



Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Fourth Session - Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow

Geneva, Switzerland, 19-23 May 2013

Second Announcement

The Fourth Session of the Global Platform “Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow” comes at a time when there is unprecedented international momentum to reduce disaster risk and build resilience in our communities. Across the globe there is action to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of catastrophes brought on by natural hazards.

At the same time, tragic events over the last few years remind us that disasters do not differentiate between regions or income-levels. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of weather-related hazards. Rapid urbanisation and environmental degradation are exposing more people and more assets to threats; the risk of economic loss from a disaster is increasing at a faster rate than economic growth.

As we head towards 2015 when the *Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* completes its first 10-year term, any future based on sustainable development for all will call on us to reduce disaster risks. Failure to do so will mean that natural hazards will continue to become disasters and impede progress towards sustainable development.

What better place to engage and contribute to these issues than at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction; the forum that brings together Governments, international organizations, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, local communities, scientific and academic institutions and private business.

At the Fourth Session of the Global Platform new partnerships and alliances will be created. Progress in risk reduction and resilience building will be exchanged and debated. Experiences, innovations and practices will be shared. This session also holds special significance as an opportunity to further consult on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

The Second Announcement outlines the expected outcomes, general structure and events, some key dates as well as logistic information for the Fourth Session of the Global Platform 2013.

Expected Outcomes

- Showcase and debate progress and practice in disaster risk reduction.
- Engage and contribute to shaping the future of disaster risk reduction for the 21st Century.
- Consult over a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.
- Create new partnerships and alliances to reduce risks of disasters and build resilience in communities.
- Exchange learning and innovations including new tools and methodologies.
- Prioritize and streamline directions for the partners in disaster risk reduction, which will be reflected in the outcome document - the Chair's Summary.

Schedule

The Fourth Session of the Global Platform will be held in Geneva at the International Conference Centre from Sunday 19 May to Thursday 23 May 2013. The first two days provide opportunities for partner meetings, consultations and preparatory events. The official agenda will take place from Tuesday 21 to Thursday 23 May.

The official events will include: opening and closing sessions; official plenary statements; high-level meetings; plenary sessions; informal plenary sessions on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction; featured events; side events; a market place; and an ignite stage. A preliminary schedule is available on the website. The final schedule will be available from January 2013.

Plenary Sessions

Private Sector for Disaster Resilient Societies

The private sector drives economic development in most parts of the world. International corporations, small and medium size enterprises ensure jobs and economic growth in countries and communities. It is evident that disasters impact the business sector and that without business ensuring the resilience of their investments, communities and countries will not be able to reduce their risks. Following the strong interest of the business sector at the previous Global Platform in 2011, the Private Sector Advisory Group will build on the momentum and engage participants in policy and partnerships to build resilience.

Community Resilience – The Foundation of Resilient Nations

New solutions, new risks and new evidence require involving more actors for change. There are great and untapped resources as well as knowledge in young people, women and social networks. The private sector, local governments and parliamentarians are also formidable allies in promoting and enacting the change needed in the coming decade. Continued campaigns and efforts to tap into the potential of local communities are the foundation for resilient nations as well as a key to future and concrete action around disaster risk reduction.

National and Local Governments Securing Sustainable Risk Management

National and local governments are key drivers of risk management and the reinforcement of disaster resilience in communities. Many governments have adopted policies and legislation, but there are still implementation gaps. Analysis and evidence on risk management has improved remarkably. More nuanced information and practical application, however, particularly around economics, urbanization and climate change adaptation is still required. One key message is on the need to systematically record disaster losses in order to feed into analysis and evidence-based models for risk mitigation.

Featured and Side Events

Featured and side events at the Global Platform will be organized around the following areas:

Emerging Evidence

Advances in analysis and research generate new and more detailed knowledge of disaster risk as well as the effectiveness of risk reduction approaches. At the Global Platform, attention will be given to the insights of the 2013 Global Assessment Report, particularly around the private and public economics of disaster risk reduction. Another priority is to bring together scientists, decision-makers and practitioners to find ways to apply the evidence into policy and practices in disaster risk reduction.

Emerging Risks

The complexity of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami is the most recent wake up call for broader and deeper consideration of emerging risks. What about risks and hazards that we have not anticipated or prepared for? Areas such as droughts and multi-hazards (combination of natural and industrial), for example, will stir a lively debate on how to assess and build resilience for future disasters. At the same time, localized disasters continue to have a major impact on the sustainability of livelihoods.

Emerging Solutions

Information and awareness on the future risk of disasters and the application of existing science and knowledge to strategies and interventions offer prospects for success. Solutions can be crafted at various levels of society and in different sectors to further integrate and maintain disaster risk reduction in the planning and delivery of sustainable development. Protecting cultural heritage from disaster is a growing area of interest. We will also follow up on the progress of the World Reconstruction Conference that was integrated into the Third Session of the Global Platform in 2011.

