



The Manila Call for Action of Parliamentarians on Applying Disaster Risk Reduction as an Instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

We, Parliamentarians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Philippines, and Thailand met at the Consultative Meeting for Parliamentarians on “Disaster Risk Reduction: An Instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals,” held in cooperation with the Philippine Senate, the Asian Forum for Parliamentarians on Population and Development and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), on 25-27 November 2010 in Manila, Philippines, **intending:**

- (1) To sustain the gains and advance the initiatives of parliamentarians in advocating for disaster risk reduction towards more sustainable socio-economic development in the region.
- (2) To highlight the roles of parliamentarians and the priorities of government in making the needed changes happen to eliminate disaster risk which, unlike hazards, are neither inevitable nor natural.

We, Parliamentarians, consider:

- (1) The state of disaster risk in the world is worsening, especially in Asia, severely affecting the poor and the most vulnerable, eroding economic development gains, and rapidly increasing the socio-economic vulnerability of developing countries.
- (2) Disasters impact directly on the lives and livelihoods of our people and the communities, pose a significant challenge to the realization of sustainable and equitable growth and development in Asia, and make more difficult the efforts of national governments in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.
- (3) Disaster risk is driven and made worse by climate change, poverty, gender inequity, poor governance and corruption, weak institutions, ecosystems decline, vulnerable rural livelihoods, vulnerable infrastructure, rapid urbanization, population pressures, inequitable economic growth, and unsustainable development policies, strategies and practices, among other factors.
- (4) The developing world is calling for climate justice due to the historical responsibility of industrialized countries in increasing disaster risk and their moral obligation to financially and technologically assist developing countries in their disaster risk reduction efforts.

(5) Disasters are preventable and risk can be eliminated. Concerted, collaborative and strategic efforts by all stakeholders and in all sectors of society reduce disaster vulnerability and build disaster resilience at all levels.

(6) Disaster risk reduction is our first line of defense against climate change and an effective strategy for promoting climate change adaptation at the international, national and local levels, in particular by mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in all development efforts.

(7) The political commitment of national governments to advance disaster risk reduction is high and sustained momentum for action in the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held biannually since the World Conference on Disaster Reduction of 2005 should be strengthened.

(8) Since “The Manila Call for Action of Parliamentarians of 2008,” parliamentarians from all the regions of the world have met and amplified the Call, resulting in more parliamentarians appreciating the importance of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, relevant laws passed in certain countries, and an advocacy kit for parliamentarians published jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UNISDR.

We, Parliamentarians, recognize:

(1) Disaster risk reduction is a shared responsibility of all, in which we have an important leadership mandate and a moral duty to create enabling policy environments, to introduce effective approaches for disaster-resilient development, and to ensure that the needed changes do occur.

(2) We have a duty to our people to exercise our oversight function in national policy development and implementation and to ensure the transparent and effective use of public funds.

(3) Disaster risk reduction is clearly more cost-effective than disaster relief and recovery.

(4) We need to increase the awareness and understanding by all parliamentarians of the importance of disaster risk reduction in protecting the people and in fortifying development.

(5) 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.

(6) We need to re-evaluate existing development models and in so doing consider the socio-economic standards and quality of living for our people towards a sustainable and equitable world and a disaster-resilient human society for future generations.

We, Parliamentarians, pledge:

(1) To deepen our understanding of the linkages of disaster risk reduction with development issues such as climate change, poverty, gender, education, public health, maternal and child care, environment, and infrastructure, among other issues, and translate it to practical actions.

(2) To demonstrate responsible and effective political leadership, governance, and public service.

(3) To be agents of change and to transcend political boundaries in advancing disaster risk reduction and in fostering synergies with climate change adaptation for achieving the MDGs.

We, Parliamentarians, call on National Governments:

(1) To adopt a national strategy and put in place the requisite institutional frameworks and arrangements that mainstream disaster risk reduction into development policy, programs, and practices.

(2) To allocate resources from costly disaster relief and recovery activities to cost-effective disaster risk reduction measures for sustainable development.

(3) To allocate at least one percent (1%) of the national budget and development funding at the national and local levels for reducing disaster risk.

(4) To enhance political commitment to disaster risk reduction and to translate this into development investments and resource sharing at the regional level.

(5) To introduce disaster risk reduction in the basic education systems, local government programs, and national and local youth programs.

We, Parliamentarians, commit to pursue the following Plan of Action:

A. At the national level

(1) Hold a parliamentary briefing on “The Manila Call for Action of Parliamentarians of 2010.”

(2) Promote parliamentary discussions on disaster risk reduction towards the elimination of risk.

(3) Through closer collaboration with the UNISDR, enhance the knowledge and capacity of parliamentarians in disaster risk reduction through forums for sharing knowledge, information, and best practices of countries.

(4) Form a parliamentary committee or a working group and a coalition of parliamentarians for disaster risk reduction, and to interact more effectively with the executive branch of government.

(5) Conduct public hearings on disaster risk reduction-related development issues and encourage public awareness through mass media campaigns.

(6) Facilitate country-specific cost-benefit analyses on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

(7) Identify, interact with, and engage stakeholders, including national and local governments, political parties, civil society, media, and youth organizations.

(8) Lobby for an increase in national investment in disaster risk reduction, and to facilitate direct access to international funds intended for climate change adaptation and for reducing climate-related risk.

(9) Promote legislation that allocates adequate national budget for disaster risk reduction in each development sector.

(10) Engage in the discourse on evaluating development towards global sustainability.

B. At the regional and international levels

(1) Request the UNISDR to be the focal point in facilitating parliamentary dialogues and interactions on disaster risk reduction and related issues.

(2) Seek collaboration with the IPU and the UNISDR to translate into national languages their publication, *Advocacy Kit for Parliamentarians on Disaster Risk Reduction: An Instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, and to document good practices.

(3) Use existing avenues and networks, such as the IPU, the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (PNoWB), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, to foster regional and international dialogues on disaster risk reduction among parliamentarians.

(4) Encourage the creation of a working group on disaster risk reduction in the IPU.

(5) Call on international donors and financial institutions to support innovative financing mechanisms such as debt-swaps for preventive disaster risk reduction measures, excluding the use of such mechanisms for disaster relief.

Adopted unanimously on 27 November 2010.