

JAPAN TO HOST WORLD CONFERENCE

The UN General Assembly has confirmed that Japan will host the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 when it passed its annual resolution on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. Japan successfully hosted the last two such world conferences.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/0UckW>

UNISDR CHIEF WELCOMES INITIATIVE ON CLIMATE SERVICES

UNISDR Chief Margareta Wahlström spoke to the extraordinary session of the World Meteorological Congress which discussed the implementation plan and governance model for the Global Framework for Climate Services.

"If anyone should benefit from a Global Framework for Climate Services then it has to be those for whom advance knowledge and understanding of extreme weather events can be the difference between a good crop and a bad crop, or the difference between a timely evacuation to a safe location and being caught unawares in rising floodwaters. Weather is often a matter of life and death, especially for the rural and urban poor," she said.

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

Season's Greetings from UNISDR!
Learn more about our highlights for 2012 and what's to come for 2013.
<http://www.unisdr.org/2012/seasons-greetings/>

SEASON'S GREETINGS

From floods in Guatemala, earthquakes in China, drought in Angola, a cold wave affecting much of Europe, to Hurricane Sandy and Typhoon Bopha, the human, economic and environmental impacts of disasters this year were felt around the world.

At the same time, women and girls have been a powerful force for change. They are activists, law makers, social workers, role models, community leaders, teachers, and mothers. Their experience and knowledge have been critical in adapting to climate change, reducing disaster risks and building resilient communities.

Looking forward to 2013, it is essential to continue supporting and building on the momentum of raising awareness and political commitment for reducing disaster risk and building resilience.



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EVIDENCE

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Mauritanian Mayor Abdel Malick (centre) joined the UNISDR "Making Cities Resilient" Campaign in May 2011 and, in December 2012, was elected as President of the Women's Network of Mayors in Africa. (see p.2)

UN STARTS WORK ON ACTION PLAN FOR RISK REDUCTION

A major UNISDR-led initiative to develop a UN strategic plan of action for disaster risk reduction and resilience got underway in November at UNESCO HQ as representatives from 20 UN agencies and programmes convened for a two-day UN High Level Retreat. The goal is to produce a plan of action in four months and identify key milestones for ownership and implementation.

In her opening remarks, UNESCO Director General, Irina Bokova, said the meeting was an opportunity for creative thinking on how to strengthen the coherence of the UN system and to focus on strengthening resilience and disaster risk reduction as the first line of defense against climate change.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/tpV4g>

FLOOD DEATHS DOWN, ECONOMIC LOSSES SIGNIFICANT

An early view of disaster trends in 2012 across Asia, the world's most disaster-prone region, shows that mortality from flood events continues to decline but economic losses remain a major cause of concern. In the year to October, CRED statistics show that 83 disaster events caused 3,103 deaths, affected a total of 64.5 million people and triggered US\$ 15.1 billion damages.

Jerry Velasquez, Head of the UNISDR Asia Pacific, said: "The relative reduction in the number of disasters so far this year in the region is not a cause for complacency. We must still contend with the fact that risk is growing faster than wealth is being created. Exposure is on the rise and flooding represents a serious challenge to Asian cities as we have seen earlier this year in Beijing and Manila where these two cities were partly flooded in a couple of hours." For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/jC7LB>

2013 UN SASAKAWA AWARD FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is accepting nominations for the 2013 UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction, made possible by the Nippon Foundation of Japan. The deadline for submissions is 28 February 2013. The winner will be announced on 22 May 2013 during the Fourth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, Switzerland. The awardee also receives a prize of US\$50,000.

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

UNISDR CHIEF VISITS SANDY-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Current estimates are that Hurricane Sandy may be the most expensive storm to have hit the United States since Hurricane Katrina with the final bill possibly reaching \$50 billion. Margareta Wahlström, Chief of UNISDR, visited Hurricane Sandy affected areas in New York and New Jersey in November. She travelled to Hoboken, Jersey City and Union Beach in the state of New Jersey and the borough of Staten Island of New York City in New York, where she met with mayors, community members and emergency management teams to learn of their vision for the rebuilding that lies ahead.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/hkse4>

MAURITANIA'S TRAILBLAZER

Abdel Malick was the first woman to take office as a Mayor in Mauritania and her stature as a champion for resilience and disaster risk reduction was confirmed when she was elected President of the Women's Network of Mayors in Africa. She helped UNISDR and UNDP to bring together representatives from 40 towns and municipalities to spend a day debating urban risk. As a result, 20 mayors have now stated their intention of joining UNISDR's "Making Cities Resilient" Campaign. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/Z7262>

PREVENTIONWEB TURNS FIVE!

UNISDR marked the 5th anniversary of the launch of PreventionWeb which is now used by 55,000 unique visitors every month as a common platform for disaster risk reduction professionals to find and share information and collaborate on disaster risk reduction issues. The website is updated daily and has published over 20,000 disaster risk reduction items from policy and legislation, country progress reports, publications, DRR maps and risk profiles, disaster data and statistics, to news, events, educational materials, networks and more. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/nvHlh>

AMERICAS URGES SUPPORT FOR DRR

The countries and territories of Latin America and the Caribbean met late November to review the region's implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), designed to save lives, jobs and properties from natural hazards. Following a long final session, participants issued the Santiago Communiqué which concretely spells out actions by countries in the Americas region to speed up HFA implementation.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/C72bh>



PHILIPPINES EARLY WARNING SAVES

UNISDR has praised the improved performance of early warning systems in the Philippines as Typhoon Bopha cut a swathe of destruction across the country resulting in over 900 deaths and significant economic losses.

UNISDR Head of Regional Office for Asia, Jerry Velasquez, said: "This time last year over 1,400 people died on Mindanao in a similar event but this time big improvements in the early warning systems have saved many lives. More than 167,000 people have been evacuated to shelters." He singled out the new automated rainfall and flood prediction systems as being critical. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/AEBgJ>

INCHEON AND LEADERSHIP

Over 30 officials from Armenia, Cambodia, Gambia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Republic of Korea met in Korea early November to examine entry points for introducing disaster risk reduction into economic development. The five-day Leadership Development Forum on Mainstreaming Adaptation and Disaster Reduction into Development (MADRID) was organized by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) at the Global Education and Training Institute for Disaster Risk Reduction (GETI) at Incheon, Republic of Korea.

Convincing peers that disaster risk should be central to development planning "is not just about having economic arguments, it's also about understanding the constraints and limitations of colleagues working in different ministries," said Glenn Dolcemascolo, acting head of GETI. **For more information, visit:** <http://goo.gl/fCzA0>

AFRICAN TOWNS STRUGGLE WITH DISASTER MANAGEMENT

A new report published by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNISDR, lays bare the huge challenges faced by medium-sized African towns struggling to cope with the rising tide of disaster events, rural-urban migration and ecosystem destruction without early warning systems or budgets to reduce risk.

"City Resilience in Africa: A Ten Essentials Pilot" was launched early December at the Africities event attended by thousands of local government representatives from across the continent and takes an in-depth look at Narok and Kisumu in Kenya and Moshi in Tanzania. They were selected for the study because they have signed up to UNISDR's global "Making Cities Resilient" Campaign.

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/4Q7cN>

SOCIAL MEDIA BOOSTS IDDR

An analysis of activity around the high-profile International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR), held in October, shows that social media played a key role in sharing news and messages and engaging people to join in the celebrations with 27 million views of over 5,000 tweets on Twitter. The focus on the role of women and girls as a force for resilience and reducing risk in their communities was actively celebrated in over 80 countries - from Afghanistan to Zambia - which provided UNISDR with details of how they joined in the "Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction" Campaign on the day.

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