

## Press release

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# UN CONVENES MAJOR CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC LOSSES FROM DISASTERS

**23 April 2013, GENEVA** – There are just four weeks to go before 3,000 people arrive in Geneva to attend the largest-ever event staged by the United Nations to discuss how to stem the rising tide of economic losses from disaster events around the world which now regularly surpass \$100 billion each year.

Business and the private sector will be at the heart of the event, the 4th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction which opens on Tuesday, May 21, and closes on Thursday, May 23.

UNISDR Chief, Margareta Wahlström, said today: “This Fourth Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction will open with a plenary on the private sector for resilient societies. The sheer scale of investment by the private sector in the coming years creates an opportunity to build a more resilient planet but only if that investment takes into account the geographical distribution of risk and respects basic rules around land use and building codes.

“This year’s Global Platform is an opportunity to turn up the volume in the discussion on the importance of the private sector in reducing disaster risk. The timing could not be better as we have seen unprecedented levels of economic losses over the last three years even though we know the full extent of disaster-related losses is seriously underestimated and unaccounted for.”

CEOs will join government representatives, mayors, parliamentarians, NGOs and representatives of civil society to debate how the private sector can be better integrated into the international system for reducing risk alongside other key actors.

The outcome of the Global Platform discussions will influence how the existing international agreement on disaster risk reduction, the Hyogo Framework for Action, is revised in the run-up to the 2015 World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction which will be held in Japan.

**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.”

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