

Press release

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HOBOKEN JOINS UN'S RESILIENT CITIES CAMPAIGN

27 March 2013, NEW YORK – The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, today welcomed the city of Hoboken, New Jersey, into UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient Campaign in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Hoboken brings to four the number of US cities who have joined UNISDR's global campaign which has 1,400 adherents.

"In the face of stronger and more frequent storms, the cost of inaction is too great," said Hoboken Mayor, Dawn Zimmer. "We must act now to make our communities more resilient. This campaign is an opportunity for us to learn from other communities around the world."

In addition to joining the campaign, the city is hosting the 5K Hoboken Resilience Run on Saturday 6 April 2013 at Pier A in Hoboken, coupled with a morning community fair, to raise awareness on community resilience. Hoboken will donate proceeds to the Rebuild Hoboken Relief Fund, the New Jersey Relief Fund, and its Jamaican sister city, Port Maria, which was also impacted by Hurricane Sandy.

Ms. Wahlström who also heads the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, said: "The mayor and citizens of Hoboken epitomise the spirit of resilience. They have made good progress to recover from one of the worst storms ever to hit the United States. It means a lot to the campaign to have that experience to tap into. Unfortunately, extreme weather events are on the rise worldwide and it is important that exposed communities like Hoboken are seen to take a lead on reducing their risk." Ms. Wahlström will attend the run on April 6.

Once an island, areas of Hoboken now lie at, or below, sea level. Last October, Hurricane Sandy left the city severely damaged by the rapid storm surge, with the community and its 50,000 residents suffering losses running up to hundreds of millions of US dollars.

Mayor Zimmer has advocated for risk reduction measures such as storm pumps to help address the issue of frequent flooding. One pump, installed in 2011, proved its value during Hurricane Sandy when it pumped out nearly 75 million gallons per day. She and her team are currently pursuing a comprehensive plan that includes green infrastructure and engineering solutions.

The Resilient Cities Campaign fosters resilience through improving urban planning, infrastructure and building safety; shoring up drainage systems to reduce flood and storm threats; installing early warning systems; conducting public awareness initiatives; and taking measures to adapt to climate change impacts.

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 seeks "the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries."