INFORMAL PLENARY SESSIONS

Thursday, 18th June

The following report has been prepared by Earth Negotiations Bulletin.

On Thursday, 18 June, Margareta Wahlström was joined by Jordan Ryan, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery as co-chair of the informal plenary.

Co-Chair Wahlström updated participants on discussions taking place at other meeting sessions, noting, inter alia, suggestions to integrate young people and children into DRR, and allocate a minimum of one percent of national development budgets to DRR. Co-Chair Ryan noted the importance of involving women and children in DRR, sustainability of recovery, institutional integration of DRR into planning and budgets, multilateral cooperation and concerted efforts at poverty alleviation. He stressed the need to maintain a positive tone in the mid-term review to reflect progress made. One participant suggested ensuring that by 2015 at least 50 percent of schools have curricula related to DRR, and dedicating a minimum of 10 percent of humanitarian aid to DRR.

Many participants highlighted the importance of local level actions and broad participatory approaches, and lamented the relative shortage of local-level actors at this conference. Some said successes are often at the local level and lessons need to be drawn from them. Another said UNISDR should respond much more creatively to local-level developments.

Others suggested achieving a higher ratio of NGO participants in ISDR processes, with one requesting that the next Global Platform session include half a day of presentations from grassroots organizations. Regarding the mid-term review, one participant proposed increasing transparency and accountability by appointing a separate and independent body to develop modalities for the review and provide quality insurance. Noting that vulnerability is difficult to monitor, one participant proposed collaborative work between international organizations to develop a range of indicators for DRR. Several participants stressed the need for, inter alia: better cross-country learning; increased involvement of children; regional policy reports; provincial action plans; South-South cooperation; and an ecosystems-driven approach.

One said that a forthcoming Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on DRR will provide knowledge and answers that can be applied locally. Another added that the mid-term review should be utilized to further improve HFA implementation. Responding to these comments, the co-chairs said the purpose of the informal plenary is to “gauge the temperature” on key issues and that the UNISDR Secretariat will consider expressed views but cannot commit to including all suggestions in the list of recommendations to ISDR stakeholders.