
WCDRR First Preparatory Committee

Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America

As Prepared For Delivery by Head of Delegation Peter Mulrean
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Thank you, Chair.

Since the Global Platform meeting last May, the world has been struck with a number of extraordinary disasters -- which we can see even now as Japan manages the disaster caused by a recent earthquake and typhoon Neoguri -- underscoring that the unrelenting global challenges we face have never been greater, nor our collective efforts more important, to reducing disaster risks worldwide.

Unfortunately, the global pattern of extreme weather and devastation has become routine. Governments must have disaster frameworks, policies, and regulations in place, and they must be prepared to adjust policies and practices and consider directing resources to manage risk in order to minimize devastation. To be sure, resources to address these risks are limited as many countries face significant and complex economic challenges that will not be resolved overnight. Consequently, disaster risk reduction

itself should not seek to prejudge the ultimate agenda, which will be decided in ongoing intergovernmental negotiations that will continue over the next year.

The United States supports the HFA as a strong basis for the HFA2, recognizing that the follow-on framework must reflect increasingly prevalent challenges and trends, such as climate change. The United States would like to highlight conclusions from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters [to Advance Climate Change Adaptation] (IPCC/SREX), stating that disaster risk reduction measures are an effective way to adapt to climate variability and change, and we support closer linkage of these two issues. Additionally, we believe that DRR should be integrated into sustainable development and poverty eradication policies, plans, programs, and budgets at all levels.

In June 2013, President Obama announced his Climate Action Plan, which outlines steps the United States government is taking to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate, including the possibility of increasing extreme weather events and other changing natural hazards. We are working to implement the President's plan at the national as well as state and local levels. We note, however, that climate change is only one of many complex factors contributing to disasters; lack of capacity, lack of governance, environmental and natural resource degradation, population growth, rapid urbanization, poverty, lack of economic development, settlement in hazard-prone areas, and many other non-climatic factors also determine whether a natural hazard becomes a disaster.

United States remains committed to working with the international community toward the common goal of reducing disaster risk worldwide.

Thank you, Chair.

