2005 by the representative of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

11. The Conference observed a minute of silence in the memory of the tens of thousands of people who lost their lives during the recent tragic Indian Ocean tsunami disaster.

12. The Conference heard a video presentation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

13. The Conference heard an address by His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Japan.

14. The Conference also heard addresses by Mr. Yoshitaka Murata, Minister of State for Disaster Management, Government of Japan, and Mr. Toshizo Ido, Governor of the Prefecture of Hyogo, Japan.

15. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference heard an address by His Excellency Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan.

D. Election of the President and other officers

16. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference elected, by acclamation, as President of the Conference, Mr. Yoshitaka Murata, Minister of State for Disaster Management, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan.

17. At the same meeting, as decided by the Preparatory Committee at its first session, the Conference elected as Vice-Presidents those countries which served as officers of the Preparatory Committee. They were: Ecuador, Federal Republic of Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Morocco, and Russian Federation. As at the Preparatory Committee, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran would serve as Vice-Chairman-cum-Rapporteur.

E. Adoption of the rules of procedure

18. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference considered the provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.206/2). As there was not yet an agreement on the adoption of the text, the Conference agreed to function on the basis of the provisional rules.

F. Adoption of the agenda

19. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference considered the provisional agenda as recommended by the Preparatory Committee (A/CONF.206/1). The Conference decided to inscribe on its agenda an additional item entitled "Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future". The agenda as adopted was as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Election of the President and other officers
3. Adoption of the rules of procedure
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Accreditation of relevant non-governmental organizations and other major groups
6. Organization of work of the Conference, including the establishment of a Main Committee

7. General statements
8. Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future
9. Report on the discussion of the thematic segment
10. Report on the public forum
11. Review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World
12. Adoption of the programme outcome document
13. Adoption of the Conference Declaration
14. Conclusion of the Conference

The agenda as adopted was issued as document A/CONF.206/4.

G. Accreditation of relevant non-governmental organizations and other major groups

20. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference approved the accreditation of the non-governmental organizations listed in document A/CONF.206/3.

H. Accreditation of intergovernmental organizations

21. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference approved the accreditation of the intergovernmental organizations listed in document A/CONF.206/INF.4.

I. Organization of work of the Conference, including the establishment of a Main Committee

22. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, the Conference approved its organization of work as outlined by the President. It decided, in accordance with rule 46 of the provisional rules of procedure, to establish a Main Committee, whose main responsibility would be to carry out the drafting of the programme outcome document and a declaration. The Conference agreed that the Main Committee could create subcommittees or working groups, as required, and elected Mr. Marco Ferrari (Switzerland) as Chairman of the Main Committee.

J. Appointment of members of the Credentials Committee

23. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January 2005, in conformity with rule 4 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Conference decided to establish a Credentials Committee composed of Austria, Benin, Brazil, Bhutan, China, Ghana, the Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America.

K. Documents

24. The list of documents for the Conference is contained in annex I to the present report.

Chapter III

General debate

25. The general debate, which took place at the 1st to 7th plenary meetings, from 18 to 21 January 2005, covered the activities for disaster reduction (agenda item 7).

26. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 18 January, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of China, India, Luxembourg (on behalf of the European Union), Germany, Uganda and Kazakhstan.

27. At the 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 January, a high-level round-table was held, on the topic "Disaster risk: The next development challenge". The facilitator was Ms. Yvette Stevens, Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator and Director of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Office at Geneva. The panelists were Mrs. Sadako Ogata, President, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Mr. Gareth Thomas, International Cooperation Minister, Department for International Development, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Zephirin Diabre, Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Geert van der Linden, Vice-President, Asian Development Bank, and Dr. Bernd Hoffman, Director, German Agency for Technical Cooperation.

28. Also at the 2nd plenary meeting, a second high-level round-table was held, on the topic "Learning to live with risk". The facilitator was Mr. Peter Walker, Tufts University, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America. The panelists were Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Mr. Toshizo Ido, Governor of Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, Mr. Edgardo Calderon Paredes, President, Peruvian Red Cross, Professor Hans van Ginkel, Rector, United Nations University, and Ms. Corazon Alma G. de Leon, Former Chairperson, Civil Service Commission, the Philippines.

