

Press release

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Pacific provides perfect springboard for HFA2 discussions

11 July 2013, Nadi FIJI – The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) today praised the Pacific for providing a ‘perfect springboard’ into the coming 18 months during which the world will prepare a new, longer term and more ambitious post-2015 framework to achieve safer and more resilient communities and nations.

The Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) in Asia Pacific, Jerry Velasquez, said the region had again demonstrated its global leadership by placing the future of disaster risk reduction work explicitly within a holistic and overarching approach to sustainable development.

“It is the perfect springboard as we approach the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 in Japan that will determine a new agreement to replace the Hyogo Framework for Action,” Mr Velasquez said at the closing of the 2013 Joint Meeting of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and Pacific Climate Change Roundtable.

“I hope the rest of the world takes note of the Pacific which is looking not 10, but 50 years ahead, to imagine the future they want. They also have the courage, drive and vision to do what it takes to achieve that more secure and sustainable future.

“As the Joint Meeting’s final communique warned, it will not be an easy road. Climate variability, climate change and disasters with wide ranging impacts that compound existing critical economic, environmental and social issues are huge challenges.

“But the forum’s recognition of the importance of ownership and inclusivity, a call for a bigger role for the private sector and a reiteration of the need to preserve and use traditional knowledge will help the Pacific to move from a culture of creating shared risk to one that creates shared value.

“With its identification of national leadership of integrated action in disaster risk management and climate change supported by enlightened regional and international partnership as key, UNISDR is confident that the region will achieve its ambitions and more importantly make a difference to vulnerable communities around the Pacific, which is the ultimate measure of success.”

The Roundtable was the first time that the two principal Pacific regional conferences on disaster risk management and climate change have been combined. The meeting’s outcomes will contribute to one over-arching regional strategy and framework for climate and disaster-resilient development.

The Joint Meeting was co-convened by UNISDR, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and is hosted and chaired by the Government of Fiji.

Next year the region plays host to the 3rd Small Islands Developing States conference, which will be held in Samoa.

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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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