**Official Plenary Statement – Plan International**

**Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

**Thursday 12 May**

Excellencies, Heads of Delegations, distinguished guests and participants;

Plan International is pleased to be part of this forum and welcomes the opportunity to exchange information and learn from our counterparts. Congratulations to Margareta Wahlstrom and the ISDR team for their preparations of the conference, and for ISDR’s work.

Some of you here today may have been sat in these same chairs in the final plenary of the 2009 Global Platform. Rhee Telin, a boy from the Philippines spoke there. He said that he’d come to Geneva from his village in the Philippines and he thought that Geneva was quite like a school. A school for governments. He asked delegates then to learn their lessons and do their homework. He asked governments to come back in 2011 to report that they’d made his world safer. Honestly, can we say we’ve satisfied him?

In this conference there has been a lot of talk about targets. Plan International asks governments and the international community to set targets that reflect children’s priorities.

Firstly: **invest in education**. This morning in this Global Platform three teenage children who have faced disasters in their own countries described how they were affected. They said that their priority was education. They need to learn how to survive and how to prevent disasters. And they need to learn in safe schools. Plan believes that b**y 2015 all children should learn about the disasters that may affect them. And all children should be going to safe schools**. This is a realistic target.

Second: **allocate more funds for reducing disaster risk**. Planners and governments need to invest much more in disaster risk reduction and preparedness. This is a long term commitment. Plan believes that by 2015 a**ll governments should have doubled their current expenditure on disaster risk reduction and they should report their progress in the biannual national reports on implementing the Hyogo Framework.**

Third: **involve children in planning and implementing disaster risk reduction**. Listen to children. Let them speak. Trust them. They should be seen and they should be heard. Children are receptive to new ideas and they can be effective leaders of change. They can be ambassadors for DRR, both in their own homes and more widely in their communities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child gives children the right to be protected and the right to express their opinions about their future. Plan believes that b**efore the next Global Platform, every delegation should have consulted with children and come to the conference with children’s priorities in mind.**

Thank you.