Partner and Consultation Meetings

Partners interested in organizing an event are requested to provide information as specified in the guidelines for speakers and session organizers (see links on page 4). The deadline to submit one page concept notes to the UNISDR secretariat is *15 December 2012*. Earlier submissions are strongly encouraged.

Upon events confirmation by the secretariat, a detailed background paper and an abstract (of no more than 250 words) should be submitted to the secretariat by *1 February 2013* to allow for wide dissemination.

Events organizers are encouraged to ensure a balanced representation of speakers from diverse stakeholder groups (government sectors, NGO's, private sector and community representatives) with the appropriate gender diversity. UN organizations, as is customary, are encouraged to give visibility to government counterparts.

Submissions for partner consultations, regional or other meetings on *Sunday 19 and Monday 20 May* can be made to the Global Platform coordination so that rooms can be allocated accordingly. These can be requested (email: globalplatform@un.org) up to *1 May 2013* and will be allocated subject to availability of space.

Information on the submission of proposals for the Ignite Stage and Market Place will be published on the Global Platform website in September 2012. The Market Place provides the opportunity to showcase and demonstrate new and innovative approaches to disaster risk reduction at the national and regional level, as well as major thematic areas of work and private sector solutions. The Ignite Stage features short 15 minute presentations of disaster risk reduction success stories, emerging issues and trends, and new approaches to disaster risk reduction and resilience building. The Global Platform will also include the Sasakawa Disaster Risk Reduction Award and other special events.

Interpretation and IT equipment

All rooms will have a standard set-up of microphones and a screen for presentations. During the official events (21-23 May) simultaneous interpretation will be available in all six official UN languages for formal and informal plenary sessions. English, French and Spanish interpretation will be available for featured events.

Invitations

Invitations to Governments will be sent through the Permanent Missions to the United Nations. Individuals interested in becoming part of their national delegation should contact their national focal point for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and/or the Ministry of External Relations or Foreign Affairs. Governments are encouraged to designate high-level representatives and to have a mix of stakeholders in delegations where possible.

A generic invitation will be extended to previous participating delegations to the Global Platform including the relevant international organizations, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, civil society organizations, private sector, academic and research institutions. Requests for participation by other or new organizations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Participation may be limited if the capacity of the conference centre is reached.

Invitations to specific speakers will follow in due course following consultation between UNISDR and partners. Guidance for speakers and session organizers is on the website (see links at end).

Registration

Invited participants will be able to register online on the Global Platform website as of *10 September 2012*. Closing date for online registrations is *1 May 2013*.

At the Conference Center (Centre International de Conférences Genève, 17 rue de Varembe, Geneva, Switzerland) participants will be issued an access badge which should be worn at all times on the premises. The registration desk at the conference centre will open from 0930 to 1800 hrs on Sunday 19 May 2013 and on other days from 0800 to 1800 hrs. On-site registration requires the presentation of a national passport or national ID card. Please allow 30 minutes to register. Early registration and badge pickup on Sunday 19 May or Monday 20 May is encouraged.

A dedicated line at the entrance of the conference premises will be enabled for quick and seamless registration of high-level delegates. All delegates will receive a color badge on the basis of their delegation type. Permanent missions in Geneva will be able to pick up the badges for their delegates in the week before the Global Platform at UNISDR offices, 9-11 rue de Varembe, Geneva,

Visas and Accommodation

Please note that Switzerland is a Schengen Member State. If you need a visa to enter Switzerland, it is important to note that a visa application can take up to two months to process. Official participants nominated by their respective governments must provide an official note from their Ministry.

For all other delegates, conference registration is required before applying for a visa. No visa applications will be handled prior to registration, which opens on *10 September 2012*. The representative of Switzerland at your place of residence can provide you with a list of necessary documents needed for your visa application.

Upon request and when necessary, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) can support the visa request of registered participants with a letter addressed to the respective Swiss Embassy or Consulate. Information on visa requirements can be found at: http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/merkblatt_einreise.html

Participants are requested to arrange their own hotel bookings for their stay in Geneva. **Early booking of accommodation is advised, as other events are scheduled to take place in Geneva around the same date.** The conference centre is close to the Palais des Nations. The centre is also easy to reach by public transport and is 15 minutes from the Geneva international airport by car or taxi and even less from the town centre. Parking spaces can be difficult to find.

Press and Media Accreditation

The UN Press Corps will be automatically accredited on presentation of their UN badge. Other journalists should provide proof of credentials to receive a badge to attend the meeting. In order to avoid delays entering the conference, journalists are strongly advised to register in advance.

Website and Contact

At the Global Platform Website at <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2013/> you will find updated information and where practical logistic details can be found. If you need to contact UNISDR Headquarters in Geneva, please write to globalplatform@un.org.

Global Platform Website: <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2013/>

Quick links for information:

2011 Chair's Summary: http://www.preventionweb.net/files/20102_gp2011chairssummary.pdf

2013 Concept Paper: http://www.preventionweb.net/files/23895_20120321conceptpaperfor2013.pdf

Notes for session organizers:

<http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2013/documents/NotesforSessionOrgandSpeakers.pdf>