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OVERWHELMING SUPPORT IN ASIA FOR A NEW INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

YOGYAKARTA, October 25 – High-level delegations from 50 countries across Asia and the Pacific – the most disaster-prone region in the world – today united around a call for an international agreement on disaster risk reduction to follow on from the Hyogo Framework for Action* in 2015.

Margareta Wahlström, the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative on Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), today welcomed the outcome of the 5th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction contained in the Yogyakarta Declaration.

Ms. Wahlström said: “This Conference has been a major breakthrough in ensuring that building disaster resilience and reducing risk are embedded into the post-2015 development agenda. The world has always looked to Asia for leadership in disaster management and the Yogyakarta Declaration outlines clearly what the region’s expectations are for a new international agreement on disaster risk reduction.

“The tone for the week was set by President Yudhoyono of Indonesia when he voiced his fears that disasters could push millions of people back into poverty unless we take preventive action now to tackle the rapid growth in exposure of people and industry to floods, earthquakes and other natural hazards. Climate change is accelerating the frequency of extreme weather events.”

The 5th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, organized by UNISDR in collaboration with the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) closes today and was attended by 2,600 participants including delegations from 72 countries. Representation included two Heads of State and 25 government ministers.

The Conference outcome was unanimously agreed today at a full-plenary session. Key elements of the Final Declaration include: identification of accountability measures for effective implementation of a post-2015 Disaster Risk Reduction Framework; political commitment to deliver at all levels; awareness, education and public access to information; improved governance; the promotion of resilient investments; and the allocation of resources to build local capacity. Conference participants also resolved to hold consultations which will contribute to the development of a post-2015 framework agreement on disaster risk reduction.

A unique feature of the conference was the number of different stakeholders contributing to the discussions. Ten annexes to the Declaration were adopted from groups representing Child-Centred Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, Individuals and Organizations Concerned with Disability, Individuals and Organizations Concerned with Gender Issues, Mayors and Local

Government Authorities, Media, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Parliamentarians, the Private Sector and Scientific, Academic and Research Stakeholders.

There was also strong participation in the Conference from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

The Kingdom of Thailand will host the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2014 when Governments will report back on their implementation of the Yogyakarta Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction.

**The Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2010): Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* was agreed by all UN Member States in 2005 following the Asian Tsunami. 133 Governments are actively reporting on its implementation.

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