



## **Second Announcement**

### **Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 8-13 May 2011 Geneva, Switzerland**

The Global Platform is the world's foremost gathering of stakeholders committed to reducing disaster risk and building the resilience of communities and nations. The Third Session of the Global Platform will bring together disaster risk reduction, recovery and reconstruction experts. Over 2,000 policy makers and practitioners, from government, international organizations, NGOs, academia, and the private sector from both developing and developed countries will collect, assess and share information as well as set new directions. The Third Session will be convened over six days (8-13 May). The official welcome and plenary sessions will begin on Tuesday 10 May.

Formal invitations will be sent to delegations in the coming weeks.

Themes, topics and outcomes of the Third Session of the Global Platform continue to be refined through consultation with stakeholders. Initial responses and developments since the last Global Platform indicate that we have unfinished business in securing a safer tomorrow. It is also clear that the goals of the Hyogo Framework cannot be achieved without greater investments in local implementation.

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#### **Overall Theme: Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow - Increased Investment in Local Action**

The Chair's Summary of Second Session the Global Platform in 2009, called for "Reduced risk for all". Since the last Global Platform in 2009, local action is delivering results and drawing increased attention. The Making Cities Resilient campaign has signed over 150 to date, illustrating the commitment and contribution of mayors, local governments and their supporters worldwide. A new Community Practitioners Platform for Resilience is being used by policy makers and community organizations to build alliances between them. The Global Assessment Report 2011 recognizes local perspectives and incorporates 'Views from the Frontline' from civil society organizations.

But, to what extent do our interventions lead to improved conditions in the places where the vulnerable live and work? Are all our programs and policies targeted enough at supporting local action and building on local assets? How can we accelerate finance and increase investment in local action. What do we need to do to make this happen?

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#### **Topics**

To increase investment and accelerate implementation of disaster risk reduction, we need to better understand how decisions are taken in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction and how investment decisions are taken by government and private sector in the course of development. We need to be informed by the economics, costs and benefits of disaster risk reduction. We need to make the link with climate change adaptation efforts and to understand the dynamics of poverty and development. These concerns are addressed through the three proposed topics supporting the overall theme of the Third Session of the Global Platform.

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#### **1. Recovering and Reducing Risks after Disasters: World Reconstruction Conference organized by the World Bank, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction**

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Disasters are increasing worldwide and this trend is expected to intensify. Catastrophic events are followed by major public interventions for recovery and reconstruction and divert scarce resources originally intended for development programs. At the same time, reconstruction programs offer an opportunity to improve living standards and reduce future risks by building back better. When there is a

lack of institutional capacity, coherent planning, and coordination between stakeholders, however, the chance for development is lost, funds are wasted, and the affected population is left additionally burdened. This phenomenon can be observed across the globe from reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina, haphazard recovery efforts after the earthquake in Haiti, and the lack of preventative measures even after the numerous floods that occur every year in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This situation raises serious questions. Have we really learned the lessons of the past? What are the systemic challenges that cause the same problems to be brought up in reconstruction experiences in geographies around the world and what needs to be done to help move the international community forward? Disaster vulnerability and risks are well known and recent evidence shows that prioritizing prevention pays off in the end and can be cost-effective too. But why are we not investing in it? What are the constraints for proactive investment to finally make communities safer?

The challenges of disaster recovery and reconstruction will be addressed in diverse ways at the World Reconstruction Conference as part of the Global Platform. Further information on the World Reconstruction Conference will follow at [www.wrc-2011.org](http://www.wrc-2011.org)

#### Expected outcomes

- *Greater knowledge of practice and experiences of disaster recovery and reconstruction with the aim of ensuring that local communities receive what they need in reconstruction*
- *Reflection and review of current reconstruction practices and the development of new ways for more effective disaster recovery and reconstruction*
- *Proposals and recommendations for a global policy framework and key international standards for effective cooperation and coordination of recovery and reconstruction efforts*

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## **2. Understanding the Economics of Disaster Risk Reduction**

We see the devastating impact of disasters almost everyday. We also know the factors that increase risk sometimes can cause more loss than need be. For example, they may include: poor urban planning; denuded hillsides; or poor communications. But the investments to reduce these risks are not forthcoming at the scale or targeted effectively. We need to fully appreciate the costs and benefits or the economics of disaster risk reduction. We need to unpack the report 'Natural Hazards, UnNatural Disasters – the Economics of Effective Prevention' to hear the evidence, and to learn about what works and what does not, and why.

We often find that not enough resources are flowing to the local level to build up resilience. We need to find the incentives for investment in disaster risk reduction. We need to find and implement financial modalities that are going to work. Questions raised by the topic include: What are the overall economic impacts of disasters on countries and communities? What are the triggers to decide to invest more in risk management? What are the best examples of risk reducing investments (e.g. private investment, Government expenditure, public procurement)? What are the best financing modalities for disaster risk reduction?

#### Expected outcomes

- *Better understanding of the economics of disaster risk reduction*
- *Guidance for further investment in disaster risk reduction*
- *Developing financing modalities for risk reduction that work at the local level*

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## **3. Strengthening Alliances for Climate Change Adaptation and Development**

The Global Platform in 2009 emphasized that success in reducing disaster risk, adapting to climate change, and achieving sustainable livelihoods, requires extensive collaboration and partnerships.

