



September 24, 2014

Support for Nomination of Prof. Dr. Allan Michael Lavell to 2015 UN Sasakawa Award on DRR

In 2005, as a result of the Indian Ocean Tsunami and the 2nd World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005, the International Council for Science (usually identified by its acronym ICSU) established a scientific Planning Group on Natural and Human-induced Environmental Hazards and Disasters, which I was asked to Chair. Due his recognized excellence in disaster risk reduction and implementation on a regional basis, Dr. Lavell was selected to be a member of this Planning Group. He made outstanding contributions across the disciplinary issues of disaster risk reduction and specifically focussed on the very important issues of social and developmental aspects of risk and disasters. With his invaluable contributions, the formal “*A Science Plan for Integrated Research on Disaster Risk - Addressing the challenge of natural and human-induced environmental hazards*” was completed in 2008 and endorsed by the International Council for Science General Assembly of that year. The General Assembly also approved the formation of the program Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) – addressing the challenge of natural and human-induced environmental hazards. IRDR was established to leave the legacy of an enhanced capacity around the world to address hazards and make informed decisions on actions to reduce their impacts, such that in ten years, when comparable events occur, there would be a reduction in loss of life, fewer people adversely impacted, and wiser investments and choices made by governments, the private sector and civil society. In recognition of his very major and inspired contributions to the Science Plan and his outstanding abilities, the General Assembly appointed Dr. Lavell as a member of the Scientific Committee. As Chair of the IRDR Scientific Committee from 2008 to 2011, I can personally attest to the strong and very important role that Allan played on that Committee in moving from a plan to a program and in building the scientific team and regional actions and linkages. He has continued to be a member past my Chairmanship.

My interactions with Dr, Lavell were also very active through our roles as Coordinating Lead Authors (CLA) for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation. Allan was the CLA for the very important Chapter 1, Climate Change: New Dimensions in Disaster Risk, Exposure, Vulnerability, and Resilience. There he demonstrated not only his scientific excellence, for which he was chosen to be a CLA, but also his ability to constructively link

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across the fields of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management and to work effectively with scientists from around the world. The Special Report, published in 2012, has had major positive impacts and benefits for global society and Allan was a major factor in making it successful.

In my opinion, Dr. Allan Lavell is a pioneers and global leader in disaster risk reduction science, its implications for the benefits of society and bringing in the social and developmental aspects; which make him an especially appropriate and deserving nominee for the 2015 UN Sasakawa Award on DRR.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon McBean". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gordon McBean, CM, OOnt., Ph.D., FRSC
President, International Council for Science
President, START International Inc (capacity building in developing countries)
Formerly: Chair, Science Committee, Integrated Research on Disaster Reduction Programme (2008-11); Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment Canada (1994-2000)

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