

## ASIAN MAYORS TALK RESILIENCE

Some 40 mayors and other representatives from some of Asia's largest cities gathered in Manila in March for a three-day course on urban resilience organized by ASEAN-UNISDR Technical Cooperation. "Mayors and local government leaders can learn a lot from each other and join forces for more resilient communities," stated Al Arquilano, Vice Mayor of San Francisco (Camotes) in the Philippines and Sasakawa Award recipient.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/TCQZQ>



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## IPCC REPORT OUTLINES THREAT TO 'THE FUTURE WE WANT'

UNISDR welcomed the full publication of the Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX) and said "it provides us with the impetus for action to save the world from the worst that climate change can bring to our planet in the coming years." Speaking at a launch event in Geneva, Helena Molin-Valdes, acting Director, UNISDR, described the new report as the most comprehensive analysis yet of the interplay between the impacts of extreme weather and socio-economic vulnerability. She said its publication was well-timed for the debate on resilience and risk reduction in the run-up to the UN Sustainable Development Conference in Rio de Janeiro or Rio+20. **For more information, visit:**

<http://goo.gl/Hq1Pb>

## CHILE'S LOCAL LEADERS EMPOWERED TO ACT ON RISK

Recently empowered by the Chilean Congress, local government bodies in Chile are using their increased autonomy to boost community resilience and address risk reduction. Under the theme, "Stronger local governments," participants of the 6th Latin-American Congress of Cities and Local Authorities recently held in Santiago, Chile, addressed disaster risk reduction in development planning. "Local governments in Chile are keen to address risk posed by climate variability such as the serious water shortages that are currently affecting several municipalities in central Chile, as well as the disastrous impact that can be caused by interaction between natural hazards and industrial facilities, especially in densely populated urban areas," said Ricardo Mena, head of the UN disaster risk reduction regional office for the Americas (UNISDR), who was present at the meeting. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/jUz4F>

## CONSUMER CARE ON WORLD WATER DAY

UNISDR's chief, Margareta Wahlström, urged people to think about how much water they would be responsible for using on World Water Day, March 22. "There are 783 million people in the world today without access to safe water. Climate change is expected to exacerbate water stress in semi-arid regions across the globe and increased competition for water usually means less for the poor and the vulnerable. Water comes with lots of hidden costs and we need to make people more aware of what they are," said Ms. Wahlström. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/IFCMZ>



Visit our webpage dedicated to Disaster Risk Reduction and Rio+20

<http://www.unisdr.org/2012/rioplus20/>



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# EVIDENCE

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From left: Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, meets with Bob Carr, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs prior to debate on disaster risk reduction (Photo: UN Photo / Eskinder Debebe)

## VENICE: AN ICON OF RESILIENCE

Margareta Wahlström, United Nations disaster risk reduction chief, appointed Giorgio Orsoni as Europe's first Champion of Urban Resilience. The ceremony took place at a two-day conference on "Building Cities Resilience to Disasters in Europe: Protecting Cultural Heritage and Adapting to Climate Change."

"Improving resilience requires continuous work built on cooperation, information exchange and common action by all the actors involved, whose work is devoted to civil protection purposes. This is why disaster risk reduction is constantly ranked at the top of the political agenda," said Mayor Orsoni.

For more information, visit:

<http://goo.gl/KkRbm>

## NATIONS CALL FOR FOCUS ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AT RIO+20

There was a strong call for "the incorporation of disaster risk reduction in any future framework for sustainable development" during the UN General Assembly Thematic Debate on Disaster Risk Reduction held at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 13 April, in the lead up to Rio+20. "We call for strong and strategic language on disaster risk reduction in the Outcome Document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development -- language that recognizes disaster risk reduction as fundamental to achieving sustainable development and places it at the heart of the future development agenda," said a statement delivered by Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bob Carr, on behalf of the Co-Chairs of the Friends of Disaster Risk Reduction group. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/vsckl>

## DISASTER LOSSES TOP ONE TRILLION USD

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, launched a new report by Development Initiatives which highlights major discrepancies in the way that donors allocate funding for disaster risk reduction, despite economic losses of over one trillion dollars from disasters so far this century. "Disaster Risk Reduction: Spending Where It Should Count" highlights the fact that the top 40 recipients of humanitarian aid between 2000 and 2009 only received about 30% of total development aid (\$363 bn out of \$1,229 bn) compared to 90% of all emergency aid. And just \$3.7 billion was spent on disaster risk reduction in the 40 countries surveyed in the report. "This report is a very timely examination of funding for disaster risk reduction when it is now clear that we have broken through the trillion dollar ceiling for economic losses so far this century. As of the end of 2011 we can conservatively state that disasters so far this century have cost over \$1,380 billion," said Ms. Wahlström. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/9xose>

## UNISDR CHIEF SURVEYS RISK REDUCTION IN VIETNAM

UNISDR Chief, Margareta Wahlström, visited parts of Vietnam's Mekong Delta this month, which were affected by storm surges last October and are most vulnerable to rising sea levels caused by climate change.

"Viet Nam has learned a lot from the many disasters that hit the country on an annual basis. It is now important for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to be addressed in an integrated way, which is more effective given the limited capacity of provinces like Ben Tre." She said.

Ms. Wahlström visited Ho Chi Minh City where she praised the government for the measures it has taken to protect people and homes from annual flooding and to improve public awareness of flood risk.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/KuD0a>

## TSUNAMI EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS PASS TEST

On 11th April, following a massive earthquake in the Indian Ocean and the threat of a tsunami, Indonesian President and UNISDR Global Disaster Risk Reduction Champion, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, told the press, "Our early warning system is working well". There were no tsunamis in Banda Aceh or other places which were hard hit by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. There is, at present, a large network of seismographic centres, national warning centres, agencies, coastal and deep-ocean stations in place across the Indian Ocean to detect potential tsunamis and pass on warnings to communities. Gaps remain in the system - most significantly at the community level - and experts say more coordination is needed to ensure national centres are communicating with each other and sharing information across the region. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/TQ0Xi>

## BANGLADESH: SHORTAGE OF CYCLONE SHELTERS

Margareta Wahlström met late March with the Government of Bangladesh to discuss the country's huge shortfall in cyclone shelters and the protection of the country's coastline from rising sea-levels ahead of the cyclone season. The country has 3,000 but reportedly needs 5,000. Speaking on Bangladesh's National Disaster Preparedness Day, Ms. Wahlström said: "Bangladesh is the epitome of resilience and has shown this through its successful efforts to reduce mortality from cyclones over the last 40 years. Your country is often cited as an early example of a successful national effort to prepare for the worst-case scenario through planning, effective early warning, social mobilisation and putting in place the shelters necessary to save lives.

**For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/NZ3Q8>



Photo: DARA

## Australia, Germany, UK raise bar for donors, says report

A new report the 2011 Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) issued by Development Assistance Research Associates (DARA) on humanitarian responses states that "If other donors were to follow the lead being set by Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom, it could mean a turning point in transforming the humanitarian system from a reactive, response-driven model, to a proactive, preventive and anticipatory model."

Based on an analysis of 23 of the world's main donor governments and nine major crises, the report highlights that these three donors are becoming increasingly engaged in supporting disaster risk reduction and preparedness efforts, with a focus on capacity-building at the local level as an integrated part of their humanitarian assistance.

**For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/voxIL>

## WRITESHOPS SUCCESSFULLY MENTOR YOUNG RESEARCHERS

A five-day writer's workshop was recently organized by the UNISDR and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) in Bangkok. Writeshops bring young researchers working at the intersection of DRR and CCA together with experts. Participants arrive with a paper abstract and an outline or draft. They then work closely with an expert, as well as with other participants in the programme, to develop the paper in preparation for a rigorous peer-to-peer review that follows. The end product is enhanced awareness of the process of writing papers for academia and a publishable quality article that is submitted to a journal.

**For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/mNeaY>

Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready  World Disaster Reduction Campaign

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### A Toolkit for Local Governments

<b>Handbook for Local Governments</b> <p>This Handbook offers practical guidance to support public policy and decision making as cities take action on the 10 Essentials for Making Cities Resilient.</p> <p><a href="#">Learn more →</a></p>	<b>The 10 Essentials</b> <p>A ten-point checklist and the building block for disaster risk reduction. Explore each Essential to learn more, find case studies, tools and resources.</p> <p><a href="#">Learn more →</a></p>	<b>Self-Assessment Tool</b> <p>The Local Government Self-Assessment Tool (LGSAT) provides key questions and measurements against the Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient and builds upon the priorities and national indicators of the Hyogo Framework for Action.</p> <p><a href="#">Learn more →</a></p>
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Access to the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool is available on the updated Making Cities Resilient website, in addition to other key tools for local governments to reduce their disaster risk and build resilience (see p.3)

## NEW INITIATIVE TO ASSESS URBAN RISK

UNISDR launched a new initiative, this month, to support cities around the world to manage risk following the worst year on record for economic losses from disasters. It also announced that over 1,000 cities have now joined its "Making Cities Resilient" Campaign. The new online Local Government Self-Assessment Tool is part of the global 'Making Cities Resilient' campaign designed to help cities to establish baselines and identify planning and investment gaps for risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

**For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/XZ62g>

**Access the Local Government Self-Assessment Tool here:** <http://goo.gl/sNQIU>