Parties to the UNFCCC climate change negotiations have repeatedly signaled the relevance of the Hyogo Framework for Action. Interest in the skills, expertise and experience of the disaster risk reduction community continues to grow. There is further acknowledgement that Millennium Development Goals may not be achieved if disaster risk is ignored. Humanitarian actors continue to seek commitment and support

from development partners. Leaders in the private sector have begun to weigh the impacts of hazard risk against economic risks. At the national level, several governments have undertaken concrete measures to harmonize risk reduction and adaptation policies and link these to development.

The Third Session of the Global Platform is an opportunity to chart a course for stronger alliances based on good examples we have seen over the last few years. Some key questions arise, including: What is the value of harmonizing institutional mechanisms and policies for disaster risk reduction, adaptation and development? What are the risks of working in isolation? What concrete activities will encourage joint efforts? How can the global and regional mechanisms be strengthened to facilitate stronger alliances?

#### Expected outcomes

- *Examples of alliances that have supported disaster risk reduction at national and community levels*
- *Showcasing of good practice in preparedness and prevention*
- *Measures for strengthening partnerships in disaster risk reduction, adaptation and development*

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### **Features**

Throughout the design of the Global Platform we will seek to provide a model for substantive multi-stakeholder dialogue with sessions designed to foster interactivity and partnership building among stakeholder groups.

A key feature of the Third Session will be the joint efforts of the UN and the World Bank to present and arrange innovative discussions and material for the Global Platform. For example, for the World Reconstruction Conference, a high-level policy panel will set out the key challenges of reconstruction with a selected group of prominent thought-leaders. An innovation competition and forum will showcase innovations in services, products, and approaches that have been implemented in disaster recovery. A social networking platform will be used to facilitate dialogue in advance of the deliberations and virtual participation and debate will be encouraged through live web broadcasting and blogging.

The Third Session of the Global Platform will also include:

- *An e-Platform from February for stakeholder groups to have their voices heard*
- *Interactive dialogue sessions to explore issues related to the plenary topic of the day*
- *Plenary and roundtable discussions on the topics*
- *Events, releases and promotion, for example*
  - Launch of the Global Assessment Report for Disaster Reduction
  - Sasakawa Award Ceremony
  - Meetings of National and Regional Platforms
  - Discussion on the findings of the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework of Action
  - Promotion of the 'Making Cities Resilient' Campaign
- *Consultative Group Meeting of the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)*
  - 10th meeting of the GFDRR donors and partners will discuss the current status and challenges in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation in the sustainable development agenda of the disaster-prone developing countries
- *Technical sessions on capacity building and other key issues will be organized by partners*
- *Communication opportunities to share information and experiences*
  - Market stalls, open meeting space for discussion and a social media component for the space
  - Listening to government - Statements webcast live throughout the venue and other innovative communications to reinforce the announcements from each government statement
  - Building on the success of 'Views from the Frontline', we will aim to project citizen reports from field sites in cities and communities

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### **Overall Global Platform Outcomes**

A Chair's Summary will be the outcome document produced at the Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. We also expect the overall outcomes to centre around:

- *A clearer future direction for disaster risk reduction, recovery and reconstruction efforts*
- *Promotion of local and national solutions*
- *New investments for implementation*

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## Practical Information - Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction

### When and Where

The Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction will take place from 8 to 13 May 2011 at the International Conference Centre Geneva, 17 rue de Varembe. The conference centre is close to the Palais des Nations and many other international organizations. The centre is also easy to reach by public transport and is 15 minutes from the Geneva international airport by car or taxi and less so from the town centre. Parking space is often difficult to find in the area.

### Participation

- Invitations to Governments are being sent through the Permanent UN Missions in Geneva and New York. Persons wishing to become part of their national delegation should contact their national focal point for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and/or the Ministry of External Relations or Foreign Affairs.
- Invitations will also be extended to relevant UN and International Organizations, International Financial Institutions, Regional Intergovernmental Organizations, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector, Academic and Research Institutions.

Requests for participation by other expert organizations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Given the nature and purpose of the Global Platform, there is a lot of interest but participation may be limited. Given the importance and topics of the Global Platform, Governments and organizations are encouraged to send high level representatives.

### Travel and Visas

Participants are requested to arrange their own hotel bookings for their stay in Geneva, and should contact their Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva for assistance, as required. Early booking of accommodation is advised, as other events are scheduled to take place in Geneva around the same date.

Upon request and when necessary, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) can support the visa request of registered participants with a letter addressed to the respective Swiss Embassy or Consulate. Please note that visa arrangements can take up considerable time, up to two months can be expected.

### Website and Contact

At <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/> you will find updated information on the Global Platform 2011. We will add to the website as more information becomes available. Coordinator for the Global Platform is Neil McFarlane at UNISDR, Geneva (email: [mcfarlane2@un.org](mailto:mcfarlane2@un.org)).

### Registration

At above website, invited participants will also be able to register directly from 2 January 2011 onwards. Closing date for online registration is 20 April 2011.