



PRESS RELEASE

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G8 Summit 'promises much' on Disaster Risk Reduction

Leaders of the world's eight main industrialized countries gathering for a G8 Summit meeting later this week are being urged to apply their 'considerable influence, resources and political will' to advance five major action points on disaster risk reduction (DRR).

This pivotal event in the international calendar is taking place at a moment when decisive action is needed to adapt to climate change, with people already suffering from extreme weather now. Governments must develop resilience to future hazards and make a lifesaving difference to the millions who are at risk.

As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted at the recent Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, "Investing in risk reduction is a triple win: against poverty, against disasters and against climate change."

His words are echoed in a joint statement issued today (Tuesday) by the seven international agencies/organizations (*see Note 2*), which form the management oversight board of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction partnership (ISDR). G8 leaders and their governments are 'uniquely placed to establish, support and implement nationally owned disaster risk reduction plans and help address the risks associated with climate change', it says.

The document also notes that climate change and food safety and security are among the key agenda issues at the Summit taking place in L'Aquila, Italy – which was devastated by a fearsome earthquake just three months ago, on 6 April 2009 – adding that the meeting 'promises much in taking forward the global DRR imperative'.

It goes on to specify five action areas which would benefit particularly from G8 attention and follow up:

- **Helping disaster-prone countries** in incorporating disaster risk reduction as a strategic and programmatic development instrument, integral to all national strategic initiatives such as poverty reduction plans, United Nations Development Assistance Framework, country assistance strategies and national development plans.
- **Promoting effective measures** to reduce the number of people living with chronic food insecurity by strengthening livelihoods through enhanced risk management particularly at the community level.
- **Ensuring the research needed** at all levels to develop, disseminate and apply climate forecast information, early warning systems and ecosystem essentials – particularly in developing countries – through improved water resource management and increased sustainable agricultural, fisheries and forestry productivity.
- **Enabling expeditiously** a global structural and functional assessment of all schools and hospitals, coupled with firm action plans for safer health and education facilities developed and implemented in all disaster-prone countries – with disaster risk reduction included in all school curricula as standard.
- **Making unequivocal financial commitments** to disaster risk reduction, for example to allocate a minimum of 10% of all humanitarian and reconstruction funding, at least 1% of development funding, and a sizeable portion of climate change adaptation funding to disaster risk reduction.

"The ongoing impetus to push DRR up the international agenda is founded on partnerships – both at the community and national level – coupled with intensive effort to concentrate the minds of the world's political leadership," says Margareta Wahlström, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.

"This is a significant statement from agencies and organisations that effectively guide the global DRR endeavour and it is very much to be hoped that G8 leaders will listen to their recommendations and then act upon them."

Notes to Editors

1. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) is a system of partnerships comprising a broad range of actors, all of which have essential roles in supporting nations and communities to reduce risk. ISDR partners include Governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, scientific/technical bodies and specialized networks as well as civil society and the private sector.
2. The seven agencies/organisations which form the ISDR Management Oversight Board are: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; United Nations Development Program; United Nations Environment Program; United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; World Bank; and World Meteorological Organization.
3. The Second Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction took place in Geneva, Switzerland, 16-19 June 2009. See: <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2009/>.
4. A copy of the full ISDR Management Oversight Board Statement is attached.

Further Information

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