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PRESS RELEASE

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Asian Parliamentarians call on governments to allocate at least 1 per cent of national budget to disaster risk reduction

Geneva – Parliamentarians from ten Asian countries have issued a call to national governments to allocate at least 1 per cent of the national budget and development funding for reducing disaster risk.

The call came just days before negotiators gathered in Cancun, Mexico, for the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 16) where a group of States Parties are working to integrate disaster risk reduction as part of the final negotiated text.

“We need to elevate national and global aspirations in addressing disaster risk from mere ‘reduction’ towards ‘elimination’, and to promote disaster prevention with ‘zero tolerance’ to disaster losses as a mindset and approach for international, national, and local development action,” says the Manila Call for Action, which is directed at national governments and signed by parliamentarians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Philippines, and Thailand.

Meeting in Manila, Philippines, the parliamentarians pledged to be “agents of change” and agreed “to transcend political boundaries in advancing disaster risk reduction and in fostering synergies with climate change adaptation for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.”

Adopted unanimously on 27 November at the consultative meeting for Asian Parliamentarians on “Disaster Risk Reduction: An Instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals,” parliamentarians agreed to enhance their knowledge and capacity in disaster risk reduction through closer collaboration with the UN’s agency for disaster risk reduction -- UNISDR.

The document also recommends that governments use UNISDR’s Advocacy Kit for Parliamentarians on Disaster Risk Reduction as an Instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

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