29. At the 3rd plenary meeting, on 19 January, a third high-level round-table was held, on the topic "Emerging risks: What will tomorrow hold?" The facilitator was Mr. Salvano Briceno, Director, Inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The panelists were Dr. Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada, Mr. Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization, Mr. Li Xueju, Minister of Civil Affairs of China, Mr. Ashok Kumar Rastogi, Secretary of the Government of India, Mr. Joseph Kwabena Odei, National Coordinator, National Disaster Management Organization of Ghana, and Mr. Daniel Biu, Deputy Director, United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

30. Also at its 3rd plenary meeting, in the context of the general debate, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of Poland, Thailand, Costa Rica, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Australia, Sudan (on behalf of the African Group of States), Ukraine, Madagascar, Japan and Romania.

31. At the 4th plenary meeting, on 19 January, a special forum was held, with the participation of Mr. Ryutaro Hashimoto, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Water and Sanitation, Government of Japan, and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Secretary-General on Water and Sanitation, His Excellency Mr. J. Koonjul, Permanent Representative of Mauritius and Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States, Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the Secretary-General for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Ms. Joke Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, Mr. James Morris, Executive Director, World Food Programme, and Mr. Ad de Raad, Executive Coordinator, United Nations Volunteers.

32. Also at its 4th plenary meeting, in the context of the general debate, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of Mexico, Sweden, Norway, the Philippines, Turkey, Indonesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Bangladesh, France, Jamaica, Ecuador, Niue, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Benin, Denmark, the Maldives, Egypt, the Czech Republic, Mongolia, Finland, Austria, Malaysia, South Africa, Cameroon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Singapore, Samoa, Ghana, the Sudan, Morocco, Serbia and Montenegro, Guatemala, Cape Verde, Portugal, Botswana and Viet Nam.

33. At the 6th and 7th plenary meetings, on 20 and 21 January, the representatives of Switzerland, the United States of America, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Venezuela, Pakistan, Peru, Afghanistan, Zambia, Swaziland, Mozambique, Senegal, the Seychelles, New Zealand, Italy, Belgium, Canada, Yemen, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Algeria, Brazil, Spain, Nepal, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Barbados, Gabon, Cambodia, Trinidad and Tobago, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, Greece, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Armenia and the Netherlands made statements. Statements were also made by the European Community and by the observers for the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group and the Council of Europe. The Conference also heard statements by representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Office at Geneva, the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the Vice-President of the Asociación Iberoamericana de Organismos Gubernamentales de Defensa y Protección Civil, the Office of Outer Space Affairs, United Nations, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Disaster Recovery Institute International, and by the Rector of the United Nations University.

Chapter IV

Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future

34. At its 5th plenary meeting, on 20 January, the Conference considered item 8 of its agenda, entitled “Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future” in a special session. After opening remarks by the President of the Conference, an introduction was given on early warning systems and preparedness by Mr Abdullahi Majeed, Deputy Minister of the Environment (Maldives), and Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Director of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Department of Ocean Development (India). The Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs talked of the international emergency response, of lessons learned and of the importance of transition within a risk reduction framework. This was followed by a short review of country experiences and perspectives, through short presentations on main challenges confronting Indian Ocean countries in their response to the disaster, with a focus on lessons learned and future preparedness, mitigation and recovery activities, by Mr. Kamal Ibne Yousuf Chowdhury, Minister of Food and Disaster Management (Bangladesh); Mr. Adik Bantarso, Head of the Bureau for Cooperation, National Coordinating Board for Disaster Management and Refugees (Indonesia); Professor Tissa Vitharana, Minister of Science and Technology (Sri Lanka); Mr. Ashoka Kumar Rastogi, Secretary of the Government (India); Mr. Dave Mwangi, Permanent Secretary, Office of the President (Kenya); Mr. Suporn Ratanakakin, Foreign Relations Officer, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior (Thailand); and Mr. Ian Wilderspin, Head of Disaster Risk Management, Southeast Asia delegation, representing the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. A series of short presentations of initiatives towards a common outcome was made by Mr. Li Xieju, Minister of Civil Affairs (China), Mrs. Sadako Ogata, President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Japan), Mr. Hans-

Joachim Daerr, Director-General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Germany), Mr. Howard H. Baker, Jr., Ambassador of the United States of America in Japan, Mr. (Australia). Thereafter, the Conference heard statements by representatives of Australia, Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, France, Denmark, Egypt, Sweden, Japan, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, South Africa, Morocco, Turkey, the Netherlands, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea. The Conference also heard statements by the observers for the European Commission, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Food Programme, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Basel Convention, the United Nation's Children's Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, the Abdus Salaam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, the ASEAN secretariat, the International Labour Office, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the European Space Agency.

35. At the conclusion of the special session, the Conference agreed to annex to its final report the "Common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future", that was delivered at the session and is shown in annex II to the present report.

Chapter V

Review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World

36. At its 7th plenary meeting, on 21 January, the Conference considered item 11 of its agenda. Document A/CONF.206/L.1 was introduced by the secretariat. There was no debate on the content of the Review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World. In thanking the secretariat for its work, the Conference took note of the document, which was seen as a solid basis for the formulation of a framework for action for the next decade. It remains a separate document (not incorporated in this report) under the same reference A/CONF.206/L.1.

Chapter VI

Report on the thematic segment

37. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 22 January, the Conference considered item 9 of its agenda, with oral reports provided by the chairs of the thematic panels: Governance, institutional and policy frameworks for disaster reduction (South Africa), Risk identification, assessment, monitoring and early warning (United States of America), Knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience (Chile), Reducing the underlying risk factors (Romania), and Preparedness for effective response (Bangladesh). An oral report was also given on the regional session that took place within the thematic segment. The results of the very rich exchanges that took place in the many facets of the thematic segment, through the high-level round tables, the thematic panels, the thematic sessions, and the regional sessions, will be the subject of a thorough compilation and publication by the ISDR secretariat later in the year.

Chapter VII

Report on the public forum

38. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 22 January, the Conference also considered item 10 of its agenda, with an oral report from the secretariat. Over 40,000 visitors participated in a variety of activities, including workshops, exhibition booths, poster sessions, where they had opportunities to learn about disasters and measures aimed at establishing disaster-resilient societies. Under this item, a statement was also made by the representative of the non-governmental organization Center for Disaster Reduction, on behalf of those representatives of civil society present at the Conference.

Chapter VIII

Adoption of the programme outcome document and of the Conference Declaration

39. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 22 January, the Conference jointly considered items 12 and 13 of its agenda, since both were directly linked to the work of the Main Committee. The items were presented together by the Chairman of the Main Committee, Mr. Marco Ferrari (Switzerland). Both the programme outcome document, entitled Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters, and the Hyogo Declaration were submitted with the consensus endorsement of the Main Committee. In support of the Hyogo Framework for Action and of the Hyogo Declaration, statements were made by representatives of Sudan on behalf of the African States Group, the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Asian States Group, Romania on behalf of the Eastern European States Group, Brazil on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States Group, Germany on behalf of the Western European and Other States Group. A statement was made also by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The Conference adopted the two documents as submitted by the Chairman of the Main Committee (see chap.I, resolutions 1 and 2).

Chapter IX

Conclusion of the Conference

40. Finally, at its 9th plenary meeting and closing session on 22 January, the Conference considered item 14 of its agenda and adopted the Draft Report of the Conference (A/CONF.206/L.7) as submitted by the Rapporteur. In his concluding remarks, the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs referred to the Hyogo Framework of Action as a milestone for disaster reduction, setting out an ambitious agenda to substantially reduce the losses in lives and in social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries. He called on international cooperation, through existing and new partnerships, to reach the challenges taken on by the Conference. The texts adopted by the Conference were not legally binding, but represented a strong commitment by States and organizations to guide policies and actions in the next 10 years. The Under-Secretary-General confirmed his own strong engagement in providing the ISDR secretariat and all partners in the Inter-agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and Member States with support to ensure that the United Nations system strengthens its disaster reduction actions.

41. In closing the Conference, the President said the World Conference on Disaster Reduction had been a success not only for its high number and level of participants and not only because of its many interesting thematic sessions and events in the public forum,

not only because important texts had been adopted, but also because disaster risk reduction had been put as a high priority on the international agenda. Referring to the tragic disasters the world had witnessed in the last few months of 2004, culminating with the terrible tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the President noted that this had brought home to many that it was high time to address disaster prevention, risk management, vulnerabilities as an unavoidable responsibility of States and of communities. While there will always be hazards, mankind has advanced enough in the past few decades to be able to protect itself from the tragic consequences that derive from the absence of preparedness. Having heard much about early warning during the Conference, particularly during the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster, and witnessing verbal commitments from many countries, the President called upon the Conference to ensure that the level of engagement would rapidly be translated into action. He called on participants to make a firm pledge that those five days in Kobe would make a real difference in the way the world looked at hazard, at risk and at vulnerability, to truly engage on the road for a safer world.

Annex I

List of documents for the Conference

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title or description of contents</i>
A/CONF.206/1	Provisional agenda and annotations
A/CONF.206/2	Provisional rules of procedure
A/CONF.206/3	Accreditation of relevant non-governmental organizations and other major groups to the Conference
A/CONF.206/4	Agenda of the Conference
A/CONF.206/5	Report of the Credentials Committee
A/CONF.206/L.1	Review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World
A/CONF.206/L.2	Draft Programme Outcome Document Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters: [Hyogo] Framework for action 2005-2015
A/CONF.206/L.2/REV.1	Draft programme outcome document building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters: Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015
A/CONF.206/L.3	Draft Hyogo Declaration
A/CONF.206/L.3/REV.1	Draft Hyogo Declaration
A/CONF.206/L.4	Establishing regional mechanisms on surveillance, prevention and assessment of severe natural disasters. Draft declaration submitted by China
A/CONF.206/L.5	Draft elements and considerations for a resolution on early warning for natural disasters. Draft resolution proposed by Germany
A/CONF.206/L.6	Draft common statement of the Special Session on the Indian Ocean Disaster: Risk Reduction for a Safer Future

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title or description of contents</i>
A/CONF.206/L.6/REV.1	Draft common statement of the Special Session on the Indian Ocean Disaster: Risk Reduction for a Safer Future
A/CONF.206/L.7	Draft report of the Conference
A/CONF.206/L.8	Draft report of the Main Committee
A/CONF.206/MISC.1	Provisional list of participants
A/CONF.206/MC/CRP.1	Note from the secretariat
A/CONF.206/INF.1	Information Note for Participants
A/CONF.206/INF.3	List of participants
A/CONF.206/INF.4	Participation of intergovernmental organizations in the work of the Conference
A/CONF.206/INF.5	Information paper submitted by the delegation of the United States of America entitled: "Development of a global tsunami warning system: U.S. next steps"
A/CONF.206/INF.6	Information paper submitted by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany entitled "Concept of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Establishment of a Tsunami Early-Warning System in the Disaster Region of the Indian Ocean"

Annex II

Common statement of the Special Session on the Indian Ocean Disaster: risk reduction for a safer future

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction,

Extending its deepest sympathies and condolences to the victims of the recent tsunami disaster and their families and to the people and Governments of those countries, and expressing our deepest concern over the negative economic, social, psychological, environmental and other consequences and impacts of the tsunami disaster,

Commending the national and international community's prompt and generous support and contributions to the relief efforts, which truly reflect the spirit of solidarity and commitment to addressing challenges facing mankind in a collective and collaborative manner,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 57/256 of 6 February 2003, 58/214 and 58/215 of 23 December 2003, and 59/231 and 59/233 of 22 December 2004 on natural disasters and vulnerability and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,

Recalling also that in its resolution 58/214 the Assembly recommended the implementation of the outcomes of the Second International Conference on Early Warning, held under the auspices of the United Nations at Bonn, Germany, from 16 to 18 October 2003,

Recalling further the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Yokohama, Japan, from 23 to 27 May 1994,

Recognizing that severe natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, typhoons, cyclones, droughts and tsunamis respect no borders and remain major threats to all people, and hinder social and economic progress, in particular in the developing countries,

Recognizing also the importance of national and local capacity building to effectively address the impact of disasters,

Emphasizing the importance of continued international and regional dialogue and discussion in order to build understanding, solidarity and commitment to improve early warning systems and to reduce disasters,

Emphasizing the need to comprehensively assess all the lessons learnt from the tsunami disaster,

Emphasizing also the Special Leaders' Meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations on the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunamis, held in Jakarta on 6 January 2005, which agreed to establish a regional early warning system such as a Regional Tsunami Early Warning Centre on the Indian Ocean and the South-East Asia region,

Taking note of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Mauritius from 10 to 14 January 2005, and in particular the support expressed at the Conference for a global early warning system,

Responding to the request to launch a process to establish a regional early warning system, including for tsunami, by the resumed session of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly,

Noting the proposals to expedite the development of a global tsunami early warning capability, to include the Indian Ocean, drawing on the experience of existing regional tsunami warning system in the Pacific Ocean.

