

PRESS RELEASE

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UNISDR HEAD MEETS WITH PRIVATE SECTOR IN CHINA TO DISCUSS DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

GENEVA, 8 November 2011 – The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, is in China today for a first round of consultations on disaster risk reduction with entrepreneurs and business people.

Some of the biggest names in Chinese industry are represented at the meeting including the Bank of China, the China Railway Construction Corporation Ltd, China Petroleum Equipment Co. Ltd, the China Association of Women Entrepreneurs, the World Cities Scientific Development Alliance and a number of major investment companies.

Wahlström who heads the UN office for disaster risk reduction, UNISDR, said: “China can play a leading role in UNISDR’s global initiative to promote public/private sector partnerships in reducing the impact of natural hazards and building the resilience of business to disasters. The country experienced more major reported disasters last year than any other country.

“Studies show that the average property loss is 20 times larger for companies with weak physical risk management practices. Integrating disaster risk reduction into business planning contributes to the sustainable reduction of disaster losses and helps to save lives, jobs and important infrastructure. A private sector committed to disaster risk reduction can steer public demand towards materials, systems and technological solutions to build and run resilient communities.”

Today’s brainstorming session aims to exchange information and knowledge on challenges and opportunities for enterprises to integrate disaster risk reduction into their business management cycle, especially in urban areas.

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 900 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.

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