



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

Official Statement

By Mr. Bekele Geleta, Secretary General of IFRC

Geneva, 22 May 2013

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good Morning.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to participate in this Fourth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. It is encouraging to note that attendance has more than doubled since our first gathering four years ago. This clearly shows the attention the disaster risk reduction movement is attracting, and also the increasing importance the international community is attaching to it.

This year, 130 Red Cross Red Crescent representatives from a range of countries including Nepal, Georgia, Thailand and Armenia are in attendance. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as a grassroots organisation with more than 13 million volunteers worldwide, has long been an advocate and a practitioner of disaster risk reduction, as our emergency response work goes hand in hand with long-term development efforts.

We are currently providing disaster risk reduction training in more than 50 countries through our staff and volunteers, who live and work within the communities they are helping.

Creating a culture of prevention and resilience for the next generation of children is a key objective of our work and we have the potential to reach further through our on-going partnerships with education ministries around the world.

Therefore, I feel very strongly that the Red Cross Red Crescent can complement the important work governments and all of your organisations are doing in the area of disaster risk reduction. Moreover,



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in our role as auxiliary to governments, the Red Cross Red Crescent is in a very good position to ensure disaster risk reduction is on the agenda at the highest level of decision making and that investment in prevention and risk reduction continues to be stepped up.

However, in terms of securing political will and motivation, our disaster risk reduction movement needs to push further.

At the 2009 Global Platform, States committed to increasing their disaster risk reduction funding to 10 per cent of their total humanitarian relief budgets - but unfortunately this commitment is yet to be met. Therefore, persuading States to fulfil this 10 per cent commitment would be a welcome achievement indeed.

Disaster risk reduction **must** be an integral part of any humanitarian development planning and budget. This is "risk informed" disaster response, and "risk informed" development – smart investment that saves lives and is also cost effective.

It is also my hope that this year's Global Platform will provide us all with a further opportunity to build on the current Hyogo Framework for Action. Its goals of improving disaster resilience and reducing disaster losses by 2015 are very much enshrined in the IFRC's Strategy 2020.

On behalf of vulnerable people across the world, the IFRC calls on **Governments** to ensure that resource and policy commitments are put in place; we call on **the private sector** to see disaster risk reduction as a responsive, innovative and cost effective investment; we call on **the people** themselves to change their lifestyles, attitudes and mindsets to fit the demands of change, and we call on **civil society organizations** to participate and facilitate support to vulnerable populations in a timely manner.

I hereby give you my word, on behalf of the Red Cross Red Crescent, that we will fully deliver on our commitments.

Before closing, I extend a special thanks to Special Representative Mrs Margareta Wahlstrom. Her leadership and contribution to disaster risk reduction has been exceptional. I thank Margareta for opening the doors of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to me all



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those years ago and thank her on behalf of the IFRC for her significant contribution to our humanitarian work.

Thank you all, and I wish you all a successful Global Platform.