Noting also the proposals for establishing tsunami early warning systems already under consideration as announced by individual countries of the Indian Ocean region,

Taking note of the discussions and conclusions of the special session on the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster at this World Conference on Disaster Reduction and the need to coordinate and examine expeditiously the various proposals made in this context, taking into account the findings of the thematic sessions held during the Conference,

Emphasizes the importance of regional cooperation and coordination in disaster reduction, including enhanced institutional arrangements, technical cooperation based on most effective technical equipment and capacity building to effectively address the impact of natural disasters;

Recognizes the urgent need, as evidenced by the devastation caused by the earthquake and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, to strengthen national systems and to expand existing mechanisms for sharing of information and best practices in disaster detection, early warning, prevention, and assessment of natural disasters and for disaster relief, post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction;

Recommends that necessary regional disaster reduction mechanisms be established and strengthened as soon as possible for all relevant natural hazards, which should include, *inter alia*, specialized collaborative regional centres, networks for information exchange, early warning systems, establishment of databases and knowledge management, use of modern science and technology, and strategies to reduce disaster risks and to reduce impacts arising from natural disasters;

Recognizes also that early warning systems consist of (a) prior knowledge of the risks faced by communities, (b) technical monitoring and warning service for these risks, (c) dissemination of understandable warnings to those at risk, and (d) knowledge, public awareness and preparedness to act;

Invites the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations funds and programmes, United Nations specialized organizations and other international organizations and institutions, to integrate regional disaster reduction strategies into their work programmes and to develop concrete initiatives to implement such strategies;

Emphasizes the need for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to identify, analyse and widely disseminate all the lessons learnt from the recent tsunami disaster;

Requests the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to prepare a report on regional mechanisms for disaster reduction, taking into consideration initiatives and ongoing discussion or arrangements in respective regions and sub-regions, if any, and to submit it to the 2005 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council and the sixtieth session of the General Assembly;

Requests the Economic and Social Council to include regional disaster reduction mechanisms into the agenda of the humanitarian affairs segment of its 2005 substantive session;

Invites the Secretary-General to include regional mechanisms for disaster reduction in the agenda of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly and to submit a report thereon to the General Assembly;

Welcomes the priority to be placed on disaster reduction, including early warning, at the Third Earth Observation Summit at the Ministerial level, to be held in Brussels on 16 February 2005;

Welcomes the proposed convening of a Ministerial Meeting on Regional Cooperation on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements by the Government of Thailand, to be held at Phuket on 28 and 29 January 2005, which aims to lend further political impetus to the relevant outcomes of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and to mobilize necessary resources for the establishment of tsunami early warning systems in the Indian Ocean;

Welcomes the generous offer by Germany to host a United Nations conference on early warning in Bonn in early 2006 and invites Member States, all relevant United Nations organisations, funds and programmes and relevant international and regional organizations, supported by the Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning to participate, with the following objectives: (a) to implement the International Early Warning Programme, proposed at the Second International Conference on Early Warning, held at Bonn, Germany, from 16 to 18 October 2003, and launched at the present World Conference, (b) to identify priority areas for the implementation of early warning systems, taking into account the vulnerabilities of countries to the different hazards, the current status of their warning systems, including the ongoing support, technical and institutional capacities, engagement of relevant actors, and shortcomings, gaps and barriers to implementation, and (c) to assess and monitor the implementation of early warning systems, including the development and use of guidelines, criteria and benchmarking for effective early warning systems;

Recognizes the need to use the experience of the existing Pacific Ocean tsunami early warning systems, making use of the existing coordination mechanisms of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and other relevant international and regional organisations, utilizing the planning process of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems under the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations, and including comprehensive actions such as the assessment of tsunami risks, including a range of advanced technical systems (for example satellite based, high precision dynamic sea level measurements and buoys that provide real time measurements of seismic and oceanographic parameters), as well as the detection and warning of hazardous events, the development of response plans, public education programmes, and resilient shelters, lifelines and protective infrastructure;

Calls for the establishment of an effective and durable tsunami early warning system for the Indian ocean;

Emphasizes that a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean must be tailored to the specific circumstances of the Indian Ocean and the individual requirements of countries, under the coordination of the United Nations, and that those countries must be the ones to determine the shape and nature of the system;

Recommends that elements of a forward strategy to establish an Indian Ocean tsunami early warning system can include a preparatory technical scoping meeting, assessment of needs in countries of the Indian Ocean, if requested by those countries, regional seminars and coordination meetings, as necessary, a regional planning conference, and the preparation and dissemination of public awareness and other appropriate material;

Appreciates the steps taken or to be taken by countries of the Indian Ocean to provide for interim tsunami early warning in the Indian Ocean;

Commends the many generous offers of financial and technical assistance made by key countries across the globe to help establish a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean.