



PRESS RELEASE

UNISDR 2011/29
12 October 2011

UNISDR HEAD VISITS MYANMAR TO DISCUSS ACTION PLAN FOR DISASTER REDUCTION

GENEVA, 12 October 2011 – The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, arrived in Myanmar today at the invitation of the government, on a three-day visit during which she will engage with senior Government Ministers on a national action plan for disaster risk reduction and a Disaster Management Law.

Wahlström who leads the UN disaster risk reduction office, UNISDR, will discuss these and other disaster risk reduction issues at a meeting tomorrow (October 13), International Disaster Reduction Day, with government ministers. She will also be visiting coastal areas which were badly affected by Cyclone Nargis in 2008.

In a statement issued prior to her visit, she said: “Myanmar is one of the most disaster-affected countries in Asia. It has been hit by six major cyclones in the last 40 years and is also vulnerable to multiple hazards such as floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides and forest fires. UNISDR is willing to assist in whatever way we can to help the country reduce its risk which is fundamental to inclusive economic growth and poverty alleviation which are part of the new government’s reform agenda.”

Her visit takes place following a major Mid-Term review of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which was adopted by Myanmar and 167 other UN member States in 2005 as a blueprint for reducing disaster losses.

She said: “UNISDR is supporting Myanmar in making disaster risk reduction a national and local priority for all citizens through engagement with the new National Disaster Preparedness Committee on developing law and regulations for disaster management and disaster risk reduction as recommended in the Hyogo Framework review.

“I am looking forward to hearing how the responses to Cyclone Giri last year and the Shan State earthquake in March this year benefitted from the many lessons learned from Cyclone Nargis especially in early warning, preparedness and response.”

About UNISDR

UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which has been adopted by 168 countries and seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.” Over 130 countries now report on their disaster risk reduction efforts. The biennial Third Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction took place in May 2011 and was opened by the UN Secretary General. It attracted several Heads of State and over 2,600 delegates representing 168 governments, 25 inter-governmental organizations, 65 NGOs and other ISDR partners. UNISDR has facilitated the creation of 38 National Disaster Data Bases around the world as part of its on-going global effort to lead and convince governments and the private sector to invest in risk reduction and avoid recurrent disaster losses which waste development resources. It has also mobilised over 800 cities and local governments to take part in the World Disaster Risk Reduction Campaign, *Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready!* In early 2011, UNISDR supported the initiative by the President of the UN General Assembly to organize the first thematic debate on disaster risk reduction ever held in the UN General Assembly.

For more information about UNISDR visit: www.unisdr.org

Follow UNISDR online:

