

United Nations Documents Related to Disaster Reduction

Volume 2



2000-2002



International Strategy
ISDR
for Disaster Reduction

Foreword

The increasing number and scale of natural disasters within recent years continue to leave vulnerable communities throughout the world suffering massive loss of life as well as long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences. Disaster reduction is therefore becoming a critical element in the achievement of sustainable development. Following the 2000 launch of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) which builds on the vital work of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), the United Nations General Assembly has adopted a number of resolutions guiding the Strategy's implementation process.

Since the publication of the first volume of United Nations documents related to disaster reduction (for the period 1987-2000), the ISDR has evolved considerably in its coordination and clearinghouse functions within and beyond the United Nations. Its outreach has expanded to encompass the areas of development, environment and sustainable development, in close collaboration with specific sectors such as health, in addition to its IDNDR birth link to humanitarian affairs.

An example of such consolidation is the World Summit on Sustainable Development held at Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002, which provided an opportunity for the international community to affirm its commitment to reduce risk and vulnerability to natural disasters¹.

Also noteworthy in recent General Assembly Resolutions 56/195 and 57/256 is the growing recognition of the ISDR Secretariat and Task Force as long-term inter-agency mechanisms for the international community to provide support and guidance to work on disaster reduction.

This publication brings together all the relevant official documents related to ISDR and related subjects, including UN General Assembly resolutions and reports of the UN Secretary-General of the period 2000-2002. It is designed to complement other substantive ISDR publications such as the report 'Living with risk – a global review of disaster reduction initiatives', providing a detailed assessment on disaster reduction experiences around the world.

While the information herewith relates principally to the institutional aspects of ISDR, we have attempted to include a selection of documents reflecting a broader scope of the subject. It is hoped this publication will serve as a comprehensive reference to all those interested and involved in disaster reduction.



Salvano Briceño
Director, UN/ISDR

Geneva, March 2003

¹ More details are contained in document *Disaster Reduction and Sustainable Development: Understanding the links between vulnerability and risk to disasters related to development and environment*, included in this publication.

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Section I

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A

General Assembly Resolutions and Decisions on ISDR

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General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 February 2003

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (b)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.2)]

57/256. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/219 of 22 December 1999 and 56/195 of 21 December 2001 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999, and taking note of Council resolution 2001/35 of 26 July 2001,

Emphasizing the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction, and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to achieving jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

Expressing its deep concern at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters within recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in developing countries,

Recognizing that disaster reduction, including reducing vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

Recalling that the annual observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction is on the second Wednesday of October,

Recalling also the results, including the lessons learned, of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, outlined in the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction and the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",¹

Reiterating that, although natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper the achievement of their sustainable development,

¹ Adopted at the programme forum on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999.

Stressing the need for Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts in the field of natural disasters, in line with their respective skills and capacities, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, inter alia, through capacity-building at all levels, where appropriate within the framework for action for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,²

Stressing also the need for Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the United Nations system, other international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, in order to ensure effective synergies in the field of natural disasters,

Recognizing the urgent need to further develop and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and emphasizing the need for developing countries to have access to technology so as to tackle natural disasters effectively,

Recognizing also the need to continue to develop an understanding of, and to address, socio-economic activities that exacerbate the vulnerability of societies to natural disasters and to build and further strengthen community capacity to cope with disaster risks,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development³ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),⁴

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and announced at the Summit,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;⁵

2. *Welcomes* the memorandum of understanding signed between the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United Nations Development Programme, and encourages the secretariat to pursue the establishment of similar arrangements with other international organizations in order to improve synergies and clarify respective roles;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in reporting to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, to provide specific proposals to Member States for the implementation of the actions on this matter agreed to by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in its Plan of Implementation;⁴

4. *Decides* to take a decision on how to conclude the review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action⁶ at its fifty-eighth session;

² A/56/68-E/2001/63 and Corr.1, para. 14.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁴ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

⁵ A/57/190.

⁶ A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy, to plan and coordinate, in consultation with Governments and relevant organizations of the United Nations system, including international financial institutions, the 2004 review of the Yokohama Strategy and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session in this regard;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to allocate adequate financial and administrative resources, within existing resources, for the effective functioning of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy;

7. *Encourages* the international community to provide the necessary financial resources to the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and to provide the necessary scientific, technical, human and other resources to ensure adequate support for the activities of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy and the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction and its working groups;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*

United Nations

Decision/57/547



General Assembly

20 December 2002

Original: English

I

Natural disasters and vulnerability

The General Assembly decides:

(a) To consider the issue of natural disasters and vulnerability at its fifty-eighth session under the sub-item entitled “International Strategy for Disaster Reduction” of the agenda item entitled “Environment and sustainable development”;

(b) To request the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the negative impacts of extreme weather events and associated natural disasters on vulnerable countries, in particular developing countries, in a separate section of his report on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 January 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 98 (b)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/56/561/Add.2)]

56/195. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, 53/185 of 15 December 1998 and 54/219 of 22 December 1999 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999, and taking note of Council resolution 2001/35 of 26 July 2001,

Recalling also the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction, as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,¹ as well as the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction and the strategy document entitled “A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction”,²

Emphasizing the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction, and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to achieve jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

Having considered the current institutional arrangements, as established in its resolution 54/219, with the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction and the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and taking into account the assessment after the first period of operations,³

Recognizing that disaster reduction is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development and that it should be taken into account in the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,

¹ A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex I.

² Adopted by the programme forum on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999.

³ A/56/68-E/2001/653, paras. 54-59.

Reiterating that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development,

Welcoming the emphasis placed on natural disaster reduction in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010, adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held at Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001,⁴

Recognizing that disaster reduction should be regarded as an important function of the United Nations and should receive continued attention,

Stressing the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;⁵

2. *Expresses its deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in developing countries;

3. *Reaffirms* that the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction should perform the functions as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, in particular those of serving as a main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for disaster reduction and ensuring complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction, mitigation and preparedness, decides to review the activities of the Task Force in 2003, and decides also that the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction should develop collaborative links with appropriate regional disaster reduction organizations;

4. *Decides* that the Task Force should be modified in order to provide for the increased participation and continued membership of regional intergovernmental organizations and key United Nations agencies;

5. *Recognizes* that the framework for action for the implementation of the Strategy,⁶ as endorsed by the Task Force, constitutes the basic guide for the implementation of the Strategy, and that the framework shall be periodically reviewed, according to the evolving needs in the field of natural disaster reduction, and urges all relevant bodies within the United Nations system to cooperate fully within the context of the framework;

6. *Stresses* that the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy should be consolidated and enhanced to perform its functions effectively, in particular to serve as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among the disaster-reduction activities of the

⁴ A/CONF.191/11.

⁵ A/56/68-E/2001/63 and Corr.1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 14; see also www.unisdr.org.

United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields;

7. *Calls upon* Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the United Nations system, other international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, in order to ensure effective synergies in the field of natural disasters, and urges the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy to develop such synergies, as appropriate;

8. *Invites*, therefore, all Governments and relevant international organizations to give appropriate consideration to the issue of natural disaster reduction in their preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

9. *Underlines* the importance of adequate financial and administrative resources for the effective functioning of the Task Force and the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs;

10. *Calls upon* Governments to establish national platforms or focal points for disaster reduction, urges the United Nations system to provide appropriate support for those mechanisms, and invites the Secretary-General to strengthen the regional outreach of the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy in order to ensure such support;

11. *Invites* Governments and relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen national participation, in particular of disaster-prone countries, in the implementation of the Strategy, including through national multisectoral and interdisciplinary platforms, in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical knowledge, including through capacity-building at all levels and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen the coordination of national emergency response agencies;

12. *Calls upon* Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts in the field of natural disasters within the framework for action for the implementation of the Strategy, in line with their respective skills and capacities, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, including through capacity-building at all levels, and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen the coordination of national emergency response agencies in natural disasters;

13. *Recognizes* the urgent need to develop further and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and emphasizes the need for developing countries to have access to technology so as to tackle natural disasters effectively;

14. *Calls upon* Governments and United Nations agencies to collaborate more closely in the sharing of disaster response and mitigation information, to take full advantage of United Nations emergency information services such as ReliefWeb, as well as the Internet, and to consider other methods for the sharing of information;

15. *Calls upon* the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to facilitate the

development of better linkages with all relevant actors, including the private sector and financial institutions, in the development of disaster management strategies;

16. *Encourages* the international community to provide the necessary financial resources to the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and to provide adequate scientific, technical, human and other resources to ensure adequate support for the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy and for the Task Force and its working groups;

17. *Requests* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to support the implementation of the goals of the Strategy, including by seconding technical staff to the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy;

18. *Endorses* the proposal of the Secretary-General to review the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,¹ within the context of the framework for action for the implementation of the Strategy;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to optimize further and disseminate through all available channels, including handbooks and information systems, the information necessary for the effective management of international cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

20. *Reiterates* the need to continue international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, within the framework for action for the implementation of the Strategy, as requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000 and by the Assembly in its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/220 of 22 December 1999 and 55/197 of 20 December 2000;

21. *Recognizes* the importance of early warning as an essential element in the culture of prevention, and encourages renewed efforts at all levels to contribute to natural hazard monitoring and impact prediction, the development and transfer of technology, capacity-building for disaster preparedness, the detection of natural hazards and the issuance and communication of early warning, as well as education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising activities, and stresses the need for appropriate action in response to early warning;

22. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the international framework for the improvement of early warning systems and disaster preparedness by developing an effective international mechanism for early warning, including the transfer of technology related to early warning to developing countries, which ensures that vulnerable people receive appropriate and timely information, and by expanding and improving existing systems, in particular those under the auspices of the United Nations, as an integral part of the Strategy;

23. *Decides* to maintain the annual observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October, as a vehicle to promote a global culture of natural disaster reduction, including prevention, mitigation and preparedness;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including criteria and modalities for the selection of the non-permanent members of the Task Force, and on the progress made in the implementation of the International

Strategy for Disaster Reduction, under the item entitled “Environment and sustainable development”.

*90th plenary meeting
21 December 2001*

UNITED
NATIONS

A

I



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/54/219
3 February 2000

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 100 (b)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.2)]

54/219. International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 and 53/185 of 15 December 1998, and taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 on the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Recalling also the results of the programme forum on the International Decade, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, and the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction adopted by the forum, together with the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",

Recalling further the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,¹

¹ A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex I.

A/RES/54/219

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Reiterating that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development,

Recognizing the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63,²

Noting the Declaration on Technical Cooperation for the Prevention and Relief of Natural Disasters, adopted by the Rio Group at its thirteenth summit meeting, held in Mexico on 28 and 29 May 1999, as well as the results of the first summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held at Rio de Janeiro on 28 and 29 June 1999,³

Taking into account the consideration of natural disasters contained in the report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held at Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999,⁴

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction⁵ and on the recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade;⁶

2. *Expresses deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, which have resulted in massive losses of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries;

3. *Endorses* the proposals put forward in the report of the Secretary-General⁶ to ensure the swift establishment of future arrangements for disaster reduction as well as functional continuity for the effective implementation of the international strategy for disaster reduction;

4. *Also endorses* the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an inter-agency task force and inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in a flexible manner, for the initial period of the biennium 2000-2001, and to undertake

² A/54/497.

³ A/54/448.

⁴ A/CONF.184/6.

⁵ A/54/132-E/1999/80 and Add.1.

⁶ A/54/136-E/1999/89.

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a review of these arrangements after the first year of operations with a view to submitting proposals on adjustments;⁷

5. *Decides* to maintain the observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish, from voluntary contributions, a trust fund for disaster reduction to enable the funding of the inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction and to transfer all assets of the Trust Fund for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction to the new trust fund for disaster reduction, effective 1 January 2000;

7. *Calls upon* Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, to implement and to develop further a comprehensive strategy to maximize international cooperation in the field of natural disasters, based upon an effective division of labour, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, including through capacity-building at all levels, and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen coordination of national emergency response agencies in natural disasters;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to solicit the required inputs from Governments, the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in order to optimize further and disseminate listings of organizations of the United Nations system as well as non-governmental organizations that provide civil protection and emergency response at all levels, with updated inventories of available resources, to help during natural disasters;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to optimize further and disseminate through all available channels, including handbooks, the information necessary to guide the international community at large in the effective management of international cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

10. *Emphasizes* the urgent need to develop further and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, bearing in mind the particular needs of developing countries, and, in this regard, calls upon all countries to strengthen scientific research and training of experts in universities and specialized institutions and to promote the exchange of information;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of early warning as an essential element in the culture of prevention, and encourages renewed efforts at all levels to contribute to natural hazard monitoring and impact prediction, the development and transfer of technology, capacity-building for disaster preparedness, the detection of natural hazards and the issuance and communication of early warnings, as well as education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising activities, such as the International Conference on Early-

⁷ See A/54/497, paras. 11–14.

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Page 4

Warning Systems for the Reduction of Natural Disasters, held at Potsdam, Germany, from 7 to 11 September 1998, to ensure adequate action warnings;

12. *Reaffirms* the need for strengthening an international framework for the improvement of early warning systems and disaster preparedness by developing an effective international mechanism for early warning, including the transfer of technology related to early warning to developing countries, under the auspices of the United Nations, as an integral part of future strategies and frameworks or any arrangements for natural disaster reduction;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the international strategy for disaster reduction, under the agenda item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*87th plenary meeting
22 December 1999*

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B

Economic and Social Council Resolutions on ISDR

E/2001/35	26 July 2001 (E/2001/L.19/Rev.1 and E/2001/SR.43) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (E/2001/99, page 55).....	18
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New York, 29-31 January 2001

Resumed organizational session for 2001
New York, 8, 13 and 22 March, 3 May and 4 June 2001

Substantive session of 2001
Geneva, 2-26 July 2001

Resumed substantive session of 2001
New York, 10 and 24 October and 20 December 2001

Economic and Social Council
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6. *Requests* the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to continue to disseminate the Consolidated List as widely as possible and to look at the possibility of using online dissemination in collaboration with the World Trade Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme.

43rd plenary meeting
26 July 2001

2001/34. Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals⁹⁷ during the biennium 1999–2000,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;

2. *Decides* to approve the programme of work of the Committee for the biennium 2001–2002 as contained in paragraph 31 of the report of the Secretary-General;⁹⁷

3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to publish the eleventh revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations* in Arabic, as well as the third revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Manual of Tests and Criteria* in Arabic, French and Spanish, without delay;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To circulate the new and amended recommendations⁹⁸ to the Governments of member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations concerned;

(b) To publish the twelfth revised edition⁹⁹ of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations*, and amendments to the third revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous*

*Goods: Manual of Tests and Criteria*¹⁰⁰ in all the official languages of the United Nations, in the most cost-effective manner, not later than the end of 2001;

(c) To give further consideration to the possibility of publishing the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods* on CD-ROM, if possible as a navigable version, for example, by commercial arrangement with external contractors;

5. *Decides* to defer further consideration of the report of the Secretary-General to its resumed substantive session of 2001.

43rd plenary meeting
26 July 2001

2001/35. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/219 of 22 December 1999 and 55/163 of 14 December 2000, and reiterating Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 entitled “International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements”,

Recalling also the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction, as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,¹⁰¹ as well as the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction and the strategy document entitled “A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction”,¹⁰²

Emphasizing the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction, and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to achieve jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁰³ including the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Having also considered the current institutional arrangements, as established by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/219,

⁹⁷ E/2001/44.

⁹⁸ ST/SG/AC.10/27/Add.1 and 2.

⁹⁹ ST/SG/AC.10/1/Rev.12.

¹⁰⁰ ST/SG/AC.10/11/Rev.3, amendment 1.

¹⁰¹ A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

¹⁰² Adopted by the programme forum on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999.

¹⁰³ A/56/68-E/2001/63 and Corr.1.

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with the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction and the inter-agency secretariat for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and taking into account the assessment after the first period of operations.¹⁰⁴

Recognizing that disaster reduction is an important element contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and that it should be taken into account in the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002,

Reiterating that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development,

Welcoming the emphasis placed on natural disaster reduction in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,¹⁰⁵ adopted at Brussels in May 2001,

Recognizing that disaster reduction should be regarded as an important function of the United Nations and should receive continued attention,

Stressing the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries,

1. *Expresses its deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries;

2. *Reaffirms* that the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction should perform the functions as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁰³ in particular to serve as a main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for disaster reduction and to ensure complementary action by agencies involved in disaster reduction, mitigation and preparedness, and decides to review the activities of the Task Force in 2003;

3. *Decides* that the Task Force should be modified in order to provide for the increased participation of regional organizations and to ensure the continued membership of key United Nations agencies;

4. *Recognizes* that the framework for action for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster

Reduction,¹⁰⁶ as endorsed by the Task Force, constitutes the basic guide for the implementation of the Strategy, and that the framework shall be periodically reviewed, according to the evolving needs in the field of natural disaster reduction;

5. *Urges* all relevant bodies within the United Nations system to cooperate fully within the context of the framework;

6. *Stresses* that the inter-agency secretariat for the implementation of the Strategy should be consolidated to perform its functions effectively, in particular to serve as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among disaster-reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields;

7. *Calls upon* Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the United Nations system, other international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, in order to ensure effective synergies in the field of natural disasters, and urges the Strategy secretariat to develop such synergies, as appropriate;

8. *Underlines* the importance of adequate financial and administrative resources for the effective functioning of the Task Force and the Strategy secretariat, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs;

9. *Calls upon* Governments to establish national platforms or focal points for disaster reduction, urges the United Nations system to provide appropriate support for those mechanisms, and invites the Secretary-General to strengthen the regional outreach of the Strategy secretariat in order to ensure such support;

10. *Invites* Governments and relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen national participation, in particular of disaster-prone countries, in the Strategy, including through national multisectoral and interdisciplinary platforms, in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical knowledge, including through capacity-building at all levels and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen coordination of national emergency response agencies;

11. *Recognizes* the urgent need to develop further and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and emphasizes the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., paras. 54-59.

¹⁰⁵ A/CONF.191/11.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., para. 14; see also www.unisdr.org.

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need for developing countries to have access to technology so as to tackle natural disasters effectively;

12. *Encourages* the international community to provide the necessary financial resources to the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and to provide adequate scientific, technical, human and other resources to ensure adequate support for the Strategy secretariat and for the Task Force and its working groups;

13. *Requests* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to support the implementation of the goals of the Strategy, including by seconding technical staff to the Strategy secretariat;

14. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on disaster reduction to the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002;

15. *Takes note* of the proposal of the Secretary-General to review the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,¹⁰¹ within the context of the framework for action for the implementation of the Strategy;

16. *Reiterates* the need to continue international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, within the framework for the Strategy, as requested by the Council in its resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000 and by the General Assembly in its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185, 54/220 of 22 December 1999 and 55/197 of 20 December 2000;

17. *Recognizes* the importance of early warning as an essential element in the culture of prevention, and encourages renewed efforts at all levels to contribute to natural hazard monitoring and impact prediction, the development and transfer of technology, capacity-building for disaster preparedness, the detection of natural hazards and the issuance and communication of early warning, as well as education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising activities, and stresses the need for appropriate action in response to early warning;

18. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the international framework for the improvement of early warning systems and disaster preparedness by developing an effective international mechanism for early warning, including the transfer of technology related to early warning to developing countries, which ensures that vulnerable people receive appropriate and timely information, and by expanding and improving existing systems, in particular those under the auspices of the United Nations, as an integral part of the Strategy;

19. *Decides* to maintain the annual observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October, as a vehicle to promote a global culture

of natural disaster reduction, including prevention, mitigation and preparedness;

20. *Invites* the General Assembly to give full consideration to the report of the Secretary-General¹⁰³ at its fifty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

43rd plenary meeting
26 July 2001

2001/36. Report of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development on its second session

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development on its second session,¹⁰⁷

1. *Decides* to transmit the report of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development¹⁰⁷ to the Commission on Sustainable Development;

2. *Also decides* to defer the approval of the provisional agenda of the third session of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development to its next resumed session, bearing in mind that the third session of the Committee is to take place from 8 to 20 December 2002.

43rd plenary meeting
26 July 2001

2001/37. Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling subparagraph (c) of its decision 109 (LIX) of 23 July 1975, in which the Council decided that the World Tourism Organization might participate, on a continuing basis, in the work of the Council in areas of concern to that organization,

Recalling also article III of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/156 of 19 December 1977 in which, inter alia, the General Assembly stipulated that the activities of the World Tourism Organization and the activities in respect of or related to tourism of the United Nations and other organizations within the United Nations system shall be coordinated by the Economic and Social Council through consultations and recommendations,

Having considered the note by the Secretariat¹⁰⁸ bringing to its attention a significant result achieved at the thirteenth session

¹⁰⁷ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 12 (E/2000/32).*

¹⁰⁸ E/2001/61.

United Nations

E/1999/INF/2/Add.2



Economic and Social Council

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30 August 1999

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Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at the 10th meeting of its resumed organizational session for 1999 and at its substantive session of 1999

(23 June 1999 and 5 to 30 July 1999)

Note: The provisional texts of the resolutions and decisions are circulated herein for information. The final texts will be issued in *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 1* (E/1999/99).

99-24841 (E) 011099

(c) Follow-up to chapter 19 of Agenda 21 (Harmonization of classification and labelling of chemicals),¹⁸³ including development of criteria for the classification of flammable aerosols, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization, and implementation of already agreed criteria through the model regulations on the transport of dangerous goods;

(d) Miscellaneous amendments to the model regulations (listing and classification, explosives, lithium batteries, limited quantities, packaging issues, portable tank issues, consignment procedures, segregation) and to the *Manual of Tests and Criteria*;¹⁸⁴

(e) Development of new provisions for the transport of solid substances in bulk in tanks and freight containers;

(f) Evolution of the model regulations (rationalized development of the model regulations and periodicity of amendments);

C. Periodicity of amendments to the Recommendations

7. Takes note of the advice of the Committee that:

(a) No firm decision as regards a possible future four-year periodicity of amendments should be taken during the period of alignment of the format of the various legal instruments concerning modal aspects of the transport of dangerous goods on that of the model regulations, and pending decisions regarding the implementation of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals in accordance with the objectives of Agenda 21;

(b) A new revised version of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods*¹⁸¹ should be published in 2001 after the session of the Committee in 2000;

8. Notes with satisfaction that this issue has been included in the programme of work of the Committee for the next biennium, for discussion, together with the question of the evolution of the model regulations in the long term;

D. Report to the Council

9. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Council in 2001 on the implementation of the present resolution.

46th plenary meeting
30 July 1999

1999/63

International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1995/47 B of 27 July 1995 and General Assembly resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989 and 49/22 A of 2 December 1994 on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, as well as Assembly resolutions 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 on early warning capacities of the United Nations system with regard to natural disasters, 52/12 A of 12 November 1997 and 52/12 B of 19 December 1997 entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform" and 53/185 of 15 December 1998 on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon,

Recalling also the programme forum on the Decade, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, and the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction adopted by the forum, together with the

E/1999/INF/2/Add.2

strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction¹⁸⁸ and on the recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade,¹⁸⁹

Expressing concern that the world is increasingly being threatened by large-scale natural disasters which will have long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences on vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries,

Reiterating that the promotion of economic growth and sustainable development cannot be achieved without adequate measures to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters and that there are close linkages between losses owing to natural disasters and environmental degradation, as emphasized in Agenda 21¹⁹⁰ and in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,¹⁹¹ adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session,

Emphasizing the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to accomplish jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

Recognizing the necessity for the international community to demonstrate the strong political determination required to use existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, bearing in mind the particular needs of developing countries,

Reiterating in that regard that regard that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries including the least developed countries, and landlocked and small island developing States, as well as for countries with economies in transition, thus hampering their sustainable development processes,

Stressing the importance of developing and strengthening regional approaches dedicated to disaster reduction in order to take into account regional and local specificity and needs,

Stressing also that the United Nations has a special role, as well as considerable experience, in the disaster prevention and reduction fields, in view of its universal character, its broad policy agenda and its vital role as a forum for global dialogue,

Recalling the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation¹⁹² and its Plan of Action,

Recognizing the importance of early warning as an integrated process at all levels, including hazard monitoring and impact prediction, technology development and transfer,

¹⁸⁸ A/54/132-E/1999/80 and Add.1.

¹⁸⁹ A/54/136-E/1999/89.

¹⁹⁰ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

¹⁹¹ General Assembly resolution S/19-2, annex.

¹⁹² A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, annex I.

capacity-building for the detection of hazards, as well as the issuance and communication of early warnings, education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising, and interface between the public and private sectors in order to ensure adequate action to warnings,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction¹⁸⁸ and on the recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade;¹⁸⁹

2. *Recognizes* the success achieved since 1990 in meeting the goals and objectives of the Decade, as expressed in General Assembly resolution 44/236 and in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation¹⁹² and its Plan of Action;

3. *Also recognizes* the increased emphasis being given to natural disaster prevention and the need for taking comprehensive measures with regard to natural disaster reduction as an integral part of sustainable development strategies and an essential element of government policy;

4. *Reiterates* the importance of fully integrating natural disaster reduction into the sustainable development strategies of the United Nations and of other international organizations;

5. *Decides*, therefore, that the international cooperative framework for natural disaster reduction, as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁸⁹ should draw on the success of the functional and organizational arrangements that were put in place for the implementation of the Decade;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish, as of January 2000, an inter-agency task force, with representation from all relevant United Nations bodies and members of the scientific and technical community, including regional representation, to serve as the main forum within the United Nations for continued and concerted emphasis on natural disaster reduction, in particular for defining strategies for international cooperation at all levels in this field, while ensuring complementarity of action with other agencies;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in this respect, to maintain the existing inter-agency secretariat function for natural disaster reduction as a distinct focal point for the coordination of the work of the task force, to place the inter-agency task force and inter-agency secretariat under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and to finance it from extrabudgetary resources through a specific trust fund;

8. *Calls* on all Governments to maintain and strengthen established national and multisectoral platforms for natural disaster reduction in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical means;

9. *Emphasizes*, in this respect, the need for the international community to support appropriate initiatives and mechanisms for strengthening regional, subregional, national and local capabilities for natural disaster prevention and reduction, making early warning a key element within these efforts;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*46th plenary meeting
30 July 1999*



C

Reports of the Secretary-General on ISDR

A/57/190	11 July 2002 Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. Report of the Secretary-General. 28
A/56/68-E/2001/63	8 May 2001 International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). Implementation of the ISDR. Report of the Secretary-General. 42
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United Nations

A/57/190



General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session

Item 89 (b) of the preliminary list*

**Environment and sustainable development: International
Strategy for Disaster Reduction**

Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report provides updated information on the implementation of the programme for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in pursuance of the recommendations of General Assembly resolution 56/195. The report also contains a section illustrating the work of agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, which illustrates the degree of coordination of the system in this field.

The conclusions highlight the fact that the programme is progressing satisfactorily. The emphasis placed by the international community on the need to develop a long-term vision with regard to natural and related disasters galvanized the partnership spirit of the framework for the Strategy. Current efforts to build regional strategies are fostering the involvement of national constituencies in the implementation of the Strategy. Inter-agency coordination with regard to disaster reduction is improving. In addition, risk and vulnerability reduction concerns are being mainstreamed into other relevant programme areas. The programme for the Strategy should also look at the interdependence between natural and related technological and environmental hazards.

With regard to constraints, the Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction, which relies solely on voluntary contributions, has not received sufficient resources to allow the secretariat for the Strategy to cover its core requirements or to carry out all of the initiatives included in its work plan. The lack of established posts for the secretariat staff is also a constraint.

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

** The present report was submitted on 10 July 2002, after extensive consultations with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other organizations involved in its finalization.

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A/57/190

Recommendations are made in the report to optimize the programme for the Strategy and to help facilitate the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and the inter-agency secretariat. Among other things, it is recommended that countries increase their contributions to the Trust Fund, that the secretariat for the Strategy be able to count on established posts for its staff, and that the political profile and visibility of the Inter-Agency Task Force be increased substantially.

I

I. Introduction¹

1. The years 2001 and 2002 witnessed an increase in the number of people affected by natural disasters and their economic consequences. According to figures released by the Munich Reinsurance Company (Munich Re), 25,000 people died in the 700 disasters recorded in 2001 alone. Economic losses associated with these disasters amounted to US\$ 36 billion, marking yet another increase from the previous year (US\$ 30 billion). At present trends, by 2050, 100,000 lives may be lost each year, and the average annual cost of disasters could top US\$ 300 billion unless aggressive disaster reduction measures are put in place. The indirect effects of disasters on economic activities and other long-term consequences on the environment remain difficult to assess.

2. Against this backdrop, the General Assembly, by resolution 56/195 of 21 December 2001, confirmed the mandates of the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction as the institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy. This decision underlined the intention of providing the United Nations system with an enhanced capacity for the promotion and coordination of disaster reduction strategies, programmes and initiatives. This constituted a logical evolution of the political process, stemming from the conclusion of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in 1999 and leading to the launching and consolidation of the programme for the Strategy. Yet, the Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction, which relies solely on voluntary contributions, has not received sufficient resources to allow the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy to cover its core requirements or to carry out all the initiatives included in its work plan. The lack of established posts for the secretariat staff was also a constraint. At a particularly difficult juncture, the secretariat received timely support from the Governments of Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In addition, the Trust Fund received contributions from the Governments of Austria, Germany, Iceland, Japan, the Philippines and Sweden.

3. The present report provides updated information on the implementation of the programme for the Strategy, as well as information on the action taken to implement recommendations made by the General

Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. As recommended in the previous report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Strategy (A/56/68-E/2001/63 and Corr.1, para. 75), the present report focuses on the activities of the United Nations system. Information concerning activities carried out throughout the world in furtherance of the goals of the Strategy are to be found in the publication entitled *Living With Risk: A Global Review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives*, which will be issued in August 2002. Reports published by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations Development Programme in 2002 provide complementary information on risk reduction measures.

II. Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

A. Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction

4. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction has held five meetings in the period since its inception in 2000 and April 2002. The topics on which it has focused over the past year ranged from drought to disaster reduction in the context of sustainable development. Its four working groups have benefited from the new backstopping procedures implemented by the secretariat for the Strategy, which were conducive to increased results and better coordination. A particular area of focus in 2002 has been developing ways of cross-collaboration among its working groups so as to avoid duplication and ensure that their work is in consonance with the mandate of the Task Force.

5. Since it provides a forum to discuss the large variety of aspects relating to disaster reduction, the Inter-Agency Task Force has a role to play in facilitating coordination and the exchange of information among agencies and other relevant entities. Based on the experience gathered over the first two years of its existence, however, the profile of the Task Force and its visibility could be improved to enable it to become an appropriate mechanism for devising disaster reduction policies and strategies.

6. The membership of the Task Force consists of 14 United Nations agencies and organizations, 8 regional

entities, and 8 representatives of civil society and relevant professional sectors. Members in the latter category are rotated every two years. In 2002, the Task Force completed the initial phase of its first rotation.² With reference to the request of the General Assembly to be informed of criteria for the selection of non-permanent members of the Task Force, it should be noted that the following criteria have been formulated by the Task Force:

(a) Members designated are entities or organizations, not individuals;

(b) Candidate entities and organizations should be well positioned to represent the interests of relevant public or private professional sectors involved in disaster reduction or that of critical elements of civil society having a stake in disaster reduction;

(c) Member entities must have an actual involvement in disaster reduction as part of their mandate and possess an adequate capacity to implement such mandate, which should be consistent with the aims and goals of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; in addition, member entities should have the capacity of developing partnerships and working relations with governmental and international organizations in the area of disaster reduction;

(d) Geographical balance shall be taken into account in the designation of candidates, as shall facilitating representation from those developing countries most vulnerable to disasters;

(e) An effective balance among various types of expertise (earthquakes, volcanoes, droughts, cyclones, geological hazards, hydrometeorological hazards) should be taken into account in the selection of candidates.

B. Inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

7. Under a renewed leadership, the inter-agency secretariat for the Strategy has been consolidating its functions and operating modalities. In particular, the secretariat is focusing on the provision of an enabling environment for better inter-agency cooperation with regard to disaster reduction, and channelling advice to organizations concerned with the design and

implementation of risk reduction measures. In addition, the secretariat has initiated a process aimed at synchronizing the priorities of the programme for the Strategy with the goals of the Millennium Declaration.³ As a first step, the secretariat has elaborated its work plan based on the renewed mandate stemming from General Assembly resolutions. For the period 2002-2003, the main goals are:

(a) To consolidate the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as the global framework for coordinated action by international organizations, professional institutions and Governments in order to ensure that disaster reduction becomes part of mainstream sustainable development strategies and programmes and is reflected in relevant international agendas and sectoral plans;⁴

(b) To ensure that concepts and methodologies relating to disaster reduction are understood and effectively applied by a growing number of disaster-prone communities around the world.

8. In keeping with the inter-agency nature of the secretariat, several programmatic meetings have been held with a number of United Nations agencies in order to share objectives and discuss joint activities. In this context, close working relations have been established with the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. Periodic tripartite meetings are being held to develop a platform for collaboration and coordination in areas pertaining to disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, in which the three partner organizations have distinct yet complementary mandates. The three offices have also been participating in the discussion on the role of the United Nations in natural disasters. The secretariat for the Strategy and the UNDP Bureau have elaborated a joint framework for collaboration that is designed to increase synergy and coordination between the two offices.

9. Additional consultations leading to closer collaborative links were held with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) — which included consultations on the establishment of an international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon (see A/57/189) — the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the

World Health Organization (WHO), and the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

10. The secretariat is also following policy formulation processes that are taking place in other areas in which disaster reduction is relevant, such as sustainable development, environment, climate change, desertification and freshwater. In particular, the preparatory process leading to the World Summit on Sustainable Development has been high on the agenda of the secretariat throughout 2001 and 2002. The secretariat has engaged in extensive consultations with a variety of United Nations and civil society partners, including the Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future. These consultations were conducive to the inclusion of disaster reduction in the agenda of the Summit.

11. The secretariat has started planning for the 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,⁵ adopted by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Yokohama, Japan, in 1994. The review is expected to provide an opportunity to assess the state of disaster reduction throughout the world and to identify gaps, future priorities and programmes of action.

12. As anticipated in the previous report of the Secretary-General on the Strategy (A/56/68 and Corr. 1), the secretariat has embarked on a periodic review of disaster reduction initiatives undertaken throughout the world. The global review for 2002 conveys areas of current interest and presents indications of global trends in disaster reduction practices. This record will initiate a structured process to maintain and disseminate information on disaster reduction on a periodic basis. The review also attempts to stimulate a process of developing and applying agreed professional criteria that reflect the global progress made in risk reduction. An inter-institutional initiative is ongoing so as to maximize coordination and synergy among future issues of the global review and other reports published by IFRC and UNDP.

13. In responding to the general requirement for increased interaction between governmental representatives and the secretariat for the Strategy, the latter has facilitated an open-ended contact group of permanent missions at Geneva. The group met twice in

2002 to discuss policy orientation of the programme for the Strategy. The contact group will also look into the funding of initiatives and core requirements. In this vein, the Government of Switzerland took the lead in convening a group of supporters of the Strategy, which includes a core group of Governments which are interested in providing advice and supporting the financial requirements of the inter-agency secretariat.

14. Pursuant to the call by the General Assembly for the strengthening of the regional outreach of the inter-agency secretariat and the provision of support for national platforms (resolution 56/195, para. 10), the secretariat has increased its efforts to disseminate disaster reduction information, documentation and policy guidelines at the regional level, while designing proposals for additional regional activities, including the hosting of regional outposts by partner organizations.

15. In Africa, the secretariat has continued its efforts to consolidate partnerships with a view to launching a regional programme for Africa in 2002, which will include the establishment of an outpost at Nairobi. This initiative includes subregional articulations, such as the process currently under way in the subregion of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) which is aimed at strengthening disaster management and reduction mechanisms in the Horn of Africa. Similar activities are being undertaken in other African subregions, building on processes that are ongoing or planned by relevant regional organizations.

16. In Asia, the collaboration of the secretariat with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre has become the platform for various joint initiatives, meetings and a continuing exchange of information. Discussion with other partners, including the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP are taking place in order to develop a coordinated outreach programme in 2003.

17. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the secretariat outpost in Costa Rica organized, in collaboration with several partners, a variety of workshops and other meetings, including the Hemispheric Conference on Risk Reduction, which was convened in December 2001 in cooperation with the Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance of the United States Agency for International

Development (USAID), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and several regional organizations in order to follow up recommendations of the third Summit of the Americas, held in April 2001. A radio soap opera was produced and an educational manual for children was developed jointly with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The secretariat web site for the region was enhanced and a publication on lessons learned from the El Salvador earthquake of January 2001 was released.⁶ The magazine *ISDR Informs* continues to be published twice a year, and several other activities have been carried out or planned in collaboration with PAHO, a major partner in the region.

18. The secretariat is also gradually expanding its capacity to support countries that are willing to establish or strengthen national multisectoral mechanisms to promote and support disaster reduction initiatives. Dedicated national platforms benefit from the exchange of information with counterparts in other countries and international partners, and from facilitated access to ongoing international debates. The secretariat is seeking the cooperation of UNDP and other relevant agencies in supporting this process, which is considered essential for the success of the Strategy.

C. Activities undertaken by partner agencies and organizations in support of the Strategy⁷

19. A large number of activities have been carried out by numerous agencies and organizations in support of the goals and principles of the Strategy, especially in the areas highlighted in the framework document for its implementation. There has been a distinct increase in inter-agency partnerships and initiatives within that framework, confirming the general tendency to recognize disaster reduction as an imperative for development.

20. In 2001, UNDP, through its country offices, regional bureaux and specialized programmes, and with technical support provided by its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, strengthened disaster reduction capacities in over 60 countries. These programmes included building local capacities for disaster reduction in Central America and Jamaica; developing a new national risk and disaster

management system in Haiti; strengthening national disaster offices in the English-speaking Caribbean countries; developing regional strategies for disaster management in countries members of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe; addressing flood risk reduction in the Tisza river basin (Hungary, Romania and Ukraine); and addressing drought risks in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. As part of their country frameworks, a number of UNDP country offices are designing major multi-year programmes which include disaster reduction. UNDP also provided support for several capacity-building programmes, including those in Albania, East Timor, Madagascar, Malawi and Romania. Additional programmes are being designed for Afghanistan, Nepal and the Sudan. UNDP has also contributed to the enhancement of international policies in disaster reduction, including a disaster profile of the least developed countries.

21. Following the major earthquakes in El Salvador, Gujarat (India) and Peru, the flash floods in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hurricane Michelle in Cuba, the volcanic eruption at Goma (Democratic Republic of the Congo), floods in Senegal, the hailstorms and flash floods in Bolivia, and the earthquakes in Afghanistan and Georgia, UNDP developed post-disaster recovery strategies which used recovery as an opportunity to address disaster reduction objectives.

22. Recognizing the importance of documenting, sharing and learning from best practice at the regional and subregional levels, UNDP has developed disaster reduction knowledge networking in Central and South-West Asia, and in Central America and the Caribbean in partnership with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration. UNDP is also preparing a world vulnerability report which in 2002 will focus on disasters and development. The report will contain case studies of best practice and a global index of disaster, risk and vulnerability, prepared in collaboration with the UNEP Global Resource Information Database and the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction of Columbia University (United States of America).

23. In support of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, UNDP chairs the working group on risk, vulnerability and impact assessment, which has facilitated international collaboration in the development of a risk and vulnerability index and

improvement in the consistency, accuracy and coverage of disaster impact data. The working group collaborates with the working group on climate and disasters in order to improve climate-related risk information by correlating climate and disaster databases.

24. UNDP efforts to advocate for and promote disaster reduction included the convening of a regional seminar in cooperation with the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America and the Spanish Agency for Iberoamerican Cooperation, as well as two regional seminars in the Caribbean. In addition, a regional seminar on drought risk management was held at Tehran. UNDP has also been working closely with the secretariat for the Strategy on the preparatory work for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

25. In 2001, the Executive Board of UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund recognized disaster reduction and recovery as a core business area of UNDP, reflected in transformation of the former Emergency Response Division into the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. Disaster reduction concerns are also increasingly mainstreamed into UNDP country programme frameworks. In this connection, UNDP is outpostting five regional disaster reduction advisers to Africa, Asia, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Latin America and the Caribbean. In the context of the United Nations system, UNDP is strengthening and further defining its areas of collaboration with both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the secretariat for the Strategy.

26. The United Nations Disaster Management Training Programme, managed by UNDP, has continued to provide its services in risk reduction education to both the United Nations system and Member States, especially disaster-prone developing countries. Following the convening of inter-agency assessments and dedicated workshops, a comprehensive plan for Central America for the period 2002-2004 was elaborated, and preparations were begun for the convening of country workshops in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. The Training Programme, in cooperation with SADC, designed a plan for Southern Africa for the period 2002-2005, which is being completed with inter-agency support. National workshops were held in Georgia and Nepal, while inter-agency programming

for future initiatives was begun in Albania, Armenia, the Balkans (together with Bulgaria and Romania), East Timor, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. The Training Programme also launched a database of the disaster risk reduction training programmes and resources available throughout the world. Finally, an inter-agency distance learning programme has been designed.

27. In the Strategic Framework for 2000-2015 of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), disaster reduction is identified as one of the important strategies to address the needs of member States, with specific reference to the eradication of food insecurity and rural poverty. In this respect, FAO has continued to assist in the development and implementation of disaster-prevention programmes and preparedness plans in order to protect agricultural production systems. FAO also provides technical assistance to strengthen capacities to prevent or mitigate the impact of natural hazards.

28. The recently transformed Emergency Operation and Rehabilitation Division of FAO has overall responsibility for the emergency field programme and linkages between emergency and rehabilitative activities and the FAO humanitarian policy. Through the World Agricultural Information Centre of FAO, a web site is being created to provide an overview as well as in-depth access to disaster reduction information.⁸ FAO also continues, through the Global Information and Early Warning System, to provide information on agricultural disasters, food shortages and insecurity, and to mobilize international support for agricultural disaster reduction and relief activities.

29. In 2001, FAO published an analysis of the medium-term effects of Hurricane Mitch on food security in Central America. It also organized an international expert meeting on forest fire management, in cooperation with the International Tropical Timber Organization, and the Asia-Pacific conference on early warning, preparedness, prevention and management of disasters in food and agriculture in Thailand. FAO has also upgraded its capacity to provide operational services on environmental information by means of an advanced real-time environmental information monitoring system, using satellite data.

30. In addition to its participation in the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force, in which it chairs the

working group on early warning, UNEP has carried out a number of activities aimed at reducing the impact of natural and related environmental and technological disasters. UNEP is implementing a strategic framework on emergency prevention, preparedness, assessment, mitigation and response. In the area of lessons learned, a project is under way on the analysis of causes and long-term environmental impact of emergencies and the possible implications for Governments and the international community.

31. In the area of capacity-building and institutional strengthening, UNEP undertook a joint mission with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to Nigeria to assess disaster management mechanisms and formulate an integrated strategy and support programme. UNEP and UN-Habitat have also continued their joint project on mitigation management and control of floods in South Asia. UNEP has also assisted the Government of Venezuela in rationalizing landslide vulnerability and risk maps at the national and local levels. A number of projects have also been prepared, ranging from flood management to information exchange networks in Africa, Latin America and the South Pacific.

32. The UNEP Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) programme is a tool for raising awareness and improving the preparedness of communities exposed to environmental emergencies. The programme addresses all environmental emergencies related to the industrial activities that can result from human activity or as a consequence of natural disasters. By providing information to the community and putting together an overall, coordinated response plan, APELL aims to protect people, property and the environment. APELL has been introduced in more than 30 countries and its implementation through country seminars and workshops and national APELL centres has improved the level of preparedness of local emergency services, and the understanding of local communities of how to react to emergencies.

33. With regard to early warning for disaster reduction, UNEP and its partners have identified a number of glacial lakes in the Himalayan mountain region as presenting a high risk of glacial lake outburst floods. In this connection, UNEP is assisting the Governments of Bhutan and Nepal in developing early warning systems that will warn communities of an impending flood and in carrying out engineering works

to reduce the risks. In another area, UNEP has produced a scientific study that addresses the drying out of the Mesopotamian marshlands. Based on the study, Governments in the region are taking action to implement appropriate measures. Finally, through the joint environment unit of UNEP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNEP provided environmental expertise to allow the United Nations system to deal with three disasters that had a significant environmental impact.⁹

34. WMO runs several programmes related to the mitigation of natural disasters and participates actively in the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, both directly and through national meteorological and hydrological services and several regional specialized meteorological centres. The assessment and reporting process of the WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has contributed to the identification of the potential impact of climate extremes. WMO has lead responsibility for the working group of the Inter-Agency Task Force on climate and disasters and participates in those on early warning and on risk vulnerability and assessment. WMO has continued to provide support to the secretariat for the Strategy, including by seconding a senior staff member.

35. Capacity-building activities within the World Weather Watch programme have progressed significantly. In addition, the African Centre for Meteorological Applications to Development at Niamey, the Specialized Meteorological Centre of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in Singapore, the National Space Research Institute in Brazil, and the drought monitoring centres at Nairobi and Harare generate regionally focused output. The WMO Tropical Cyclone Programme provides support for capacity-building and promotes the development of tropical cyclone regional specialized meteorological centres in the tropical cyclone basins. This project is being implemented with a view to expanding it to other regions. WMO has also designated eight regional specialized monitoring centres to provide atmospheric transport model products for an environmental emergency response that covers the globe.

36. The World Climate Programme provides an authoritative scientific voice on climate, climate variations and climate change. The Programme assists countries in the application of climate information and knowledge to national sustainable development. The

Climate Information and Prediction Services project of the Programme has been designed to assist countries in using climate data for disaster preparedness, water resources management and the protection of human health.

37. WMO contributes significantly to the review of sectoral systems, both within and outside the United Nations system, for the monitoring of climate-related emergencies. WMO is well placed to coordinate hazard assessment studies by United Nations agencies during the current El Niño event. Special efforts are being made to elaborate the seasonal to inter-annual climate forecasts available from national meteorological services. In particular, WMO and the secretariat for the Strategy have been collaborating with the Government of Ecuador on the establishment of an international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon.

38. WHO looks at disasters as major public health issues and views disaster reduction as a core function of the health sector and, as such, applies the public health model to disaster reduction. In particular, WHO contributes to the implementation of the Strategy by: producing policies and advocacy that highlight disasters as public health issues and health as the objective and the yardstick of disaster reduction; producing health intelligence, as a key contribution to intersectoral and inter-agency coordination; and supporting institutional focal points and structures in member States and partner agencies. The work of WHO on preparedness, started in the Americas in the 1970s, is being extended to other regions: success stories include Nepal, Bangladesh, the countries of the Mekong basin, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and the border areas of the Horn of Africa. Disseminating best public health practices for disaster reduction is part of the normative responsibility of WHO as a specialized agency. WHO produced, together with the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the Red Cross Movement and the Sphere project, a CD-ROM, Health Library for Disasters, which carries 250 documents, and the WHO Emergency Health Library Kit, which contains hard copies of 130 essential guidelines. Mobilizing partnerships is another method for WHO to maximize the contribution of the health sector to disaster reduction. Besides the institutional partnership with ministers of health and other partners at national level, such as the Red Cross Movement and UNICEF, WHO

is intensifying its participation in United Nations work on assessment and resource mobilization for national and regional disaster reduction initiatives.

39. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has promoted activities aimed at developing a better scientific understanding of the occurrence and distribution of disasters in time and space. Other sectors in which UNESCO has been active include the development of educational material, the provision of technical advice on hazard-resistant construction of schools and the protection of cultural heritage. In addition, a specific interdisciplinary programme related to natural disaster reduction was launched in 2002. The scientific and technical contribution of UNESCO to disaster reduction is carried out under the organization's natural hazards programmes in the earth sciences and builds on its five intergovernmental and international scientific programmes: the International Geological Correlation Programme, the International Hydrological Programme, the Man and Biosphere programme, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Management of Social Transformations programme. Other ongoing efforts encompass an international programme on landslide risk mitigation, a regional programme on earthquake risk reduction in the Mediterranean region and a project on capacity-building for natural disaster reduction in Central America.

40. UN-Habitat promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development, good urban governance and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. UN-Habitat has established the Risk and Disaster Management Programme under the Disaster, Post-Conflict and Safety Section in response to an increasing demand from member countries for technical support, normative and policy tools, and operational capacity in the field concerning disaster prevention, mitigation and post-disaster rehabilitation in human settlements. Disaster-related activities focus in particular on the physical and management components of shelter, infrastructure and services, with priority given to activities at the local level, and on training and technical support to increase the capacity of local authorities and communities for disaster and human settlements management in the context of good local governance. UN-Habitat is an active partner in the implementation of the Strategy, especially in the areas

of land and urban management, impact assessment and capacity-building. Processes such as the campaigns for good urban governance and secure tenure provide important opportunities to promote disaster reduction in urban areas, in support of local authorities. The Programme also supports the establishment of cooperative networks in South-East Asia and Central America and the Caribbean for local vulnerability reduction, as well as training and capacity-building programmes in Southern Africa.

41. The World Bank recognizes disasters as a major threat for the poor, and continues its efforts to reduce the impact of disaster in the fight against poverty in developing countries. The Bank's Disaster Management Facility has been working actively since 1998 to integrate disaster risk management into the Bank's development efforts. The Facility serves as a central resource for disaster-related issues, providing technical support to the Bank's operations, policy guidance, and research and learning activities that promote effective disaster risk management. The number of operations focused on disaster prevention and mitigation has increased over recent years; examples include projects in Honduras, India, Nicaragua, the countries members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Mexico and Turkey. The Bank is also working closely with its partners through the ProVention Consortium, which serves as a network to leverage resources to advance the agenda of disaster risk reduction in consonance with the goals of the Strategy. Examples of the activities of the ProVention Consortium include research to document the economic and financial impact of disasters on longer-term development; the promotion of standards for assessing damage and recovery needs; identification of disaster risk hot spots to inform priority investments in disaster mitigation; and the exploration of better ways to manage the financial impact of disasters and promote investment for disaster prevention.

42. The Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has continued to carry out its activities in the field of space applications for disaster reduction, also in keeping with the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will review in 2003 possible global operational structures for disaster management. Furthermore, the Committee

established in 2001 an action team on disaster management, led by China, Canada and France, to respond to the recommendations of the Third Conference. Currently, 39 States and 11 international organizations and entities, including the secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, participate in the action team.

43. The Office for Outer Space Affairs also cooperates with the secretariat for the Strategy and the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites and other organizations in promoting the use of space tools for disaster management. This includes the provision of technical advisory services, in particular to developing countries, and the organization of workshops with the following objectives: to inform managers and decision makers involved in disaster management of the benefits and the cost-effectiveness of using space technologies; to identify user requirements for managing specific disasters and determine the extent to which these could be met by space technologies; and to develop a blueprint for action that could lead to pilot projects that incorporate space tools for disaster management. Following on from the first regional workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in November 2000, the Office has planned two regional workshops in 2002, one in Africa and the other in Asia and the Pacific. Both have enjoyed the substantive support of the secretariat for the Strategy.

44. The United Nations University (UNU) continues to undertake project activities in support of the achievement of the goals of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The initiative on the social aspects of urban vulnerability is designed to highlight, produce and disseminate methodologies for the analysis of urban social vulnerability. Activities on disaster information and technologies continue to be undertaken, in partnership with the International Centre for Disaster Mitigation Engineering of the University of Tokyo. To enhance preparedness for the next El Niño occurrence and other climate-related disasters, a research project was undertaken in cooperation with UNEP, the United States National Center for Atmospheric Research, WMO and the secretariat for the Strategy. As a follow-up to this initiative, UNU has developed a multidisciplinary climate affairs capacity-building programme. UNU also cooperates with the University of Geneva and the Swiss Federal School of Lausanne in the international course on analysis and management of geological risk.

45. Following Hurricane Mitch in Central America, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) helped to design and implement a decentralized cooperation initiative known as Towns helping Towns, in collaboration with UNDP, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. The initiative aims at establishing an international platform to channel technical and financial assistance from local authorities to Central American counterparts most affected by the disaster. The initiative benefits from the partnership between UNOPS and the United Towns Organization. A concrete example of a successful development within the framework of Towns helping Towns is the support provided by UNOPS in the cooperation between the Canton of Geneva and the municipalities of Matagalpa and Rio Grande river basin, Nicaragua.

46. In Africa, UNOPS has been providing support to IGAD since September 2001 for the implementation of the IGAD disaster preparedness strategy. This comprehensive, medium-term programme, which receives support from the secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and other partners, is expected to benefit from the cooperation of UNDP, UNEP, UN-Habitat, FAO and ILO. At the request of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP, UNOPS is also providing services in the implementation of some disaster management programmes, including those in Djibouti and the Sudan, some of which stem from activities undertaken by the Disaster Management Training Programme. Since October 2001, UNOPS has been implementing a project, at the request of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, known as UNOSAT, which provides satellite imagery, image-processing services, maps and other geographical information to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations by means of the Internet.

47. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has continued to assist developing countries in the region in building capacities for disaster reduction, especially with relation to sustainable development, and to promote stronger regional cooperation to counter water-related disasters. Activities carried out by ESCAP include the implementation in 2001 of a regional project aimed at strengthening the capacity in participatory planning

and management for flood mitigation and preparedness in large river basins in Asia and the Pacific. Under the project, four case studies were carried out in China, India, Indonesia and Viet Nam. Among the activities undertaken in each of these countries was the convening in 2001 of national seminars on public awareness and participation in Nanjing, Calcutta, Jakarta and Hanoi.

48. At the regional level, a workshop on participatory planning and management for flood mitigation and preparedness in large river basins in Asia and the Pacific was held at Bangkok in 2001. In addition, in cooperation with WMO and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Japan, ESCAP assisted the Typhoon Committee in carrying out a review aimed at strengthening regional cooperation in flood forecasting and disaster prevention and preparedness. As a follow up to this review, ESCAP, in cooperation with the Typhoon Committee secretariat, WMO and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, assisted in the implementation of several activities, including the elaboration of an implementation programme; the organization of a regional workshop on integration of risk analysis and management of water-related disasters into the development process in the Typhoon Committee area, to be held at Manila in July 2002; and the mobilization of Typhoon Committee members for the implementation of priority activities, in particular for hazard risk mapping and forecasting of flash floods and other disasters.

49. The United Nations Centre for Regional Development carries out initiatives and studies on disaster reduction. In 2001, the Centre focused on community-level vulnerability in developing countries, with particular reference to earthquakes with the intention of providing affordable means of reducing risk. Special emphasis was placed on translating technology into practice with a participatory approach. In addition, the Centre has promoted the School Earthquake Safety Initiative (SESI). Training programmes were also conducted in 21 urban communities in developing countries and in several rural communities in earthquake-affected areas of Gujarat, India. In order to disseminate best practice, five international workshops were organized (at Kobe, Japan, in January 2001, at Quito in March 2001, at Ahmedabad, India, in January 2002, and again at Kobe in January and in February 2002). Each was attended by more than 100 participants from both the public and

private sectors. In the area of advisory services and networking for communities, support has been provided to various communities through SESI and other projects for the education, awareness-raising and capacity-building of vulnerable groups, while emphasizing self-help and cooperation. Several active networks among various sectors of the communities have been established by means of these activities.

50. States parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa have recognized the importance of building on existing early warning systems within the framework of national action programmes in order to mitigate the effects of drought and promote sustainable development. This would assist them in mitigating the effects of drought that are likely to worsen as a consequence of climate change. To this end, the Convention secretariat has encouraged parties to the Convention to enhance national capabilities and develop drought contingency plans at the local, national, subregional and regional levels. To date, approximately 50 national action programmes have been finalized. The Committee on Science and Technology established two ad hoc panels of experts to examine the issue of early warning in the light of the approach adopted in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, while parties to the Convention have been encouraged to carry out pilot studies on early warning, based on the recommendations of the panels.

51. The work of the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO) has continued to evolve towards integrating disaster prevention considerations into disaster management and civil protection issues, which are at the core of the organization's mandate. The main asset of ICDO is the network of national civil defence entities with which it has direct communication channels. Based on this, ICDO has carried out a series of initiatives ranging from training, with more than 1,400 days of training provided in more than 22 countries, to specialized publications, such as directories, disaster management manuals and multilingual glossaries. In addition, ICDO maintains a web site as a tool for enhanced interaction with its member States and the general public.¹⁰ The twelfth world conference on civil defence, held at Geneva in June 2001, produced a substantive report on civil

defence as a tool for international solidarity in the face of disasters, which was published in March 2002.

III. Conclusions

52. In general, the implementation of the programme for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is progressing satisfactorily. First, the emphasis placed by the international community on the need to develop a long-term vision with regard to natural and related disasters has galvanized the spirit of partnership within the framework for the Strategy. Second, current efforts to build regional strategies and programmes are fostering the involvement of national constituencies in the programme for the Strategy and deepening their awareness of disaster reduction. Third, inter-agency coordination within the United Nations system with regard to disaster reduction has improved tangibly, to the benefit of all agencies and organizations concerned. The role of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction deserves mention in this regard. Finally, risk and vulnerability reduction concerns are being mainstreamed into such programme areas as sustainable development, desertification, health, education, climate change and environment. Conversely, the programme for the Strategy will need to embrace natural and related technological and environmental hazards in a more holistic manner, ensuring that their interdependence is not overlooked.

53. Some positive results have also been achieved with respect to synergy among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and those in the socio-economic and humanitarian fields. On the one hand, the programme for the Strategy constitutes an optimal complement to the programmes implemented by UNDP in developing countries. On the other hand, with respect to emergency relief, there is an obvious link between the various phases of disaster management and vulnerability reduction requirements which relate to longer-term development policies. Work in this area is undertaken in particular in the framework of the meetings convened jointly by UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the secretariat for the Strategy.

54. The partnership-based policy of the secretariat in addressing inter-agency cooperation is aimed at enabling the United Nations system to bring about its full potential in the area of disaster reduction. United Nations agencies and organizations active in the development, socio-economic and humanitarian areas are benefiting from the secretariat's function as the focal point within the United Nations system for disaster reduction. Despite this, and the inclusion of disaster reduction among the goals of the Millennium Declaration, the visibility of disaster reduction within the United Nations system needs to be further improved.

55. Lack of response by the donor community to the financial requirements of the secretariat for the Strategy remains a serious concern, especially when compared with the functions mandated to the secretariat and the ever-increasing expectations of the international community with regard to disaster reduction. This situation is contradictory and potentially undermines the implementation of the Strategy, in particular in relation to realizing its goals and objectives in developing countries.

56. In the immediate future, two main areas of concern will be the work related to the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which should allow for creating linkages between disaster reduction and policies and practices aimed at achieving sustainable development and the 2003-2004 process for the 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action.

IV. Recommendations

57. Member States should continue to support and utilize the programme for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as a common multidisciplinary platform for the development of policies and measures to reduce the impact of natural and other related hazards on vulnerable societies and to integrate disaster reduction into their long-term planning.

58. All countries should make additional efforts to support the Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction and the requirements of the secretariat to administer it, with a view to enabling the Trust Fund to sustain the work undertaken within the framework of the

Strategy and facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships for disaster reduction, especially in developing countries.

59. Agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and entities should avail themselves of the programme for the Strategy as an enabling environment for enhanced coordination, synergy and collaboration, and should benefit from the role of the secretariat for the Strategy in the development of joint initiatives, studies and programmes for disaster and risk reduction.

60. In consideration of the importance assigned to disaster reduction in the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, it is recommended that the secretariat for the Strategy follow up closely on the recommendations arising from the World Summit and play a role in the implementation of the commitments emerging from it, as appropriate.

61. The secretariat for the Strategy should begin, in collaboration with Governments, agencies and other entities concerned, a full review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action. This review process will help to identify gaps and means of implementation in a way that will chart the course of action for the forthcoming decade, while taking into account the outcome of the World Summit.

62. The programme for the Strategy should continue to develop its regional outreach, integrating in one vision regional strategies and the network of national platforms for disaster reduction by developing appropriate manuals and guidelines.

63. The secretariat for the Strategy should continue to issue periodic reviews of disaster reduction initiatives undertaken throughout the world as a means of documenting the evolution of disaster reduction and trends therein. These reviews should be done in progressive synergy with other reports, such as the world vulnerability report published by UNDP and the world disasters report issued by IFRC. These reviews should be regarded in the longer term as an important component of an international information clearing house on disaster reduction, to be developed by the secretariat for the Strategy and its partners.

64. The secretariat for the Strategy should continue to be strengthened, in keeping with General Assembly resolutions 54/219 of 22 December 1999 and 56/195, and measures should be explored to provide more stable and predictable financial resources. In keeping with the recommendations of the Assembly and those contained in the previous reports of the Secretary-General, the secretariat for the Strategy should be provided with adequate capacity to perform its mandated tasks, which would include the establishment of regular posts for its staff so as to match actual operating requirements.

65. The political profile and the visibility of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction should be enhanced by progressively raising the profile of its meetings, including the organization of high-level sessions in which member organizations and entities should be represented at the highest level. At the same time, the chair of the Task Force should ensure that its working groups constitute ad hoc arrangements with clearly defined objectives and schedules, and that their activities are in tune with the overall mandate and objectives of the Task Force.

66. The Task Force should avail itself of contributions stemming from associated forums, gathering expertise from various constituencies such as the contact group on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; civil society and non-governmental organizations; relevant professional, academic and scientific sectors; and national platforms for disaster reduction. The secretariat for the Strategy should facilitate the establishment of such associated forums and ensure that they relate to the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force.

67. The General Assembly should be informed of the progress made in the implementation of the programme for the Strategy at its fifty-eighth session in 2003, and in particular the activities of the Inter-Agency Task Force, as decided by the Assembly in paragraph 3 of its resolution 56/195.

Notes

¹ For more information and access to relevant documents and publications mentioned in the present report, see www.unisdr.org.

² As at June 2002, the following entities and organizations were members of the Task Force: United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, World Food Programme, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, International Telecommunication Union, World Meteorological Organization, World Bank, Council of Europe, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, African Union, Organization of American States, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, Interstate Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Iberoamerican Association of Civil Defence and Civil Protection entities, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Council for Science, Drought Monitoring Centre at Nairobi, Munich Reinsurance Company and Global Fire Monitoring Centre.

³ Section IV of the Declaration, entitled "Protecting our common environment", sets forth a goal which relates specifically to disaster reduction and which is relevant to the programme for the Strategy, namely, "To intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters".

⁴ Sectoral plans cover such areas as environment, human settlements, agriculture, health and education.

⁵ A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex I.

⁶ For more information, see www.eird.org.

⁷ The section highlights some recent policy and programmatic initiatives undertaken by the agencies of the United Nations system which have forwarded information to the secretariat, therefore not all of the agencies and organizations active in disaster reduction are mentioned. The global review of disaster reduction initiatives contains data relating to a larger number of initiatives carried out by partners from within and outside the United Nations system.

⁸ The web site focuses on disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, and post-emergency relief and rehabilitation, which have both been identified by FAO as priority areas for interdisciplinary action.

⁹ The ammunition dump explosion in Nigeria, the floods in Bolivia and the chemical spill in Djibouti. UNEP also continues its work on post-conflict environmental assessment.

¹⁰ www.icdo.org.

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**Implementation of the International Strategy for
Disaster Reduction**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/219, the present report describes the status of the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. It also reviews the current institutional arrangements for the implementation of the Strategy, on the basis of the experience during its first year of operation, and makes recommendations on the subject.

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I. Introduction

1. In resolution 54/219 of 22 December 1999, the General Assembly endorsed the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General to ensure functional continuity for the effective implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as an international framework for responding to the challenge presented to the international community by the increasing incidence and scale of disasters which had resulted in massive losses of life and long-term negative, social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable countries worldwide, in particular in developing countries. The Assembly also endorsed the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an inter-agency task force and an inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction for an initial period covering the biennium 2000-2001, as the main instruments for the implementation of the Strategy.

2. In keeping with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 54/219, the present report reviews the status of the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. It also includes a review of the institutional arrangements after the first year of operation and makes appropriate recommendations on the subject.

II. Impact of natural and related environmental and technological disasters

3. Within recent years, the international community has witnessed the increased incidence of natural as well as related environmental and technological disasters. During the past four decades, a series of earthquakes, droughts, floods and volcanic eruptions have exacted a major toll in terms of the loss of human lives and the destruction of economic and social infrastructure. The past decade, in particular, witnessed an exponential growth in the occurrence of disasters. In 1999 alone, there were more than 700 large-scale disasters, resulting in the death of approximately 100,000 people and causing economic losses in excess of US\$ 100 billion, which in fact reflects an annual increase of approximately 10 per cent during the decade of the 1990s. Extrapolating from this trend, it is projected that by the year 2065, the economic losses due to disasters are likely to account for a significant proportion of

global gross domestic product (GDP). If the projections of the likely impact of climate change on the incidence of disasters, reflected in this year's report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), are factored into the equation, the loss, in terms of both human lives and the destruction of economic and social infrastructure, is likely to be even more significant without aggressive disaster reduction interventions.

4. Disasters are not confined to particular regions nor do they discriminate between developed and developing countries. The forest fires that raged for several weeks in the United States of America in 2000 and the devastation caused by floods in several parts of Europe, most notably in France, Italy, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, are telling reminders of the increased vulnerability of developed and developing countries alike to natural and related environmental and technological disasters.

5. Nevertheless, while all countries are susceptible to natural hazards, developing countries are much more severely affected, especially in terms of the loss of lives and the percentage of economic losses in relation to their gross national product (GNP). Various United Nations studies have shown that 90 per cent of disaster victims live in developing countries. According to the World Bank, losses caused by disasters in developing countries, in terms of percentage of GNP, are 20 times higher than those in developed countries. Within the past year or more, floods in Bangladesh, India, Mozambique, Venezuela and Viet Nam, volcanic eruptions in Indonesia, Montserrat and the Philippines, and earthquakes in El Salvador, Indonesia and India have created widespread destruction.

6. The catastrophic earthquakes that occurred earlier this year in El Salvador and India highlight key deficiencies in the approach to disaster management. The cause of the widespread loss of life and damage, a result of the occurrence of natural hazards, is linked to the increasing number of people and assets that are vulnerable to disasters. This is due to a number of factors, including the increased concentration of populations in the context of the accelerated pace of urbanization. Poverty, which often forces people to live in geographically unstable locations and in inadequate shelters, is also a major factor contributing to the creation of vulnerable communities. However, other factors such as inappropriate land-use planning, poorly designed buildings and infrastructure, and lack of

appropriate institutional arrangements to deal with risk reduction, not to mention an increasingly degraded environment, epitomized by widespread deforestation, are all linked to the current trend towards increased vulnerability.

7. Conscious human action and political will can nevertheless reduce the impact of future disasters. Solutions exist, and the knowledge and technology required to apply them are widely available. In the case of earthquakes, these solutions include proper land-use planning, aided by vulnerability mapping, to situate people in safe areas, and the adoption of proper building codes and plans reflecting local seismic risk assessment, as well as ensuring the control and enforcement of such plans and codes, based on economic and other incentives. Systematic awareness-raising campaigns, carried out with the active participation of the population, will encourage people to live in safer environments. In the case of natural hazards, such as hurricanes and floods, early warning systems, based on the application of improved scientific knowledge, can play an important role in reducing vulnerability.

8. The serious threat posed by disasters therefore requires a concerted effort by the international community to support creative disaster reduction initiatives.

III. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction: conceptual underpinnings

9. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction builds upon the experience of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999), which was launched by the General Assembly in 1989. The Strategy embodies the principles articulated in a number of major documents adopted during the Decade, including, in particular, the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,¹ and the document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",² both of which were endorsed at the Programme Forum on the International Decade held in Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, which also adopted the Geneva Mandate on Disaster Reduction.³

10. The Strategy reflects a major conceptual shift from the traditional emphasis on disaster response to disaster reduction, and in effect seeks to promote a "culture of prevention". The approach reflected in the Strategy is premised on an appreciation of the fact that the loss of life and destruction resulting from disasters are not inevitable and can be mitigated by reducing the vulnerability of communities to natural hazards. It recognizes that natural hazards in themselves do not inevitably lead to disasters, but disasters result from the impact of natural hazards on vulnerable social systems. In other words, natural disasters can be prevented through conscious human action designed to reduce vulnerability.

11. In order to appreciate more fully the feasibility of disaster reduction, it is necessary to distinguish between hazard, vulnerability and risk. Natural hazards comprise phenomena such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, tsunamis, tropical cyclones and hurricanes and other storms, tornadoes and high winds, river floods and coastal flooding, wildfires and associated haze, and drought and infestations. Vulnerability to disasters is a function of human action and behaviour. It describes the degree to which a socio-economic system is either susceptible or resilient with respect to the impact of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters. The degree of vulnerability is determined by a combination of several factors, including awareness of hazards, the condition of human settlements and infrastructure, public policy and administration, and organized abilities in all fields of disaster management. The risk of a disaster is the probability of a disaster's occurring, that is to say, the impact of a natural hazard on a socio-economic system with a given level of vulnerability. Consequently, risk management includes aspects of hazard awareness, vulnerability assessment, impact predictions and the formulation of appropriate countermeasures. These in turn include the mitigation of hazard impact and the reduction of vulnerability.

12. In the context of the conceptual elaboration of the Strategy, the relationship between disaster reduction and disaster prevention, terms that have tended to be used interchangeably, has been clarified. In the more restrictive sense of the term, disaster prevention may be seen as involving measures aimed at avoiding disasters, which is not always possible. On the other hand, disaster reduction, narrowly interpreted, implies that measures would be adopted to reduce or limit the

severity of the impact of disasters. However, in the broader sense of the expression, disaster reduction involves all measures designed to avoid or limit the adverse impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. Viewed in these terms, disaster reduction includes disaster prevention and, as the title of the Strategy suggests, has emerged as the all-encompassing concept.

13. More generally, efforts are being made to effect a conceptual integration of disaster reduction into the philosophy of sustainable development in the context of the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This is necessary in view of the fact that, despite its importance, disaster reduction is not adequately reflected in existing development strategies.

IV. Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

A. Framework for action

14. Building upon the various foundation documents to which reference was made above, and taking account of the views expressed by the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has elaborated a framework for action⁴ for the implementation of the Strategy. The overall vision of the Strategy articulated in the framework document is to enable societies to become more resilient to the effects of natural hazards and related technological and environmental phenomena in order to reduce human, economic and social losses. In support of this vision, it identifies four main objectives to be pursued, namely: increasing public awareness; promoting commitment on the part of public authorities; stimulating interdisciplinary and intersectoral partnerships, and expanding risk reduction networking; and improving scientific knowledge of the causes of natural disasters and the effects of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters on societies. It also incorporates two separate activities mandated by the General Assembly in terms of the continuation of international cooperation to reduce the impact of El Niño and other climate variables, and the strengthening

of disaster reduction capacities through the development of early warning systems.

15. Under the various objectives, specific issues are identified such as public information, education and training; natural resource management; the formulation of risk reduction strategies; the establishment of effective coordination mechanisms; the integration of disaster reduction in sustainable development; carrying out assessments of the socio-economic impact of disasters; the development of appropriate databases on disasters; the formulation of suitable coping strategies; the transfer of knowledge among countries; and the establishment of information exchange facilities. The framework document, which has been endorsed by the Inter-Agency Task Force, will serve as a broad programmatic guide for action in support of the objectives of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

B. Activities carried out in support of the Strategy

16. The Inter-Agency Task Force has succeeded in identifying a number of priority areas for action relevant to disaster reduction, including climate variability, early warning, vulnerability and risk as well as wild land fires. It has also sought to launch initiatives in these areas through its various working groups. Furthermore, at its first meeting in April 2000, the Inter-Agency Task Force identified several areas of focus for its work, including ecosystems management, land-use management and unplanned urban areas; advocacy, information, education and training; public awareness and commitment; raising political will and the profile of prevention; the social and health impact of disasters; capacity-building in developing countries; mainstreaming disaster reduction in sustainable development and in national planning; lessons learned for prevention from actual disasters; private and public sector partnerships; technological disasters; and the application of science and technology in disaster reduction.

17. During 2000, the inter-agency secretariat produced various studies and reports such as the Risk Assessment Tools for Diagnosis of Urban Areas against Seismic Disasters (RADIUS) methodology for seismic risk reduction strategies, and the report on the Usoi Landslide Dam and Lake Sarez in Tajikistan which provides a professional appraisal of the danger posed

by the lake to surrounding communities. The secretariat has also carried out a number of activities in respect of public awareness, based, among other things, on the annual disaster reduction campaign and the grant of the United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Prevention.

18. For the year 2001, the activities of the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction will include the preparation of a global report on disaster reduction initiatives in support of the Strategy. This report, which will be substantive in nature, will be issued on an annual basis and will provide the international community with an assessment of progress made worldwide in the implementation of the Strategy and also identify gaps at the policy and institutional levels that could be filled with the support of the United Nations organizations and agencies, as well as other relevant sectors of the disaster reduction community.

19. In the area of policy formulation and inter-agency coordination, emphasis will be placed on the provision of substantive inputs for the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force and the promotion of a coordinated approach to disaster reduction among the various agencies and organizations.

20. The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction will also continue to elaborate and propagate methodologies in respect of seismic risk developed under the RADIUS initiative and seek to apply similar approaches to the assessment of vulnerability in the area of floods. Emphasis will also be placed on the identification and exchange of experience based on innovative approaches to disaster reduction. Agreed terminology on disaster reduction will be drafted in order to provide a common understanding of disaster reduction and related concepts.

21. In keeping with its mandate to craft the United Nations message on disaster reduction, the secretariat will engage in advocacy and public information through an expansion of its publication programme and on the basis of the organization of annual campaigns on disaster reduction. The theme of the 2001 campaign is "Countering Disasters: Targeting Vulnerability", with sub-themes focusing on the application of science and technology to disaster reduction; building disaster-resistant infrastructure; and mobilizing local communities in support of disaster reduction. In

addition, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction web site and resource centre will be expanded in order to enable the secretariat to serve as a clearing house for information on disaster reduction activities. These activities are to be carried out with a view to sensitizing and involving Governments, local communities and regional entities in the adoption of specific measures in support of disaster reduction.

22. In keeping with its mandate to provide backstopping to the policy and advocacy functions of the national platforms for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the secretariat of the Strategy is elaborating a strategy for supporting the work of these entities, especially in developing countries that are susceptible to disasters. Special emphasis will also be placed on strengthening the regional outreach of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction by reinforcing the presence and the activities of the Strategy secretariat at the regional level. Based on the experience gained through the Strategy unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, efforts are being made to apply a similar approach in other regions of the world through collaboration with existing regional centres participating in the Strategy network. In addition, partnership and networking initiatives are being launched among key stakeholders in the disaster reduction community in an effort to further advance the objectives of the Strategy.

23. Building upon the experience of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, special attention is being given to the establishment of arrangements designed to strengthen the involvement of the scientific community in the elaboration of innovative approaches to disaster reduction, based on the recognition that the scientific community has played, and will continue to play, an active role in promoting initiatives in support of disaster reduction. As stated in the conclusions of the World Meteorological Organization/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (WMO/UNESCO) Sub-forum on Science and Technology in Support of Natural Disaster Reduction (Geneva, 6-8 July 1999), held in conjunction with the Decade Programme Forum in July 1999, to mark the conclusion of the Decade: "Though science and technology have already contributed much to saving human life and reducing property loss and environmental damage from most forms of natural hazard of meteorological, hydrological, oceanographic

and geological origin, their potential contribution over the next decade is even greater. But only if they are systematically and wisely applied within the broader social context of an integrated approach to natural disaster reduction which is the principal legacy and proudest achievement of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction".⁵

24. United Nations organizations have carried out active programmes in support of disaster reduction. United Nations organizations and agencies, such as the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), UNESCO, WMO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), have recently strengthened their disaster reduction capacity in their respective areas of competence.

25. The World Bank has focused on disaster reduction as an important element in the fight against poverty. In order to advance the goal of reducing the impact of disasters, advocated by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the World Bank has also sought to update its strategies and procedures in order to promote proactive ways to integrate disaster prevention and mitigation into its development work. Against this background, the Disaster Management Facility (DMF) was established in July 1998 to promote disaster risk management as a priority issue for poverty reduction. DMF has worked actively to ensure that risk analysis is integrated into project design, and that effective prevention and mitigation measures are included in the Bank's Country Assistance Strategies. The staff have been provided with training to equip them with the tools to design safer investments and empower communities to reduce their vulnerability to disasters. Furthermore, disaster risk management is being mainstreamed into the Bank's development efforts. Reconstruction projects, such as those carried out in the aftermath of the earthquake in Turkey, hurricane Mitch in Central America, and the January 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, India, have been designed to go beyond mere rebuilding and to focus on how to rebuild in a better way so as to strengthen resilience to future disasters. Along the same lines, pilot efforts of DMF are being scaled into Bank operations. A good example of the application of this approach occurred in Mexico where, following a DMF case study to assess the capacity of the country to manage disaster risk, the Government

requested the Bank to prepare a project aimed at reducing disaster losses. The Bank is also working closely with its partners through the ProVention Consortium, which serves as an important mechanism through which the various partners combine efforts to generate evidence on the economic and financial impact of disasters on longer-term development; to develop methodologies and standards for conducting damage and needs assessments following a disaster; to strengthen communities' resilience to disaster impact; and to identify innovations in risk transfer and financing. The World Bank is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction.

26. Throughout the year 2000, UNDP continued to support capacity-building in disaster reduction and management at regional, subregional and national levels through over 50 programmes ranging from strengthening of early warning in China, Viet Nam and Ethiopia to disaster management in the Caucasus, and institution-building in East Timor and Albania. Following recent major disasters such as those that occurred in Venezuela, Mozambique and India, UNDP used the opportunity to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into its post-disaster recovery support to these countries. While contributing to the overall objectives of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction through its regular programmes, UNDP also undertook a number of activities that related to specific themes of the Strategy. Firstly, in the domain of public awareness and information, the first issue of the World Vulnerability Report, coordinated by the Disaster Reduction and Recovery Programme of UNDP, will be published at the end of 2001. Following an expert meeting on approaches to indexing disaster risk and vulnerability, the work on the disaster vulnerability index part of the report is in progress with the contribution of the UNEP Global Resource Information Database (GRID) programme. National vulnerability reports are also planned. In addition, UNDP prepared a disaster profile of the least developed countries as a publication and promoted greater attention to the impact from disasters on national and household economy and chronic poverty for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in May 2001. UNDP also prepared and presented an Executive Board paper on its strategy for disaster reduction and recovery which provides the framework for the vision, strategy and areas of action in this domain. Secondly, with a view to fostering commitment from public authorities, the UNDP

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initiative entitled World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty (WACAP) and the Disaster Reduction and Recovery Programme (DRRP) worked in collaboration to raise awareness among the urban authorities of urban risk assessment and disaster mitigation. A conference to this end was attended by mayors from over 100 cities. An electronic network of local authorities on the subject is also planned. Thirdly, in the areas of partnership-building, especially in relation to regional capacity-building, UNDP has built partnerships with regional organizations such as the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC), for the implementation of the UNDP regional programme on risk management in Central America; with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), concerning a Caribbean risk management initiative, which integrates disaster reduction and climate change concerns; with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to strengthen regional and national capacities in disaster management in the 12 countries of southern Africa; and with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency, for a Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) for the countries of South-Eastern Europe, under the aegis of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. Furthermore, UNDP leads an inter-agency working group on disaster mitigation comprising WFP, the World Health Organization (WHO), FAO, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with the aim of developing principles and guidelines in order to incorporate disaster risk into the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). A guidelines and policy paper has been prepared and will be tested in selected countries.

27. In the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, in which it participates as a member, UNDP leads the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Working Group on Risk, Vulnerability and Disaster Impact Assessment, which has been working on the development of guidelines for social impact assessment. Fourthly, in the area of training, UNDP coordinates a Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP) focusing on disaster reduction training for the five Central American

countries. This initiative brings together all the national and regional partners for human resource development. In southern Africa, inter-agency training initiatives are under way in approximately 10 countries, complemented by a regional programme. At the local level, in order to improve awareness and contribute to the reduction of disaster impact on the poor in urban areas, UNDP has collaborated with IFRC in assessing urban disaster risks in Khartoum and Cape Town, and is developing a programme to strengthen the capacities of local communities to manage these risks. The Disaster Reduction and Recovery Programme of UNDP organized, in cooperation with the World Bank Disaster Management Facility, an international conference on the use of microfinance and microcredit for the poor in recovery and disaster reduction. Since then, a programme has been developed to elaborate financial instruments to enable the poor to manage disaster risks. In the area of environmental and technological disaster reduction, following the cyanide spill into the Lapus River in Romania, UNDP provided technical assistance on environmental assessment, contributed to improving early warning, developed environmental rehabilitation programmes and undertook training of the national and local authorities in managing future disasters.

28. FAO has provided increased assistance for developing disaster prevention programmes and preparedness plans. In this connection, the Strategic Framework for FAO 2000-2015⁶ identifies disaster reduction as one of the important strategies to address the needs of member States with specific reference to the eradication of food insecurity and rural poverty. In seeking to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural production systems to disasters, FAO has provided technical assistance to its member States to strengthen their capacity to prevent or mitigate the impact of natural hazards. This assistance included the creation of shelter-belt plantations, forestation and forest management, watershed management, soil erosion control, crop diversification, community-based seed production, and the construction of drainage systems and flood-control dikes, as well as environmental information and database development and decision support tools for disaster monitoring, assessment and early warning. Furthermore, FAO has mobilized international support through its Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). In 2001, the agency organized an international expert meeting on forest fire management in cooperation with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO),

and is also planning to convene an Asia-Pacific conference on early warning, preparedness, prevention and management of disasters in food and agriculture, scheduled for 12-15 June in Thailand. FAO has also continued to provide an operational service on environmental information through an Advanced Real-Time Environmental Information Monitoring System (ARTEMIS) using satellite data. FAO is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction.

29. In 1999, WFP identified disaster mitigation as one of the five priority areas in "Enabling Development", a key strategy document that outlines WFP's role in development. Disaster mitigation for WFP focuses on the reduction of the impact of natural hazards on the food security of vulnerable populations.⁷ A steering committee for disaster mitigation has been set up to identify means to assist country and regional offices in integrating disaster mitigation activities into their development programming. WFP's dual mandate for both development and emergencies has resulted in the linking of development activities to facilitate eventual emergency response. This linkage reduces the impact of natural hazards on food-insecure populations. Guidelines on disaster mitigation have been prepared and technical assistance missions organized to seven pilot country offices. These missions field-tested the guidelines and helped country offices to design effective disaster mitigation strategies. The formalization of WFP's role in disaster mitigation is reflected in the new generation of programming documents. Nine of the 11 Country Strategy Outlines and Country Programmes that were approved by the Executive Board in 2000 included disaster mitigation activities and several more are expected in 2001. For example, in the Sudan, WFP will support water-harvesting to decrease the impact of drought on rural livelihoods and will also conduct contingency planning activities. In the United Republic of Tanzania, WFP's Country Programme will use food-for-work activities to create assets, such as grain stores and access roads, in order to improve long-term food security and at the same time decrease the vulnerability of households to drought. WFP is also a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction.

30. In respect of natural hazards and the mitigation of their effects, UNESCO has promoted activities aimed at developing a better scientific understanding of the occurrence and distribution of disasters in time and

space. Other sectors in which UNESCO has been active are the development of educational material to raise public awareness and facilitate public information and the provision of technical advice on hazard-resistant construction of schools and the protection of cultural heritage. The Organization will also launch a programme devoted to natural disaster reduction during the biennium 2002-2003. UNESCO's scientific and technical contribution to disaster reduction has continued to be promoted under the Organization's natural hazards programmes in the earth sciences and has built on its five intergovernmental and international scientific programmes: the International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP), the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme. The Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) hosted in IOC provides a framework within which to coordinate systematic observations of the world's oceans. Both the next medium-term strategy (2002-2007) and the programme and budget for 2002-2003, which will be approved by the UNESCO General Conference, are expected to include provisions for an interdisciplinary programme related to natural disaster reduction. In this context, UNESCO works closely with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat and other organizations and entities involved in advancing the objectives of the Strategy. It is also a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction.

31. As nearly three quarters of all natural disasters including floods, tropical cyclones, droughts, forest fires and epidemics are weather and climate-related, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has a number of programmes related to the mitigation of such disasters. WMO participated actively in the implementation of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction mainly through its scientific and technical programmes and with the participation of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and a number of Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres (RSMCs) worldwide. WMO is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, and supports the work of its working groups, in particular those on climate and disaster reduction (for which it has lead responsibility), on early warning and on vulnerability and risk assessment. WMO has also provided support and seconded a senior

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staff member to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat. WMO's constituent bodies, including the Congress and the Executive Council, follow and provide guidance on the policy, scientific and technical aspects of the implementation of the Strategy's objectives at the regional and global levels.

32. The following specific programmes and activities have been carried out by WMO in support of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction objectives. The World Weather Watch (WWW) programme of WMO coordinates the preparation and distribution of weather, climate and hydrologic data, analyses and forecast products to all nations. These services provide, in the most cost-effective manner, high-quality forecasts, warnings, advisories and information in support of protection of life and property and for socio-economic development. WMO assists the NMHSs of its members in the implementation and operation of relevant new technologies, and in the coordination of their activities for ensuring timely availability of warnings and advisories for the public and the international community. In this respect, WMO ensures the tracking of dangerous weather phenomena of short duration using high-resolution limited area modelling and the prediction of other extreme weather and hydrologic events several days in advance through extended range weather forecasts using numerical weather prediction models. The WMO Tropical Cyclone Programme promotes the establishment of national and regionally coordinated systems to ensure advance and effective preparedness so that the loss of life and damage caused by tropical cyclones and associated phenomena are reduced to a minimum. The programme ensures capacity-building, and promotes the continuing development of Tropical Cyclone Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres (TCRSMCs) in the tropical cyclone basins around the world. To assess the value of a centralized global source of warning information issued by NMHSs, WMO has initiated a pilot project to demonstrate the viability of a trial web site. The project is being developed and tested as a site for tropical cyclones in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)/WMO Typhoon Committee region, with a view to its early implementation. The success of the project would lead to the long-term development of the concept to cater for other major weather hazards globally. WMO has designated eight RSMCs to provide atmospheric transport model products for environmental emergency

response covering the globe. The aim is to provide modelling products and services for environmental emergencies related to nuclear facility accidents and radiologic emergencies. Such products have proved to be most useful for forest fires, as was the case with the smoke and haze in South-East Asia in 1997-1998. These products are also applicable to incidents of airborne plumes of volcanic ash and accidental gaseous chemical releases.

33. WMO's Public Weather Services (PWS) programme supports NMHSs in disaster reduction planning by providing a variety of routine forecasts and information to enhance the social and economic well-being of nations. A core component of the programme centres on ensuring the safety of life and property, one of the primary responsibilities of Governments. For this purpose, the programme focuses on: capacity-building to strengthen members' forecasting and warning capacity; transfer of knowledge and technology; and improving relationships and coordination with the disaster management community, government agencies and media concerned with public awareness, education and training.

34. The World Climate Programme (WCP) provides an authoritative international scientific voice on climate, climate variations and climate change. WCP assists countries in the application of climate information and knowledge to national sustainable development, including prediction and early warnings of climate-related natural disasters. WCP facilitates the effective collection and management of climate data and the monitoring of the global climate system, including the detection and assessment of climate variability and changes. WCP contributes to the assessment of the impacts of climate variability and changes that could markedly affect ecosystems and economic and social activities. WCP also provides the framework for research aimed at improving the understanding of climate processes for determining the predictability of climate. The Climate Information and Prediction Services (CLIPS) project within WCP has been designed to assist countries in using past climate data in sectors such as disaster preparedness, water resources management and protection of human health. The Climate Computing (CLICOM) project, another initiative of WCP, has provided advanced climate database management systems to many countries, with applications in several areas of disaster mitigation, especially drought.

35. WMO continues to assist its members in the development of techniques for assessment and combat of drought and desertification and other extreme events through its agricultural meteorology programme. Through its leadership of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Working Group on El Niño, La Niña, Climate Change and Variability, WMO will contribute significantly to the review of sectoral systems, both within and outside the United Nations system, that monitor climate-sensitive emergencies. Of particular interest is the monitoring and prediction of climate-related natural disasters associated with El Niño and La Niña phenomena. In this regard, WMO is well placed to coordinate the assessment of impacts by United Nations agencies and other bodies during the next El Niño event. Special efforts are under way, for example, to make seasonal to inter-annual climate forecasts available by a variety of means through National Meteorological Services (NMSs). The World Weather Research Programme (WWRP) is aimed at developing improved and cost-effective techniques for forecasting high-impact weather, and at promoting their applications among countries. WWRP projects are aimed at improving extreme events prediction on all space and time scales with particular emphasis on applications and socio-economic impacts. These projects are directed at critical weather events that could be life threatening or that could have serious economic consequences. They include, for example, orographically influenced intense precipitation, land-falling tropical cyclones, aircraft in-flight icing, sand and dust storms, and warm season heavy rainfall that is conducive to severe flooding.

36. The Hydrology and Water Resources Programme (HWRP) continues to assist the National Hydrological Services of member countries to assess the risk of and forecast water-related hazards, in particular major floods and droughts. This requires the collection and processing of basic data on such elements as precipitation, stream flow and surface-water and groundwater levels, in addition to the installation of hydrologic forecasting systems. WMO continues to facilitate the exchange of technology between countries in support of these efforts. It is also collaborating with other United Nations system organizations and non-governmental organizations. In particular, a new initiative of the Global Water Partnership calls on WMO to assume responsibility for a range of activities designed to develop a broad approach to flooding, incorporating social and economic as well as

geophysical and technical aspects. This will be an essential part of integrated water resources management. To enable the WMO secretariat to act quickly and effectively in support of members in situations of emergency and disaster, an Emergency and Disaster Response Group (EDRG) has been established within the WMO secretariat. One purpose of the Group is to assist in the rehabilitation of meteorological and hydrologic infrastructure in member countries following a disaster. The most urgent needs and requirements of NMHSs are determined through visits, as necessary, while the medium- and long-term requirements are met through the preparation of priority project plans and through the coordination of support offered by cooperation partners.

37. The United Nations University (UNU) has focused its activities in support of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction goals in three main areas: firstly, the social aspects of urban vulnerability, on which a UNU initiative has been designed with a view to producing and disseminating methodologies for the analysis of urban social vulnerability; secondly, disaster information and technologies, activities concerning which have been carried out in partnership with the University of Tokyo's International Centre for Disaster Mitigation Engineering (INCEDE); and thirdly, enhanced preparedness for climate-related disasters, which has always been a high priority area for the University. A number of initiatives developed over the years to address these important global issues have made a significant contribution by linking the scientific community and the United Nations system. One particular example is the study on the El Niño phenomenon, which was carried out as a joint project between UNU, UNEP, the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) (Boulder, Colorado, United States), WMO and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat. This activity, which included the work of multidisciplinary teams in 16 countries, led to findings that have been crucial to improving preparedness for the next El Niño occurrence and other climate-related disasters. As a follow-up to the El Niño project, UNU has developed a new Climate Affairs Programme, which will encompass a broad spectrum of issues ranging from ethics and policy formulation to the impact of climatic phenomena. An important contribution of this initiative will be the development of multidisciplinary "Climate Affairs" educational programmes, which should ultimately prove to be beneficial for capacity-building

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for disaster reduction. Finally, UNU together with the University of Geneva and the Federal School of Lausanne has provided fellowships to postgraduate students from developing countries to attend the international course in analysis and management of geologic risk. UNU also participates in the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction as a member of the Working Group on El Niño, La Niña, Climate Change and Variability.

38. UNEP has carried out a number of activities aimed at reducing the impact of natural and other related environmental and technological disasters in furtherance of the objectives of the Strategy. The UNEP Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL) programme is a tool for disaster prevention and preparedness which has contributed to raising public awareness of the need for emergency preparedness and the prevention and reduction of environmental emergencies and damage. UNEP has been particularly active in assessing lessons learned from several disasters between 1999 and 2000 in various countries including China, where UNEP flood mitigation activities have been strengthened in cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat); in Venezuela, where a joint project with the Government of Venezuela on vulnerability assessment and risk mapping is being implemented; and in Mozambique and Kenya. In an effort to strengthen national capacities and promote technical cooperation in floods mitigation and management among South Asian countries, UNEP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) developed a joint project on "Mitigation, Management and Control of Floods in South Asia". Two technical meetings were held in 2000 with the participation of experts and government officials from Bangladesh, China, India, Nepal and Viet Nam. In the aftermath of recent natural disasters in Venezuela, Mozambique and Kenya, UNEP organized impact assessment missions which also made recommendations on preparedness and prevention aspects. Similarly, UNEP participated in a joint mission to Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia following the cyanide spill that affected these countries. UNEP is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and chairs its Working Group on Early Warning.

39. The establishment of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction coincided with the

consolidation of the process of restructuring carried out by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). A key component of this process was the creation of the Disaster Management Programme (DMP) and the launch of a specialized Risk and Disaster Management Unit to cater for an increasing demand from member countries for technical support, normative and policy tools, and field operational capacity concerning disaster prevention, mitigation and post-disaster rehabilitation in human settlements. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) disaster-related activities focus in particular on the physical and management components of shelter, infrastructure and service, with priority given to activities at the local level. As a result of the above, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has become an active partner of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, especially in the areas of land and urban management, impact assessment and capacity-building. Processes such as the "Campaign for Good Urban Governance" and the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) constitute important opportunities to promote disaster reduction in urban areas and strengthen collaboration with local authorities.

40. The Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has increased its activities in the field of space applications for disaster reduction. The Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) called, among other things, for the implementation of an integrated, global system, especially through international cooperation, to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention efforts, especially of an international nature, through Earth observation, communications and other space-based services.⁸ The Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has also cooperated with the Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the Disaster Management Support Group of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites and other organizations to achieve the following objectives: (a) to increase the awareness of managers and decision makers involved in disaster management of the potential benefits and the cost-effectiveness of using space technologies;

(b) to determine the types of information and communications needed for managing specific disasters and the extent to which they could be met by space technologies; and (c) to develop a blueprint of action that could lead in the near future to pilot projects incorporating and testing the use of space tools in disaster management. In this connection, the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is organizing a series of international workshops on the use of space technology in support of disaster reduction and emergency management that could lead to the launching of pilot projects in which interested national institutions responsible for disaster management could incorporate and test the use of space technologies. The first workshop was held in November 2000, for the benefit of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the substantive participation of the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. Finally, the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariat of the Strategy have concluded an exchange of letters in 2000 formalizing the terms of their inter-agency cooperation on space applications for disaster reduction.

41. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has continued to carry out activities to reduce the impact of natural and other related environmental and technological disasters in the Americas and the Caribbean. In disaster preparedness and mitigation, the following activities have been undertaken: (a) in the area of institutional strengthening, PAHO has supported the creation and enhancement of disaster programmes in the ministries of health and has promoted coordination with other sectors involved in disaster reduction; and (b) in the area of training, several hundred courses and workshops have been organized on all aspects of disaster management, which each year have benefited thousands of professionals dealing with disaster reduction. In addition, PAHO encourages universities throughout the region to incorporate disaster management in their formal curriculum. The preparation and distribution of training material have been a cornerstone of the programme. Over the last two decades this effort has produced a considerable body of technical material (publications, slides and video programmes). Print copies are distributed free of charge to institutions dealing with disaster mitigation in the member countries and electronic copies are also made available on the Internet for worldwide access. PAHO works at the

highest level in the member countries to ensure that disaster mitigation becomes an integral part of national disaster reduction programmes. Even if these measures cannot stop disasters from occurring, they can reduce their impact. When a disaster strikes, PAHO works with the affected country to identify and assess needs and damages in the health sector, including water and sanitation systems. In this context, PAHO records and publishes the most important lessons learned in order to improve disaster management in the future. PAHO recently signed a Letter of Understanding with the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in which both parties agreed on a number of measures to strengthen cooperation in priority areas for the region, such as the publication of studies, joint lessons learned exercises, inter-agency reviews, and the strengthening of the regional multi-organization consortium formed by the Strategy, PAHO/WHO, CEPREDENAC, IFRC, Médecins sans frontières (MSF) and the Costa Rica National Commission for Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management (CNE). Furthermore, PAHO, in collaboration with the Strategy, is working on the implementation of a development plan for the Regional Disaster Information Centre, Latin America and the Caribbean (CRID) in San José, Costa Rica. While PAHO is the main technical, administrative and financial supporter of CRID, the Strategy provides financial and coordination support, and CNE provides the physical space to accommodate the operation. PAHO and the Strategy have also agreed to increase the access to disaster information, exchange and networking among countries and organizations in the region, through the joint support of CRID, ISDR and PAHO to the national and subregional disaster information networks, including the Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN).

42. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has continued to play an active role in disaster reduction, concentrating especially on the socio-economic impact of natural and other related hazards. In this context, ECLAC has organized a series of assessment studies on the impact of natural disasters in the region, including the 1999 floods and landslides in Venezuela, the earthquakes in Colombia (1999) and El Salvador (2001), as well as hurricanes Georges and Mitch (1998) and Keith (2000). ECLAC has also developed and disseminated its methodology on the impact of natural disasters both through printed publications in English and Spanish,

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and in electronic form on the Internet. This methodology is being updated to include an environmental impact analysis, a gender perspective and a more complete analysis of the macroeconomic impact of disasters and its effect on reconstruction plans. ECLAC is also developing indicators of vulnerability and risk, in terms both of scientific analysis and the measurement of natural phenomena and of their economic and social impact. Finally, the Commission, through its regional office for the Caribbean, has implemented training programmes for small island developing States that are vulnerable to hurricanes.

43. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has continued its efforts to promote capacity-building in developing countries and to mainstream disaster reduction in sustainable development. In this context, ESCAP has concentrated on water-related disasters, especially floods, undertaking a wide array of activities. Such activities include the organization of seminars and training courses for flood control and management, a regional overview of experiences in water-related disaster management in Asia, and a regional project for "strengthening capacity in participatory planning and management for flood mitigation and preparedness in large river basins". In addition, ESCAP, in cooperation with WMO, provided assistance in carrying out a regional survey, which served as a basis upon which to strengthen regional cooperation in flood forecasting and disaster prevention and preparedness. Similarly, the Commission has provided advisory services to the secretariat of the Mekong River Commission on the formulation of the regional strategy for flood management and mitigation.

44. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is an autonomous body within the United Nations with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations through appropriate training and research. UNITAR has a positive record in providing effective and timely training and project services for policy and institutional development in the areas of chemicals and waste management, climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, environmental law, environmental negotiations, reconstruction, information systems and local authorities. Some of the recent activities carried out by UNITAR in relation to disaster reduction include the launching of the International Training Centre for Local Actors

(CIFAL). CIFAL is a programme, carried out in cooperation with several United Nations organizations, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, universities and the private sector, that constitutes a service structure, an international space for meetings and exchange of experiences, and a working system open to all actors in the field of sustainable social and human development and international cooperation. UNITAR recognizes that geographical information systems and new information and communication technologies (ICT) are essential tools for disaster reduction. For this reason, since 1986, UNITAR has organized more than 100 training sessions in these fields. Between 1999 and 2001, UNITAR has also organized several activities related to disaster reduction including: a dozen training sessions in Africa for national civil servants in the field of land degradation; 10 training workshops for local authorities in Lebanon and Crimea; and sensitization workshops in Kinshasa and southern Caucasus countries for national decision makers in the field of information systems for prevention and disaster reduction. In addition, UNITAR is ready to collaborate with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat to elaborate a specific Strategy training programme for disaster reduction, based on a joint assessment of activities to be carried out by the Strategy secretariat together with its different partners. In this context, UNITAR is willing to establish, within the CIFAL programme, a strong disaster reduction training component for local authorities. Given its long experience in this area, UNITAR is also willing to launch a specific training programme on information systems for disaster reduction. The training programme could focus on developing a specific database based on the harmonization of the collection, processing and analysis of the required data, the establishment of specific modelling and early warning systems, and the strengthening of local capacities.

45. The International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO) has been actively involved in the promotion of activities relevant to disaster reduction. In October 2000, it convened an international conference which adopted a declaration entitled "Civil Defence for Sustainable Development". It has also prepared a Civil Defence International Directory, 2001, which provides information on the institutional arrangements in place in more than 100 countries for managing disasters and emergencies.

V. Institutional arrangements

46. As mentioned earlier in the report, the Inter-Agency Task Force and the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction have been established as the main mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy. These institutional arrangements, which were established by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/219, serve as the hub of an extensive global network in support of disaster reduction, based on the mobilization of the capacities of the various United Nations agencies, the scientific community, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in the Strategy community.

A. Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction

47. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/219 and following the recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/497) on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction was established in early 2001 as the main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for the reduction of natural hazards; for identifying gaps in disaster reduction policies and programmes and recommending remedial action; for ensuring complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction; for providing policy guidance to the Secretariat; and for convening meetings of experts on issues related to disaster reduction.

48. The Inter-Agency Task Force comprises eight representatives of organizations and entities of the United Nations system, six representatives of regional entities and eight representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations. It therefore constitutes an innovative tripartite coalition among these entities. The present composition of the Inter-Agency Task Force, which is chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, is shown in the annex to this report.

49. Since its inception, the Inter-Agency Task Force has held three meetings — in April and October 2000 and in May 2001. Although much time was spent at the first meeting in seeking to clarify the mandate and functions of the Inter-Agency Task Force and its

relationship with the Strategy secretariat, the deliberations at its subsequent meetings have been constructive and have served to identify a number of priority issues in disaster reduction to be addressed by the international community. In carrying out its activities, the Inter-Agency Task Force has established four Working Groups. Working Group 1, which is led by WMO, deals with climate and disasters; Working Group 2, led by UNEP, focuses on early warning; Working Group 3, led by UNDP, deals with risk vulnerability and impact assessment. Working Group 4, which was established at the second meeting of the Task Force, is led by the Global Fire Monitoring Centre (GFMC) located in Freiburg, Germany, and deals with wild land fires.

50. A review of the operation of the working groups suggests that start-up activities in terms of the identification of their membership, agreement on their work programme and the determination of the substantive issues to be addressed required considerable effort on the part of the lead agencies. Moreover, the convening of meetings has been constrained by the lack of resources to fund, among other things, the participation of members of the working groups, particularly from institutions in developing countries. Fortunately, one donor has recently indicated its interest in providing resources to facilitate participation in meetings of the various working groups. This should lead to an improvement in the functioning of the working groups.

51. It should also be pointed out that in carrying out their activities, the working groups have established varying types of working relations with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat. The secretariat has established focal points to provide backstopping for the activities of the working groups. There is growing recognition that all working groups could benefit from even closer contact with the Strategy secretariat and therefore increased emphasis will be placed on further strengthening this relationship in the future.

52. In terms of the composition of the Inter-Agency Task Force, as set out in paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497), it was agreed that the membership of the Inter-Agency Task Force would be rotated on a biennial basis, taking account of both the "continuity of work" and the need to ensure "the uninterrupted participation of relevant key sectors of the United Nations system". The initial decision to

limit United Nations organizations and agencies to eight members on the Inter-Agency Task Force has resulted in the exclusion from its membership of a number of key organizations and agencies that play an active role in disaster reduction. It is proposed, therefore, that in order to ensure the inclusion of all "key sectors" of the United Nations system, the number of this category of members of the Task Force should be expanded to a maximum of 14. In addition, other United Nations organizations and agencies that are not formally designated as members of the Inter-Agency Task Force but that are interested in participating in its meetings, will continue to be eligible to participate on an invitational basis. Moreover, the key United Nations organizations and agencies selected to participate as members of the Inter-Agency Task Force will not be subject to rotation in view of the fact that such organizations, unlike regional entities, civil society and non-governmental organizations, have global mandates for disaster reduction and would therefore need to be engaged on an ongoing basis in promoting the objectives of the Strategy. This will involve a modification of the original formula for determining the composition of the Inter-Agency Task Force, which also envisaged the biennial rotation among all membership categories. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) will continue to select the United Nations agencies that are to participate in the Inter-Agency Task Force on the basis of an expanded representation of these institutions in the Inter-Agency Task Force.

53. Nevertheless, given the large number of regional and civil society organizations, the participation of these entities should be rotated biennially, beginning on 1 January 2002, on a basis that would affect half of the members in each of these two categories. In keeping with the procedure set out in the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497), the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs will continue to designate the representatives of regional institutions. He will also assume responsibility for the designation of the representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations, in view of the fact that the Scientific and Technical Committee of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, which had been assigned this responsibility for the initial selection of these bodies, ceased to exist at the end of the Decade. Moreover, in order to facilitate the participation of regional organizations in the Inter-Agency Task Force, the number of their representatives will be increased

to a maximum of eight. In identifying regional organizations to participate in the Inter-Agency Task Force, special emphasis will be placed on the selection of regional organizations established by Governments which will comprise at least half of the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force falling within this category.

B. Inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

54. Pursuant to the proposal contained in paragraph 21 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/136-E/1999/89) on recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/219, the inter-agency secretariat was established effective 1 January 2000 to carry out the following functions: to serve as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination of strategies and programmes for natural disaster reduction, and to ensure synergy between disaster reduction strategies and those in the socio-economic and humanitarian fields; to support the Inter-Agency Task Force in the development of policies on natural disaster reduction; to promote a worldwide culture of reduction of the negative effects of natural hazards, through advocacy campaigns; to serve as an international clearing house for the dissemination and exchange of information and knowledge on disaster reduction strategies; and to backstop the policy and advocacy activities of national committees for natural disaster reduction. In carrying out these functions, the secretariat has adopted a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary approach to its work in recognition of the cross-cutting nature of disaster reduction initiatives. It has also continued to pay close attention to regional approaches, although, because of financial constraints, it has not been able to establish outreaches in other regions along the lines of the arrangements that exist for Latin America and the Caribbean. The secretariat has formulated, however, a proposal for the establishment of a regional outreach in Africa to be based in an existing institution for which funding is expected to be provided by an interested donor. Similar proposals are being elaborated for Asia and the Pacific.

55. As set out in the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/497, annex), the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat, which is headed by a Director who reports directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, comprises 14 core staff members. In addition, provision is made for the recruitment of a limited number of additional staff to carry out specific initiatives, subject to the availability of funds. Furthermore, WMO has seconded to the secretariat, on a non-reimbursable basis, a senior expert in meteorology. Other agencies are urged to follow the example set by WMO by seconding experts to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat in order to further strengthen its substantive technical capacity, this being necessary if the secretariat is to continue to respond effectively to the increased challenges presented by disasters and also to reinforce its inter-agency character.

56. The experience of the first year of its operation suggests that the current staffing is adequate for carrying out the tasks assigned to the secretariat. It is clear that the year 2000, which represented a transition from the previous International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction arrangements, presented a number of major challenges as the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat sought to clarify the precise nature of its relationship with the Inter-Agency Task Force in terms of their respective mandates. Moreover, the Strategy secretariat was engaged in the important task of ensuring the conceptual development of the Strategy and also in elaborating a programmatic framework for facilitating its implementation.

57. Based on the forging of a collaborative relationship between the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat and the various United Nations organizations and agencies as well as Governments and other members of the disaster reduction community, the second and the third meetings of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, held in October 2000 and May 2001, respectively, proved extremely constructive and succeeded in identifying a number of priority issues to be addressed in advancing the objectives of the Strategy.

58. Paragraph 28 of the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497) had stipulated, *inter alia*, that the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat would function during the initial two-year experimental period "as a flexible and evolving

structure" and "would be reviewed in a process that would start after the first year of operation". In keeping with this provision, based on the review of the experience of the functioning of the Strategy secretariat, the Secretary-General recommends that it should continue to serve as an effective instrument for responding to the challenges posed by the increased incidence and scale of disasters, which, as indicated earlier, pose a major threat to the planet.

59. In keeping with paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497) and paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 54/219, it was agreed that the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat should be funded on an extrabudgetary basis and that the previous Trust Fund for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction should be renamed as the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction for the purpose of receiving voluntary contributions in support of the activities carried out by the secretariat. Since its inception, the Trust Fund has received contributions amounting to US\$ 2.2 million for the biennium 2000-2001, which were provided by eight main donors, namely, Canada, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Norway, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland. More recently, the secretariat has also received a contribution from the Philippines. However, despite the generous contributions provided by these donors, the funding of the Strategy secretariat remains inadequate. Consequently, donors are urged to increase their contributions to the Strategy secretariat, particularly since the amounts contributed to disaster reduction by the international community remain relatively modest.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

60. The above-mentioned analysis suggests that disasters continue to pose a major challenge to the international community, and that both the Inter-Agency Task Force and the inter-agency secretariat, endorsed by General Assembly resolution 54/219, have played an important role in enabling the international community to respond effectively to this challenge.

61. Based on this review, which has been carried out in keeping with the provisions of paragraphs 4 and 13 of the above-mentioned resolution, the Secretary-General wishes to make the following recommendations.

A. Substantive issues

62. The international community should continue to give priority attention to the promotion of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as a common platform for responding to the challenges presented by the increased incidence and scale of disasters.

63. The framework for action, prepared by the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and endorsed by the Inter-Agency Task Force, should serve as the basic guide for the implementation of the Strategy.

64. Governments are requested to support the promotion of national platforms or focal points for disaster reduction.

65. Donors should increase their contributions in support of disaster reduction activities as an investment in protecting lives and avoiding catastrophic economic losses resulting from the destruction of physical assets.

66. The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should launch a 10-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the Yokohama World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction preparatory process beginning in 2002 in order to ensure that a comprehensive assessment is made of progress in disaster reduction with a view to identifying ways of further strengthening the efforts of the international community in support of this objective.

B. Institutional arrangements

1. Inter-Agency Task Force

67. The Inter-Agency Task Force should continue to serve as the main forum for the formulation of policies on disaster reduction and perform the functions assigned to it in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497).

68. The formula for constituting the Inter-Agency Task Force should be modified in order to provide for increased participation of regional organizations as well as ensure the continued membership of the "key United Nations agencies", which, by virtue of their global mandates and their active role in disaster reduction, should continue to be involved on an ongoing basis in the work of the Inter-Agency Task

Force. In this regard, the key strategic agencies that are to participate in the Inter-Agency Task Force, whose number should be increased from 8 to a maximum of 14, should be identified by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). Similarly, the number of regional organizations should be increased to a maximum of eight. One half of the members representing regional institutions and the non-governmental organization community should be rotated on a biennial basis, beginning January 2002. The participants in the Inter-Agency Task Force falling within these latter two categories should be selected by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs following consultations with Governments and a representative member of regional organizations and civil society and non-governmental organizations.

2. Inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

69. The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, which should have established posts, should continue to carry out the functions set out in paragraph 25 of the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497).

70. The secretariat should continue to function as a separate entity reporting directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

71. The secretariat should continue to maintain the staff complement set out in the annex to the Secretary-General's report (A/54/497), subject to any modifications that may be made in future to respond to the changing nature of the challenges to be addressed in the field of disaster reduction.

72. United Nations organizations and agencies should make a special effort to second technical staff to the secretariat with a view to further strengthening the substantive capacity of the secretariat.

73. The secretariat should continue to expand its regional outreach in order to propagate the message of disaster reduction, with special attention to the needs of Africa.

74. The secretariat should continue to promote increased public awareness of the importance of disaster reduction through, among other things, the organization of the annual campaigns on disaster reduction.

75. The secretariat should prepare annual reports on progress made by the United Nations system in advancing the goals of the Strategy and present them to the General Assembly through the appropriate channels.

76. The secretariat should also take the initiative to organize meetings of an informal contact group of permanent missions in Geneva in order to ensure an action-oriented dialogue with Governments on disaster reduction.

77. Donors are urged to increase their contributions to the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in order to provide an optimal level of funding for the secretariat and its activities.

C. General

78. Apart from the annual reports to be submitted to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General also intends to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session through the Council as a basis for determining what modifications, if any, may be necessary in the Strategy, taking into account the recommendations emanating from the proposed 10-year review of the Yokohama conference process.

Notes

¹ A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex I.

² Available at <<http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/safer.htm>>. Accessed on 11 May 2001.

³ Available at <<http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/forum/mandate.htm>>. Accessed on 11 May 2001.

⁴ Third draft (March 2001) available at <<http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/framework.htm>>. Accessed on 11 May 2001.

⁵ Available at <<http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/forum/wmoconc.htm>>. Accessed on 14 May 2001.

⁶ Available at <<http://www.fao.org/docrep/x3550e/x3550e00.htm>>. Accessed on 14 May 2001.

⁷ Available at <<http://www.wfp.org/info/POLICY/Faad3/FAAD3-912ePDF>>, paras. 89-93. Accessed on 14 May 2001.

⁸ See A/CONF.184/6, chap. I, resolution 1, sect. I, para. 1 (b) (ii).

Annex**Inter-Agency Task Force membership, 2000-2001**

Chair (ex officio)	Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
Secretary (ex officio)	Director of the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

United Nations system agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 International Telecommunication Union
 World Meteorological Organization
 United Nations Development Programme
 United Nations Environment Programme
 World Food Programme
 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)

Regional entities

Council of Europe
 Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
 Organization of African Unity
 Organization of American States/Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction
 South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
 Commonwealth of Independent States Inter-State Council
 Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM of Russia)

Civil society and non-governmental organization representatives**Ms. Maritta Koch-Weser**

Former Director-General, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources — World Conservation Union (IUCN)
 Gland, Switzerland

Ms. Eva von Oelreich

Director, Disaster Preparedness Department
 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
 Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Robert Hamilton

Chair, Committee on Disaster Reduction
International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU)
Paris, France

Mrs. Yvonne Dutra Maisonnave

Director, National Direction of Meteorology
Ministry of Defence
Montevideo, Uruguay

Mr. Zadok Znaiidi

Director-General, International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO)
Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Burhani Nyenzi

Project Coordinator
Drought Monitoring Centre (DMC)
Harare, Zimbabwe

Mr. Gerhard Berz

Member of Executive Management,
Munich Reinsurance Company
Munich, Germany

Mr. Toshiyasu Noda

Director for Disaster Preparedness
Cabinet Office
The Government of Japan
Tokyo, Japan

**Fifty-fourth session**

Agenda item 100 (b)

Environment and sustainable development: International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction**International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction:
successor arrangements****Report of the Secretary-General****I. Introduction**

1. The Economic and Social Council, by resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 entitled "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements", requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of that resolution.

2. The present report complements the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, 1990-2000 (A/54/132-1998/80 and Add.1) and on recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the International Decade (A/54/136). It focuses on the specific arrangements that the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to put in place. In particular, it presents the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction which will serve as a framework for the future activities of the United Nations system in this area. It also describes the organizational measures to be taken to implement Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63, including the establishment of an inter-agency task force and a secretariat which would be in place by 1 January 2000.

3. In submitting the present report, the Secretary-General wishes to emphasize the increasing vulnerability of societies to natural hazards, and the importance of adopting preventive strategies and practical measures to reduce the potential loss of human lives resulting from natural disasters. In the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General stated that it is essential that the pioneering work carried out during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction be continued and that the strategy for the new millennium, "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction", had his full support.¹ It is with these considerations in mind that the Secretary-General submits to the General Assembly the present report, concerning successor arrangements to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

II. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

4. Disaster reduction is essentially a medium-term to long-term activity. Through the best use of scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge, it aims to ensure that Governments and civil societies take preventive measures and put in place practices that will safeguard

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societies against the negative impact of future natural and technological disasters. Its success rests on building a culture of prevention, a difficult undertaking since the benefits lie in the distant future and are not immediately tangible.

5. There is an overriding need for a common approach to disaster reduction activities throughout the world through the adoption of a global strategy to guide efforts and initiatives at all levels. The experience gained during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction has shown that successful long-term prevention strategies depend first and foremost on broad-based, cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation.

6. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, which will succeed the programme for the Decade, is contained in the document entitled "A safer world for the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction". The document was adopted at a programme forum for the Decade held in July 1999 by partners in the International Framework of Action for the Decade, which included representatives of Governments, the scientific and technical community, academia and the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council took note of the strategy in its resolution 1999/63.

7. The main objectives of the Strategy are: (a) to enable communities to become resilient to the effects of natural, technological and environmental hazards, thus reducing the compound risk posed to social and economic vulnerabilities within modern societies; and (b) to proceed from protection against hazards to the management of risk, by integrating risk prevention strategies into sustainable development activities.

8. The Strategy is structured around four main goals derived from the above objectives:

(a) To increase public awareness of the risks that natural, technological and environmental hazards pose to modern societies;

(b) To obtain commitments by public authorities to reduce risks to people, their livelihoods, social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources;

(c) To engage public participation at all levels of implementation so as to create disaster-resistant communities through increased partnerships and expanded risk reduction networks at all levels;

(d) To reduce economic and social losses caused by disasters as measured, for example, by gross domestic product.

9. The above objectives are of a broad nature and can serve as a framework for disaster reduction efforts at all levels, from local communities to national, regional and international concerns and interests. Member States and organizations of the United Nations system have begun to set in place strategies, policies and practical measures in the field of disaster reduction. For example, the World Meteorological Organization and the World Bank recently entered into a memorandum of understanding on improved cooperation in the field of disaster reduction. Similarly, the Government of Switzerland, through its Federal Board of Technology Institutes, has established the World Institute for Disaster Management, which facilitates worldwide scientific research and technology in the field of disaster reduction. The United Nations Development Programme has started an operational programme of disaster reduction activities, and the United Nations Environment Programme has strengthened its activities for disaster reduction in the environmental field. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has reaffirmed its commitment to disaster reduction, *inter alia*, in the context of the World Conference on Science, held at Budapest from 26 June to 1 July 1999. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has indicated its continued commitment to disaster reduction in the areas of early warning, prevention, preparedness, risk and impact assessment, response and rehabilitation, and is currently taking steps to strengthen further its capacity in those areas. For its part, the International Council of Scientific Unions has established a subcommittee on disaster reduction and has endorsed a global project for disaster reduction in megacities.

10. In the light of these many initiatives, it is essential that the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction serve as both an overall strategy and as a cooperative effort to promote cost-effective approaches to disaster prevention. The Secretary-General believes that the institutional arrangements established in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 should support that purpose. Consequently, the task force and secretariat will function under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs from 1 January 2000, with the objective of facilitating the implementation of the goals of the International Strategy.

III. Institutional arrangements for the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63

11. In its resolution 1999/63, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to:

(a) Establish, as at January 2000, an inter-agency task force, with representation from all relevant United Nations bodies and members of the scientific and technical community, including regional representation, to serve as the main forum within the United Nations for continued and concerted emphasis on natural disaster reduction, in particular for defining strategies for international cooperation at all levels in this field, while ensuring complementarity of action with other agencies;

(b) Maintain the existing inter-agency secretariat function for natural disaster reduction as a distinct focal point for the coordination of the work of the task force, to place the inter-agency task force and inter-agency secretariat under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and to finance it from extrabudgetary resources through a specific trust fund.

12. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council decided that the international cooperative framework for natural disaster reduction, as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General, should draw on the success of the functional and organizational arrangements that were put in place for the Decade.

13. In anticipation of a decision by the General Assembly on successor arrangements for the Decade, the Secretary-General has included activities related to natural disaster reduction under section 25, Humanitarian assistance, of his proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. For subprogramme 3, Natural disaster reduction, it was noted that pending a decision by the General Assembly on the content and structure of a successor arrangement, it was expected that the secretariat of the Decade would serve as the liaison and coordinating entity for organizations of the United Nations system, as well as for the private sector, with regard to implementation of the disaster reduction strategy for the twenty-first century.

14. Taking into account the considerations in paragraphs 12 and 13 above, and also the ongoing dialogue within the international disaster reduction community in the fields of climate change, scientific research, environment, sustainable development and disaster reduction, the Secretary-General is of the view that the successor

arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction should be flexible in the initial period and adapted as experience is gained. The arrangements would, therefore, need to be reviewed after one year, in consultation with key stakeholders, and the necessary adjustments made.

A. Inter-agency task force

15. By resolution 1999/63, the Economic and Social Council requested that a task force be established as part of the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. This body would serve as the main forum within the United Nations for continued and concerted emphasis on natural disaster reduction. As recommended in paragraph 20 of his report on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities after the conclusion of the Decade (A/54/136), the major functions of the task force would be: (a) to serve as the main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for the reduction of natural hazards; (b) to identify gaps in disaster reduction policies and programmes and recommend remedial action; (c) to ensure complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction; (d) to provide policy guidance to the secretariat; and (e) to convene ad hoc meetings of experts on issues related to disaster reduction.

16. In its work, the task force would follow the guiding principles of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, outlined above. This requires a sound capacity for tracking future disaster trends, as well as maintaining the progress achieved during the Decade, in concert with those partners both inside and outside the United Nations system that contributed to the success of the Decade.

17. In its resolution 1999/63, the Economic and Social Council decided that the international cooperative framework for natural disaster reduction should draw on the success of the functional and organizational arrangements that were put in place for the Decade. Pursuant to that decision, the task force would be composed in such a manner that due consideration would be given to the achievements of and the lessons learned from the following major components of the International Framework of Action (see General Assembly resolution 44/236 of 22 December 1989), even if these bodies cease to exist upon the conclusion of the Decade:

(a) The Scientific and Technical Committee, which ensured, *inter alia*, adequate consideration of overall scientific and technical concerns during the Decade,

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effective integration of existing knowledge and technology in the development of international cooperative activities, and the promotion of future research needs;

(b) The Inter-Agency Steering Committee for the Decade, which provided the platform for dialogue among all relevant organizations of the United Nations system, as well as institutional interests outside the United Nations system, including regional and intergovernmental bodies concerned with disaster reduction;

(c) The informal contact group of permanent missions at Geneva, which ensured an action-oriented dialogue among Governments and the United Nations system on all major issues of disaster reduction after the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in 1994.

18. The task force will seek close cooperation with the national platforms for the Decade, many of which included representation from the community of non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society in general. These platforms should continue, as appropriate, to translate internationally concerted strategies for disaster reduction into coordinated action at the national level, in particular in the areas of advocacy and promotion. Many of these national committees and focal point administrations are already in the process of ensuring their functional continuity in support of the successor arrangements for the Decade, as approved by the Economic and Social Council.

19. In addition, synergies which were developed during the Decade between the cross-sectoral issue of disaster reduction and other major strategies of the United Nations system in the social, economic and environmental fields must be retained and fostered. This relates to the coordinated approach adopted for the follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summit meetings in the social, economic and environmental fields, as well as to their respective plans of action. It relates also to the existing and envisaged coordinating frameworks and mechanisms in the fields of humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, technical cooperation, and environment and climate change. Consequently, there is a need to take into account and develop further the existing interface with inter-agency bodies, such as the Inter-Agency Committee for Sustainable Development, the Inter-Agency Committee on the Climate Agenda, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the relevant subcommittees of the Administrative Committee on Coordination. Emerging platforms, such as the environmental management group proposed in the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human

settlements (A/54/463), which was supported by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999, will need to coordinate their work effectively with that of the task force on disaster reduction. Inter-agency efforts towards improved early-warning capacities for disasters will continue to be an essential component of disaster reduction, and will thus be a key component of the work of the task force.

20. The provisions of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, will have to be taken fully into account in the establishment of the task force for disaster reduction. In paragraph 7 of that resolution, the Council called for the continued and full implementation of the concerted efforts of the United Nations system towards reducing the impact of the El Niño phenomenon as an integral function of the successor arrangements to be made following the conclusion of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

21. The above-mentioned considerations clearly illustrate the challenges of establishing a task force that is broad enough in its membership to encompass all elements of disaster reduction, but at the same time compact enough to work effectively and efficiently.

22. Taking the above-mentioned considerations into account, the Secretary-General will establish, under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, the Task Force for Disaster Reduction with a limited number of core members, including the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs as Chair and the Director of the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction as Secretary. The membership of the Task Force would rotate every two years, in a manner that would ensure both continuity of work and the uninterrupted participation of relevant key strategic sectors of the United Nations system. It would be composed of: (a) eight representatives of organizations and entities of the United Nations system, to be designated by the Administrative Committee on Coordination; (b) eight representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations, to be designated initially by the Scientific and Technical Committee of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction before it comes to a conclusion at the end of 1999; and (c) six representatives from regional entities to be designated by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in consultation with regional groupings and Governments.

23. Interested organizations not designated among the members listed above would be able to participate in the work of the Task Force. Representatives of the inter-agency bodies described in paragraph 19 above would be welcome to participate, as would representatives of Governments which expressed their interest to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Disaster reduction experts would also be welcome to participate on an invitational basis.

24. The Task Force for Disaster Reduction would organize its work as it deems necessary, but it is expected that, in the initial phase, it would meet twice a year. It is also suggested that the Task Force should constitute sub-groups at the expert level to work on specific thematic issues, as and when required. Whenever possible, extensive use would be made of telecommunication technology in order to reduce the number of meetings.

B. Inter-agency secretariat

25. As elaborated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 21 of his report (A/54/136), the key functions of the inter-agency secretariat would be: (a) to serve as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination of strategies and programmes for natural disaster reduction, and to ensure synergy between disaster reduction strategies and those in the socio-economic and humanitarian fields; (b) to support the inter-agency task force in the development of policies on natural disaster reduction; (c) to promote a worldwide culture of reduction of the negative effects of natural hazards, through advocacy campaigns; (d) to serve as an international clearing house for the dissemination and exchange of information and knowledge on disaster reduction strategies; and (e) to backstop the policy and advocacy activities of national committees for natural disaster reduction. In terms of its approach and work, the secretariat would retain its multisectoral character and regional representation.

26. By resolution 1999/63, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to take into consideration the functional and organizational arrangements established for the Decade in maintaining the secretariat for natural disaster reduction in the proposed budget programme for the biennium 2000-2001. The Secretary-General therefore intends to follow the practice of the Decade, maintaining a small secretariat with its members drawn, as appropriate, from the international community of disaster reduction experts and other relative experts, *inter alia*, seconded from competent United

Nations organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations. Secondment of personnel from relevant entities outside the United Nations system would also be welcomed. In this context, the secretariat would welcome the secondment of staff from both within and outside the United Nations system on a non-reimbursable basis. The inter-agency nature of the work of the secretariat is understood to be on the same basis as it was within the context of the Decade, namely, of a substantive, multidisciplinary and intersectoral character, rather than purely institutional.

27. The successful performance of the Regional Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, established in connection with the Decade and located in Costa Rica, shows how cost-effective arrangements for regional representation could be put in place. The Secretary-General would therefore wish to maintain such regional arrangements for the new secretariat.

28. In the light of the above considerations, the secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, as a successor to the secretariat for the Decade, will have a small staff of seven substantive officers and be managed by a director under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Support staff for secretarial work, as well as for administrative and financial issues, will also be provided. The secretariat will be structured along substantive lines so that it can provide corresponding support to the four main areas of work as defined by the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction". Funding for the secretariat will come exclusively from extrabudgetary resources. Staff additional to the core staff mentioned above would be considered on the basis of special funding for specific activities to be carried out by the secretariat in connection with its key functions, as described in paragraph 25 above. As indicated in paragraph 14 above, the secretariat for the International Strategy would function as a flexible and evolving structure with adjustments to be made for the next biennium, and would be reviewed in a process that would start after the first year of operation. More detailed information on the proposed secretariat is contained in the annex to the present report.

29. Pursuant to the decision of the Economic and Social Council that the secretariat be funded from voluntary contributions, the Secretary-General will rename the current Trust Fund for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction as the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and modify the related terms of reference accordingly.

C. Other institutional arrangements

30. The Secretary-General wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that, in its resolution 44/236 by which proclaimed the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the General Assembly decided to designate the second Wednesday of October International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, to be observed annually during the Decade by the international community. The observance of the Day has significantly contributed to raising awareness of disaster reduction in local communities and countries around the world. More than 90 countries have actively participated in such observances on a regular basis in the past decade. Given that the first objective of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is the promotion of public awareness of the issue, and in view of the catalytic nature of such a Day which is celebrated around a common theme throughout the world, the Secretary-General recommends that the annual observance of the International Day for Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October be maintained.

31. Another essential element of the success of the message of the Decade has been the active involvement and support of United Nations resident coordinators in broad-based, multisectoral approaches to disaster reduction at the country level. The Secretary-General therefore recommends that this involvement continue and that the resident coordinators participate actively in the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in close liaison with national platforms, as appropriate. The Secretary-General will also request resident coordinators to assist in the establishment of such platforms where they do not exist.

32. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1999/63, called on all Governments to maintain and strengthen established national and multisectoral platforms for natural disaster reduction in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical means. It is indeed incumbent on each Government to decide on the form and structure of the multisectoral platform in its own country. Given the success of national committees and focal points for the Decade in a large number of countries, the Secretary-General strongly encourages all Governments to take the necessary measures to implement this appeal.

IV. Conclusion: call for support by Member States for disaster reduction activities

33. The numerous devastating earthquakes and floods which took place in many parts of the world in 1999 are reminders of one of the most pressing challenges of our times: the extraordinary increase in the number and extent of disasters. Communities will always have to face natural hazards but recent disasters owe as much to human activity as to the forces of nature. It is therefore incumbent upon the community of nations to ensure that the necessary measures be taken to reduce the loss of life, human suffering and the dilapidation of economic assets when disasters strike. Today, there is an increased need for a shift in emphasis from post-disaster rehabilitation to pre-disaster prevention.

34. The approach outlined in the present report, as well as the institutional arrangements to be introduced or maintained in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63, will go a long way towards building a culture of prevention with regard to natural and technological disasters. Programmes of disaster reduction as well as the institutional arrangements to implement them will, however, not yield the desired results unless there is political will and the necessary resources to support the required measures and policies.

35. The Secretary-General therefore appeals to all Governments, in particular Governments in a position to do so, to increase the level of their support to national, regional and international programmes for disaster reduction, and to establish a better balance between their expenditures on relief activities and those on prevention activities. It is symptomatic that the financial support expected from Member States for the institutional arrangements to be set up for the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 is equivalent to only about 10 per cent of the resources that are expected to be received for disaster response activities. "Prevention pays", according to the slogan used in this year's International Day for Disaster Reduction. This message should be heeded by Governments by increasing the amount of resources provided to prevention activities, including those for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/54/1)*, para. 35.

Annex

Proposed secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

A. Core posts

Office of the Director

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Director | D-2 |
| 2. Special Assistant to the Director for Programme Coordination and Special Initiatives | L-3 |
| 3. Secretary | General Service (Other level) |

Other posts

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 4. Senior Adviser for Policy Issues | L-5 |
| 5. Senior Officer for Inter-agency Liaison | L-5 |
| 6. Awareness and Promotion Issues Officer | L-3 |
| 7. Public Commitment and Policies Issues Officer | L-3 |
| 8. Technical and Scientific Issues Officer | L-3 |
| 9. Economic and Social Issues Officer | L-3 |
| 10. Registry, Mailing and Publications Clerk | General Service (Other level) |
| 11. Secretary | General Service (Other level) |
| 12. Secretary | General Service (Other level) |

Administrative posts (to be financed from the Programme Support Costs Account)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 13. Accounts, Certifying and Fundraising Officer | L-3 |
| 14. Administrative and Financial Clerk | General Service (Other level) |

B. Non-core posts

The intention is to use additional non-core posts, depending on specific initiatives. At the present stage, funding is sought for:

- (a) Specific advocacy and promotional activities, including those at the regional level in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- (b) Specific substantive initiatives, such as early warning, protection of cities against floods and strengthening of the trade capacity of disaster-prone developing countries.

D

General Assembly Resolutions on El Niño

A/RES/57/255	20 December 2002	International Cooperation to reduce the impact of El Niño Phenomenon 72
A/RES/56/194	21 December 2001	International Cooperation to reduce the impact of El Niño Phenomenon 74
A/RES/55/197	20 December 2000	International Cooperation to reduce the impact of El Niño Phenomenon 76
A/RES/54/220	22 December 1999	International Cooperation to reduce the impact of El Niño Phenomenon 78



General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 February 2003

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (b)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.2)]

57/255. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/220 of 22 December 1999, 55/197 of 20 December 2000 and 56/194 of 21 December 2001 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000,

Reaffirming the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and repair the damage caused by natural disasters that result from the El Niño phenomenon,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development¹ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),²

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and announced at the Summit,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;³

2. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Government of Ecuador, in cooperation with the World Meteorological Organization and the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, towards the establishment of the International Centre for the Study of the El Niño Phenomenon at Guayaquil, Ecuador, and the announcement made regarding its opening in

¹ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

² *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

³ A/57/189.

January 2003, and encourages all parties to continue their joint efforts for the development of the Centre;

3. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and the relevant funds, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system, in particular those taking part in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and encourages the international community, to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures to support the establishment of the above-mentioned research Centre at Guayaquil, and invites the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for this purpose, as well as to strengthen, as appropriate, other centres devoted to the study of the El Niño phenomenon;

4. *Encourages* the Centre, once established, to strengthen its links, as appropriate, with national meteorological and hydrologic services of the Latin American region, the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research and the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction, as well as with other relevant regional and global organizations that study climate, such as the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development, the Drought Monitoring Centre and the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, and other relevant centres as appropriate, in order to ensure the effective and efficient use of the available resources;

5. *Invites* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, to ensure that measures needed to address more effectively extreme meteorological and hydrologic events like the El Niño phenomenon are considered appropriately in the 2004 review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action;⁴

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of its resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/220, 55/197 and 56/194 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46, 1999/63 and 2000/33;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*

⁴ A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 January 2002

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 98 (b)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/56/561/Add.2)]

56/194. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/220 of 22 December 1999 and 55/197 of 20 December 2000 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999 and 1999/63 of 30 July 1999, and taking note of Council resolution 2000/33 of 28 July 2000,

Noting that the signing of the memorandum of cooperation between Ecuador and the World Meteorological Organization¹ constitutes a major step in the process for the establishment of an international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon,

Noting also the contributions made by regional and global climate-study organizations and specialized Internet information services, which have led to improved scientific understanding and prediction capabilities in the area of climate variability,

Reaffirming the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and repair the damage caused by natural disasters that result from the El Niño phenomenon,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;²
2. *Commends* the measures adopted by the host country for the establishment of an international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon, and encourages the Government of Ecuador to continue its efforts aimed at the completion of that process;
3. *Encourages* the centre, once established, to strengthen its links with other relevant regional and global climate-study organizations, as well as with Internet

¹ A/C.2/56/2, appendix.

² A/56/76-E/2001/54.

information services, in order to ensure an effective and efficient use of the available resources;

4. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and the relevant United Nations organs, funds and programmes, in particular those taking part in the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and encourages the international community, to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures to support the establishment of the above-mentioned research centre at Guayaquil, Ecuador, and invites the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for that purpose, as well as to strengthen, as appropriate, other centres devoted to the study of the El Niño phenomenon;

5. *Welcomes* the establishment of the working group on climate and disasters, and invites the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction and the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to ensure functional synergies among the working groups dealing with climate variability, social and economic vulnerability, and the effectiveness of early warning systems;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of its resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/220 and 55/197 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46, 1999/63 and 2000/33;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*90th plenary meeting
21 December 2001*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 February 2001

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 95

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/55/582/Add.8)]

55/197. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998 and 54/220 of 22 December 1999 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999 and 1999/63 of 30 July 1999, and taking note of Council resolution 2000/33 of 28 July 2000,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,¹

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation for a better scientific understanding of the El Niño phenomenon and that international cooperation and solidarity with the affected countries are indispensable,

Reaffirming also the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and repair the damage caused by natural disasters resulting from the El Niño phenomenon,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General;¹

2. *Also takes note with appreciation* of the measures adopted in order to ensure the continuity of international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, within the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and reiterates its invitation to Member States, organs and organizations of the United Nations system, contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of its resolution 52/200;

3. *Welcomes* the establishment of the working group on the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon within the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction;

4. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and the relevant United Nations organs, funds and programmes, in particular those taking part in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and the international community to adopt, as appropriate, the

¹A/55/99-E/2000/86.

necessary measures for the prompt establishment of the international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon at Guayaquil, Ecuador, and invites the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for that purpose, in accordance with resolution 54/220;

5. *Invites* the Government of the host country to facilitate the process for the prompt establishment of the international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of its resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/219 and 54/220 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46, 1999/63 and 2000/33;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2001, on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*87th plenary meeting
20 December 2000*

UNITED
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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/54/220
8 February 2000

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 100 (b)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.2)]

54/220. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997 and 53/185 of 15 December 1998 on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, and taking note of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, on the same subject, and 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 on the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Recalling also paragraph 20 of the report of the Secretary-General on successor arrangements for the Decade,¹

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon² and the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its seventh session,³

Having also considered the report on the conclusions and recommendations of the first Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts on El Niño, held at Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 9 to 13 November

¹ A/54/497.

² A/54/135-E/1999/88.

³ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 9 (E/1999/29).*

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1998,⁴ and the feasibility study for the establishment of an international research centre on the El Niño/Southern Oscillation,⁵

Reaffirming the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and rehabilitate the damage caused by natural disasters resulting from the El Niño phenomenon,

Taking into account the considerations in relation to the use of tele-observation systems on weather forecast and climate contained in the report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held at Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999,⁶

1. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General,² and endorses the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;
2. *Welcomes* the 1999 retrospective report on the El Niño/Southern Oscillation prepared by the World Meteorological Organization;
3. *Reiterates* its invitation to Member States in paragraphs 8 and 9 of resolution 52/200 in relation to the technical and financial assistance needed to strengthen the national capacity of developing countries to support observation and research systems at the global and regional levels to prevent, mitigate and repair the damage caused by the El Niño/Southern Oscillation;
4. *Welcomes* the recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventh session regarding the approach that the United Nations system and the international community should take in dealing with the El Niño/Southern Oscillation,⁷ and reiterates its invitation to Member States to cover the impact of the El Niño/Southern Oscillation in their annual national reports;
5. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General, the relevant United Nations organizations and the international community to take the necessary measures, as appropriate, to establish an international research centre on El Niño at Guayaquil, Ecuador, invites the international community to provide financial, technical and scientific assistance and cooperation for this purpose, and encourages the centre, once established, to strengthen its links with other relevant regional and global climate-study organizations and to focus on the practical application of information regarding El Niño in such areas as disaster preparedness, agriculture, health, tourism, water and energy;
6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to promote the full implementation of its resolutions 52/200 and 53/185 as an integral part of the agreed arrangements after the conclusion of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

⁴ See A/C.2/53/10.

⁵ A/54/135-E/1999/88, annex II.

⁶ A/CONF.184/6.

⁷ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 9 (E/1999/29), decision 7/1, para. 34.*

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7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, through the Commission on Sustainable Development at its eighth session and the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2000, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, under the agenda item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*87th plenary meeting
22 December 1999*



I

E

Economic and Social Council Resolutions on El Niño

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Resolutions and Decisions of the Economic and Social Council

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New York, 28 February, 9 March, 3, 10 and 12 May and 16 June 2000

Substantive session of 2000
New York, 5-28 July 2000

Resumed substantive session of 2000
New York, 18 and 30 October and 22 November 2000

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 2000
Supplement No. 1



United Nations • New York, 2001

Resolutions and Decisions of the Economic and Social Council

note by the President of the Security Council of 17 April 2000,¹⁰⁸

Taking note of the note by the Secretariat,¹⁰⁹

Taking note also of section VII, on assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations, of the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1999,¹¹⁰

1. *Takes note* of the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions,¹¹¹ in particular sections IV and V thereof;

2. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General¹¹² containing a summary of the deliberations and main findings of the ad hoc expert group meeting on developing a methodology for assessing the consequences incurred by third States as a result of preventive or enforcement measures and on exploring innovative and practical measures of international assistance to the affected third States, and invites States and relevant international organizations within and outside the United Nations system which have not yet done so to provide their views regarding the report of the ad hoc expert group meeting;

3. *Reaffirms* the important role of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination in mobilizing and monitoring, as appropriate, the economic assistance efforts of the international community and the United Nations system to States confronted with special economic problems arising from the carrying out of preventive or enforcement measures imposed by the Security Council and, as appropriate, in identifying solutions to the special economic problems of those States;

4. *Decides* to continue consideration of this question, under the item entitled "Economic and environmental questions", taking into account the relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

*45th plenary meeting
28 July 2000*

54/220 of 22 December 1999 and Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999 and 1999/63 of 30 July 1999,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,¹¹³

Reiterating that the coordination function of the Council is to give guidance to its functional commissions on natural disaster reduction within the overall context of sustainable development strategies,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General,¹¹³ and expresses its willingness to study them;

2. *Welcomes* the steps taken to ensure the continuity of international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon within the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

3. *Notes with satisfaction* the establishment of the working group on El Niño/La Niña within the Inter-agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction;

4. *Recognizes* the contribution to the research on the El Niño phenomenon made by existing institutions, including the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction, the Pan-American Health Organization and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies;

5. *Invites* the international community to provide technical, financial and scientific cooperation for the prompt establishment of the international centre for research on El Niño in Guayaquil, Ecuador, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/220, and also invites the host country to facilitate the process of establishing the centre;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of General Assembly resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/219 and 54/220, and Council resolutions 1999/46 and 1999/63.

*45th plenary meeting
28 July 2000*

2000/33. International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/219 and

¹⁰⁸ S/2000/319.

¹⁰⁹ E/2000/45.

¹¹⁰ E/2000/53.

¹¹¹ A/54/383 and Add.1.

¹¹² A/53/312.

2000/34. Report of the Committee for Development Policy

The Economic and Social Council,



Recalling section B of annex I to its resolution 1998/46 of 31 July 1998, in which it decided that the Council should decide on an appropriate programme of work for the Committee for Development Policy,

Recalling also its resolution 1998/39 of 30 July 1998 on the status of the least developed countries, its resolution 1999/67 of 16 December 1999 on the report of the Committee and its decision 1999/290 of 26 October 1999 on the consideration of

¹¹³ A/55/99-E/2000/86.

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Reports of the Secretary-General on El Niño

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- A/57/189 *11 July 2002*
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the impact of El Niño Phenomenon.
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- A/55/99-E/2000/86 *30 June 2000*
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Fifty seventh session

Item 89 (b) of the preliminary list*

**Environment and sustainable development:
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction**

**International cooperation to reduce the impact of the
El Niño phenomenon**

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report provides an overview of activities undertaken at the global, regional and national levels in support of the objectives set out by the General Assembly to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts related to climate variabilities, such as El Niño (see General Assembly resolution 56/194).

The report argues in favour of strong support to ongoing activities to ensure synergy between science, technology and the United Nations system in order to further improve the understanding of the effects of El Niño, the prediction of potential impacts and the development of preventive measures. In the same vein, capacity-building programmes need to include the development of integrated disaster risk management plans, including such areas as risk assessment, early warning systems, training and public awareness programmes, and transfer of technical knowledge, as well as emergency response management with recovery resources, including the strengthening of community-based organizations to deal with climate variability.

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

** The present report was submitted to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services on 11 July 2002, after extensive consultations with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other organizations involved in the finalization of the current report.

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The report recommends the undertaking of reviews of ongoing programmes on both the El Niño phenomenon and the strengthening of early warning systems. Those reviews should be part of the planned 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action, which was endorsed by the General Assembly to take place in 2004. The report also recommends that the international community continue to support the establishment of an international centre for the study of El Niño in Ecuador, as called for in General Assembly resolution 56/194. Finally, the report emphasizes the need to take full stock of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to maintain coordination of the information flow concerning El Niño.

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I. Introduction

1. Of all abnormal weather and climatic events, the El Niño phenomenon is perhaps the most likely to lead to extensive natural hazards with the potential to seriously affect humankind. That assertion is well supported by the outcomes of the 1997-1998 El Niño, which is now generally recognized to have been one of the most intense and devastating in recorded history. Although the present report uses the term "El Niño", it should be noted that the specific changes in weather and climate patterns across the Pacific Ocean and the associated ocean-atmosphere processes are referred to as the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO). The other extreme of the Southern Oscillation is associated with colder than normal waters over the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and a piling up of warm waters in the west, and is referred to as a La Niña event. The two extremes are often referred to as the warm and cold phases, respectively, of ENSO, indicating that they appear to be part of a single phenomenon.

2. Since the previous El Niño phenomenon occurred five years ago (1997-1998) and El Niño events, during the last 30 years, have reappeared at varying intensities about four to six years apart, there is an increased probability of an El Niño event developing in the near future. Throughout 2001 and 2002, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Research Institute (IRI) of Columbia University produced *El Niño Outlooks*,¹ as a contribution to the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. Although uncertainties remain, the earlier consolidated statements (August 2001 and March 2002) considered the large-scale situation to be favourable for El Niño development in 2002. The *El Niño Outlook* of June 2002 stated that developments in the equatorial Pacific represented a significant progression towards the formation of a basin-wide El Niño event. Those statements are an early warning for organization and public authorities at all levels to strengthen their preparedness capacities and contingency planning in the face of raised expectations of an increased range of variability in climate related phenomena, especially in tropical and subtropical regions of the world, which could result in the disruption of normal rainfall and temperature patterns, including increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme events, such as floods, droughts, tropical cyclones and ensuing landslides.

II. Institutional background

3. In its resolution 54/219, the General Assembly endorsed the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as the international framework for addressing the challenge posed by the growing incidence and scale of disasters and their long-term social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable countries worldwide, in particular in developing countries. In particular, Member States took note that the considerable recent advances in seasonal weather and climate predictions, including such phenomena as El Niño, allow for improved preparedness of vulnerable communities. This highlighted the importance of a visible focal point within the United Nations system for scientific and technical aspects of natural disaster preparedness, prevention and mitigation.

4. In its resolution 56/194, the General Assembly also took note of the measures adopted in order to ensure the continuity of international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon within the framework of the Strategy. In that context, the General Assembly invited countries, intergovernmental organizations and all those participating in the Strategy to provide technical and financial assistance, including national capacity-building, to developing countries to support global and regional observation system and research, including the dissemination of data on El Niño, in order to prevent, mitigate and redress the negative effects of the phenomenon.

5. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction was established in 2000 as the main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for the reduction of natural hazards; to identify gaps in disaster reduction policies and programmes and recommend remedial action; to ensure complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction; to provide policy guidance to the Secretariat; and to convene meetings of experts on issues related to disaster reduction. In carrying out its activities, the Task Force established four working groups: Working Group I, led by WMO, deals with climate and disasters; Working Group II, led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), focuses on early warning; Working Group III, led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), deals with risk vulnerability and impact assessment; and Working Group IV, which is led by the Global Fire

Monitoring Centre, deals with wildland fires. In its same resolution, the General Assembly welcomed the establishment of the working group on climate and disasters at its fifty-sixth session, which has continued the work initiated by the inter-agency task force on El Niño.

III. Related activities

6. The previous report of the Secretary-General on this subject matter (A/56/76), provided an overview of a number of activities carried out at the global, regional and national levels in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 52/200 and aimed at reducing the impact of future El Niño phenomena and similar climatic variables. The activities described relate to the study of lessons learned from the 1997-1998 El Niño event, both from a scientific and technical perspective and the application of seasonal to interannual forecasts and the related societal efforts to reduce vulnerability. The report described in particular:

- Working Group I on climate and disasters, led by WMO, set up to ensure that climate-time-scale factors are appropriately incorporated in the work carried out under the Strategy.
- The first Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts on El Niño, held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 9 to 13 November 1998.
- The scientific and technical analysis of the 1997-1998 El Niño event, prepared by WMO, with additional financial and technical support from UNEP, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Council for Science.
- A project to assess the impact of the El Niño event on 16 developing countries around the world, carried out by UNEP, WMO, the National Centre for Atmospheric Research, the United Nations University and the Strategy secretariat.
- The World Climate Programme/Climate Information and Prediction Services project, which is developing a coherent, global framework for effective operational seasonal to interannual climate prediction and dissemination to serve national meteorological and hydrological services.

- The climate outlook forums and the findings of the global review of regional climate outlook forums.
- The extreme climate events programme run by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, in collaboration with the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and with the support of the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.
- An agreement for a study on the prediction and amelioration of economic impacts of El Niño southern oscillation in Latin America and the Caribbean countries, signed in September 1999 by the Inter-American Development Bank and WMO.
- A regional workshop to assess climate variability impacts on water resources, which was convened by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, and held in Nadi, Fiji, in October 1999, and supported by the British High Commission (Fiji), UNEP, NOAA, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and WMO.

7. Other activities mentioned in the previous report that bridge the gap between forecasts and end users included the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme START Climatic Variability and Agriculture Protection project. A European project, Promoting the Information Society in Europe, has a major component on agricultural applications, and a number of pilot projects around the world have been arranged by NOAA and IRI, and a number of activities have been undertaken by the Pacific ENSO Application Centre in Hawaii, the Agricultural Production Systems Research Unit, in Queensland, Australia, and national meteorological services in a number of countries.

IV. Recent developments

8. A number of the activities described above have been further developed and new processes are being undertaken. A number of international, regional and national organizations and institutions have been strengthening their capacities and developing programmes in support of the goals and objectives established under the Strategy, to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon.

9. Task Force Working Group I (climate and disasters) has taken on the responsibility for ensuring that accurate information on processes leading to El Niño and related events is provided to the members of the Task Force. That information, provided through consolidated *El Niño Outlooks*, is then available for wider distribution through the institutional networks of the Task Force members and the Strategy secretariat.

10. In late 2001, data relating to the equatorial Pacific region showed a number of precursors of conditions that might lead to the development of an El Niño event during the following months. In January 2002, consultations were initiated by the Working Group among major operational meteorological centres and research institutions around the world that were monitoring and generating predictions on those developments. In early February 2002, the first of a series of *El Niño Outlooks* was prepared by WMO, in collaboration with IRI. That *Outlook* and subsequent bulletins were distributed to national meteorological and hydrological services and members of the Task Force. Early signals did not point to an event of the severity of the El Niño of 1997-1998. Nonetheless, weather conditions characteristic of El Niño events were subsequently observed along the equatorial coastal regions of South America, including a number of heavy rainfall and flooding episodes, with consequential loss of life, in Ecuador, Peru and Chile. Drier conditions were also observed to be developing in some areas further westward in the Pacific, such as across the Philippines and parts of eastern Australia, which is another distinguishing feature of an El Niño event.

11. In addition to preparing the *El Niño Outlook* bulletins, the Working Group provided briefing sessions for agencies and organizations of the Strategy network to apprise them of recent developments with regard to possible future emergency response and relief.

12. Task Force Working Groups I (climate and disasters) and III (risk, vulnerability and impact assessment) are developing stronger inter-agency cooperation in this area. One proposal relates to the correlation of climate and disaster databases for four to six countries which are exposed to El Niño-related events. The objective is to identify a pattern of relationship between climate impact and disaster databases, which will help to generate more reliable forecasts and credible information on risks at the

national and local levels. The programme will network with the institutions which have established research programmes for studying El Niño, and will build upon their investigations and databases of climate risks.

13. Working Group IV (wildland fire) has produced a report on wildland fires and international cooperation to reduce the impacts of the El Niño phenomenon. The report recognizes that in some regions of the tropics and subtropics, ENSO phenomenon leads to an increase of the duration and intensity of fire seasons. Possible consequences are:

(a) An increase in number of fire occurrences and change of fire behaviour due to decreasing moisture content of vegetation and an increase of fuel consumption and fire intensity;

(b) More fires of extreme intensity and impacts (fire severity);

(c) The effects of ecosystem changes due to climate change, coupled with changing fire regimes, will lead to an overall change of vegetation cover, possibly resulting in a loss of forest cover;

(d) Peat and swamp biomes will become increasingly vulnerable to fire. Wildfires penetrating into organic layers will result in destruction of ecosystems and biodiversity and lead to the release of radioactive carbon to the atmosphere.

14. The report calls for measures to cope with drought and fire on different time scales, and includes examples of successful local-to-global early warning and monitoring systems of fire that assist in improving preventive and preparedness measures.

15. The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with UNEP and WMO and supported by the Global Fire Monitoring Centre (GFMC), has issued comprehensive guidelines for Governments and responsible authorities on actions to be taken when their population is exposed to smoke from fires. The WHO-UNEP-WMO *Health Guidelines for Vegetation Fire Events: Guideline Document* gives information on vegetation fires at the global, regional and national levels. The *Guidelines* give insights into acute and chronic health effects of air pollution due to biomass burning, advice on effective public communications and mitigation measures, and guidance for assessing the health impacts of vegetation fires. They also provide measures on how to reduce the burden of mortality and preventable disability suffered,

particularly by the poor, and on the development and implementation of an early air pollution warning system.

16. GFMC was established in Freiburg, Germany, in response to the fire and smoke episode during the El Niño of 1997-1998. GFMC started its operations as a contribution of Germany to the International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction. As its Convener, GFMC supports the efforts of the Task Force Working Group IV (wildland fires) to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer and capacity-building in the area of fire management to regions with high risk of drought during an El Niño event. The working group cooperates closely with Working Group II (early warning), led by UNEP.

17. The Guayaquil declaration proposed immediate actions to evaluate the feasibility to establish an international research centre for the El Niño/Southern Oscillation. In February 1999, WMO organized a mission to Ecuador to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of such a centre. In its resolution 54/220 on international cooperation to reduce the negative impacts of the El Niño phenomenon, the General Assembly called upon the relevant United Nations organizations and the international community to take the necessary measures, as appropriate, to establish such a centre. In September 2001, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between WMO and the Government of Ecuador. It establishes a trust fund, of which WMO is the trustee, to begin the necessary actions for the creation of the centre. In April 2002, another mission was conducted in order to advance the establishment of an international research centre for El Niño in Guayaquil. That mission was organized by WMO and supported by the Strategy secretariat, in response to General Assembly resolution 56/194. The mission met with representatives of key international, regional and national institutions based in Quito and Guayaquil. The results indicated that there was sufficient support to proceed as soon as possible with the establishment of the centre in Guayaquil in 2002 (see annex).

18. UNDP has provided emergency assistance in the wake of El Niño-related disasters to such countries as Peru, Ecuador, Cost Rica, Somalia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Many of those emergency programmes have evolved to address the secondary and indirect effects of El Niño. In addition, those operations have provided opportunities to develop a

capacity for prevention, preparedness and mitigation at the national and community levels. UNDP developed a joint project through which Peru and Ecuador together obtained updated maps of high-risk areas from satellite imagery, and supplemented that with database information to show the degree of vulnerability in terms of, inter alia, population, major infrastructure, housing, schools and health centres. UNDP is supporting two regional projects in the Caribbean and Central America for capacity-building in the area of disaster risk reduction. In both the programmes, UNDP has emphasized the component of monitoring and reducing climate risks related to El Niño.

19. In the context of the regular convening of tripartite meetings between the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Strategy secretariat, a proposal related to increasing cooperation for specific steps to reduce and mitigate the impact of El Niño events is being developed. It envisages multi-year country programmes, under which a number of interventions aimed at improving national capacities, databases, risk information, contingency planning and public awareness will be promoted.

20. Finally, the draft plan of implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development notes that an integrated, multi-hazard, inclusive approach to address vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, is an essential element of a safer world in the twenty-first century. In particular, it calls for action at all levels to develop and strengthen capacity to collect and disseminate scientific and technical information, including the improvement of early warning systems for predicting extreme weather events, especially El Niño/La Niña, through the provision of assistance to institutions devoted to addressing such events, including the International Centre for the Study of the El Niño Phenomenon.

V. Other ongoing activities

21. Starting in November 2000, based on a joint decision by their Presidents, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela launched the Regional Andean Programme for Risk Reduction and Disaster Prevention (PREANDINO). The 1997-1998 El Niño affected significantly the welfare and economic development of those countries. The Andean

Development Community (CAF) received a first mandate from the Presidents of member countries, who met in Guayaquil in 1998, to carry out an assessment of the socio-economic impact of the disasters that resulted from El Niño with a view to strengthening prevention. Many institutions from each country participated in the effort, producing a set of policy recommendations and suggestions for projects to respond to future events. Based on the results of the assessment and the lack of disaster reduction components in the Andean nations' sustainable development policies, in 1999 CAF was again entrusted by the Presidents with the task of supporting the institutional strengthening required at the regional level to achieve that objective and build capacity in risk management by promoting collaboration across national borders.

22. The general objective of the programme is to promote and support the design of national and sectoral risk mitigation policies and of institutional arrangements aimed at incorporating prevention into development planning. The ministries of planning or their equivalent are spearheading the programme at the national level in consideration of the fact that prevention plans and programmes should fall within development planning and policy-making. In July 2001, it was agreed that the national platforms for risk reduction and disaster prevention that have been set up or strengthened within the PREANDINO framework would become the Strategy focal points for cooperation and integration in that subregion.

23. Since its establishment in 1989, the Drought Monitoring Centre in Nairobi has played an important and useful role in providing the subregion with weather and climate advisories, including prediction and early warnings on severe climate events, such as floods and droughts. The Centre is also working with other partners to address how to optimize the use of climate information and prediction products through day-to-day operations, user-specific workshops and pilot application projects. The Centre and the Great Horn of Africa National Meteorological and Hydrological Services provide 10-day, monthly and seasonal climate monitoring, prediction and early warning products. They also provide updates on any major past, current and anticipated extreme regional climate events. For example, due to the potential of El Niño development later in 2002, the Centre, WMO and the Great Horn of Africa Services started, in April 2002, to issue a

regional climate watch to disseminate updated climate information to partners, collaborators and users.

24. The Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research is supporting a number of projects related to climate change and variability in the Asia and Pacific region. Those projects aim to integrate scientific findings with social and economic factors, and to provide inputs for policy-making and implementation.

VI. Conclusions

25. **The impacts related to climate variability, such as the El Niño phenomenon, are hindering efforts undertaken at all levels towards sustainable development. It is therefore imperative to strengthen active collaboration and generate synergy between science, technology and operational entities within the United Nations system to improve the understanding of the effects of El Niño, the prediction of potential impacts and the development of preventive actions. In addition, national capacity-building needs to include development-integrated disaster risk management plans, including risk assessment, early warning systems, training and public awareness programmes and transfer of technical knowledge, as well as emergency response management and recovery resources. Community-based organizations should be strengthened to deal with climate variability and its impacts.**

26. **The activities and initiatives described in the present report build on the increasing capacity to predict global climate patterns, improvements in weather forecasting and the availability of other climate information. It is an ongoing requirement for organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations to adopt a comprehensive approach to reducing the impact of El Niño and related phenomena, and to intensify their cooperation with the affected regions with special reference to small island developing States and landlocked countries, in consonance with the spirit of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.**

27. **The increase in the scientific understanding of the cause of seasonal to interannual climate variability is due in large part to the sustained availability of real-time "in situ" and remotely**

sensed data from the current ENSO observing system in the Pacific region. Those data are essential for further model development. However, continued progress in filling the existing gaps in our knowledge depends on maintaining and improving observing systems globally, especially the enhancement of "in situ" observing systems in the tropical regions of the Atlantic and Indian Ocean basins.

28. A timely opportunity is provided by the fact that in 2002, the Strategy secretariat has started preparations for the 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation, and its Plan of Action, which were adopted by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Yokohama in 1994. The review, which was endorsed by the General Assembly (see A/56/76), is expected to provide an opportunity to assess the state of disaster reduction worldwide, help to identify gaps and means of implementation, and chart the course of action for the decade to come, taking account of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

VII. Recommendations

Recommendation 1

29. The Strategy secretariat, supported by the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, should continue ensuring that policies adopted under the Strategy to reduce the negative impacts caused by climate anomalies, such as El Niño, are recognized as an integral part of sustainable development plans of action and policies at all levels, in particular concerning the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Activities launched under the Strategy to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon and other climate variabilities should take account of relevant Summit outcomes, as well as relevant sustainable development conventions, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.

Recommendation 2

30. The forthcoming 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action should include a full thematic review on the status of progress achieved in meeting the targets set out in the Guayaquil declaration (1998). In particular, the thematic review should assess efforts undertaken by the international community to enhance its capacity to use climate-related data and information to increase resilience to related extreme events.

Recommendation 3

31. In the same spirit, the 10-year review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action should include thematic reviews of the work accomplished five years after the Potsdam Conference on Early Warning (1998). The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and its working groups should support that process, in particular through collaborative efforts, which should also involve collaboration with Governments, agencies and other entities concerned.

Recommendation 4

32. In keeping with the findings of the mission led by WMO with the support of the Strategy secretariat and the memorandum of cooperation between WMO and the Government of Ecuador of September 2001, the relevant United Nations organizations and the international community should, as appropriate, provide scientific, technical and financial assistance to support the establishment of an international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon and other regional and subregional institutions and networks devoted to addressing the problems caused by natural disasters, mainly those associated with extreme weather events linked to climate change, as recommended in General Assembly resolution 56/194.

Recommendation 5

33. United Nations agencies and organizations, supported by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, in particular through its working groups, should strengthen the coordination of the information flow on the development of the El Niño event, which has proved valuable for a

wider audience seeking an authoritative voice on the event, including predictions of its likely course over time.

Recommendation 6

34. The General Assembly should be apprised at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, of ongoing efforts to increase international cooperation to reduce the impact of El Niño.

Notes

¹ *El Niño Outlooks* are a collaborative effort between WMO and IRI; they draw on contributions from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, the China Meteorological Administration, the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts, IRI, the Japan Meteorological Agency, the Korea Meteorological Administration, the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research of New Zealand, the Met Office of the United Kingdom, the United States Climate Prediction Center, the Centre for Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Studies, and the Climate Variability and Predictability (CLIVAR) Project of the World Climate Research Programme.

Annex

Summary of a report entitled "Towards the International Research Center for El Niño in Guayaquil, Ecuador"

1. General Assembly resolution 52/200 on the international cooperation to reduce the negative impacts of El Niño phenomenon, the Guayaquil Declaration proposed immediate actions to evaluate the feasibility to establish an International Research Centre for the El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO). In February 1999, WMO organized a mission to Ecuador to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of such a centre. In September 2001, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between WMO and the Government of Ecuador, establishing a trust fund, of which WMO is the trustee, to begin the necessary actions for the creation of the centre. In April 2002, another mission was conducted in order to advance the establishment of a centre in Guayaquil. That mission was organized by WMO and supported by the secretariat of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction in response to General Assembly resolution 56/194. The mission met with representatives of key international, regional and national institutions based in Quito and Guayaquil. The results indicated that there was sufficient support to proceed as soon as possible with the establishment of the centre in Guayaquil in 2002.
2. The functions identified by the joint mission for the centre are the following:
 - The centre is to be an international research centre, using the increased scientific capabilities of producing useful forecasts up to a season or more in advance in areas affected by the ENSO phenomenon, with a special focus on the eastern equatorial Pacific and the western countries of South America.
 - The centre should also be designed to have direct benefits in the region, deriving from the development of regional databases for applications that would benefit many social and economic sectors, including agriculture, health and water resources. Through the provision of seasonal forecasts and El Niño-La Niña warnings and advisories, the centre would also promote actions for disaster risk reduction.
 - For the best utilization of the warnings and advisories, scientific data must be converted into information products that are relevant to particular sectors. A core unit in the centre should be responsible for carrying out that work, in collaboration with other national, regional and international institutions. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its regional office could contribute to such activity.
3. The centre should be thought of as a means to conduct a regional project that addresses four major needs:
 - (a) Early warning systems for disaster loss reduction;
 - (b) Adaptation to climate change and variability;
 - (c) Transboundary water issues (coastal and shared waterbeds);
 - (d) Sustainable development and institutional capacity-building.
4. Activities that could be undertaken by the centre include the down-scaling of global-scale climate modelling experiments from around the world and interpreting the results for the region, and generating and facilitating access to regional and global databases on meteorological, oceanographic, chemical and biological parameters. Collaboration among official (government) agencies and academic institutions through the centre would demonstrate the value of better information products through the application of sound scientific principles. The centre could also support educational and training activities in the region based on the experience of scientists from Latin America and the rest of the world.
5. Activities in the Andean region imply a growing capability and sense of cooperation between institutions, suggesting that the time is right to establish an institution in Guayaquil that will bring those various activities together in a more formal way. The capability to make productive use of ENSO predications is growing. The centre and its outreach activities promise to yield synergies and many benefits

for the region. On the national level, the above-mentioned memorandum of cooperation between Ecuador and WMO established a technical committee which will provide relevant advice on operational activities. Scientific developments indicate that enough is already known to provide useful advisory services, but that further research conducted by the centre, both locally and globally, would be valuable, in order to promote concrete actions for the reduction of El Niño phenomenon impacts.

6. It has been proposed that the centre be implemented in a phased approach, the first phase of which would cover the period 2002 to mid-2003. Specific activities during that phase would include a decision and work on securing satisfactory accommodation facilities; the selection of initial core staff; formation of an International Advisory Board to facilitate, inter alia, the selection of a director for the centre; the installation of effective data-communication systems; the negotiation of cooperative arrangements with other centres; the initiation of an operational seasonal forecasting system and continuation of research on seasonal forecasts to underpin advisory services for various economic sectors by national and academic institutions; and the establishment of an information and communication function.

7. A number of relevant activities are already well under way, and it is recommended that emphasis be placed on the formation of an international board in time for a centre stakeholder workshop to be held towards the end of 2002. It is further recommended that the Member States of the United Nations consider the possibility of financially supporting activities to be carried out by the centre.

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**International cooperation to reduce the impact of the
El Niño phenomenon**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/220 and 55/197. The report builds on previous reports of the Secretary-General on this subject (A/53/487, A/54/135-E/1999/88, and A/55/99-E/2000/86) and reviews ongoing activities designed to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, as well as the initial recommendations of the Working Group on Climate and Disasters, which has been established under the leadership of the World Meteorological Organization. These recommendations include the need for the effective coordination of information flows between different agencies of the United Nations system on future El Niño events.

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I. Background

1. The term El Niño, although not rigorously defined,¹ is associated with a major warming of the surface layers of the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. An El Niño event occurs when warm water flows eastward from the warm pool of the western tropical Pacific Ocean and there is a reduction in upwelling of cold water in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and along the Pacific coast of the Americas. Once initiated, typically during the late Northern Hemisphere spring or early summer, an El Niño event typically lasts about a year, although associated climate anomalies in some parts of the globe may persist. Of all abnormal weather and climatic events, the El Niño is perhaps the phenomenon most likely to lead to extensive natural hazards with the potential to seriously affect humankind. This assertion is well supported by the outcomes of the 1997/98 El Niño, which is now generally recognized as one of the most intense and devastating in recorded history. Nonetheless, in a number of locations commonly affected by El Niño events, notably in Southern Africa and Australia, its impacts were not as severe as the previous El Niño of 1982/83. These differences attest to the complexity of the natural climate system, in which even the effects of the El Niño phenomenon can be modulated significantly by the different rhythm of other varying physical processes that are linked to the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

2. The shifting of seasonal weather patterns triggered by the 1997/98 El Niño event produced climate extremes over many parts of the globe, often with major social and economic impacts. More than 24,000 lives were lost because of the intense storms, producing high winds, floods and storm tides, that occurred during this period. Overall, it is estimated that 110 million people were affected, including more than 6 million people who were displaced as community infrastructures, including housing, food storage, transport and communications, were lost during storms. The direct value of losses exceeded 34 billion United States dollars. While the waterlogging of fields led to reduced agricultural production in many parts of the world, in other regions the absence of the usual seasonal storms and rains led to prolonged dry spells, loss of crops and reduction in water supplies. Furthermore, increased incidence of disease occurred due to the prolonged disruption to weather and rainfall patterns, which resulted in contamination of water

supplies and a more favourable environment for disease-carrying insect vectors.

3. The intense 1997/98 El Niño event was rapidly replaced by La Niña conditions, which set in during the latter half of 1998, prevailed through 1999 and continued into 2001. This La Niña phase appears to have brought its own set of disasters in many areas of the world. A thorough analysis, such as that carried out on the preceding La Niña phase, has not, however, yet been undertaken. As of April 2001, there is evidence beginning to emerge of a shift in ENSO signals in the Equatorial Pacific from the remnant weak (cool) La Niña conditions of the past several months towards the (warm) El Niño phase. The timing in the annual cycle is propitious for such a shift. It is also four years since the last event and El Niño events, during the last 30 years, have reappeared at varying intensities around four to six years apart.

II. Institutional context

4. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 52/200 on 18 December 1997, the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño was created within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. The Task Force provided a platform for combining efforts to improve understanding of the El Niño phenomenon, disseminating early warnings prior to the events and providing technical assistance for capacity-building resources to Member States threatened or affected by El Niño/La Niña-related disasters.

5. At the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted a report, through the Economic and Social Council, on progress made on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon (A/55/99-E/2000/86), as requested in Assembly resolution 54/220 of 22 December 1999. The Assembly welcomed the establishment of the Working Group on Climate and Disasters, established by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and chaired by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) (previously named the Working Group on the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon), as a means of ensuring continuity of the international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon. The broader mandate of the Working Group would also enable it to consider other climate aspects of disasters within the

framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction.

6. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters is complemented by three other thematic working groups dealing with strategic disaster reduction issues: early warning; the quantification of risk and vulnerability; and wildland fires.

7. The General Assembly also noted with appreciation the efforts made to reduce the impact of natural disasters related to the El Niño phenomenon through improved scientific understanding, close monitoring and the dissemination of timely forecasts to communities at risk and, in particular, the efforts of those agencies supporting the Climate Agenda.²

8. The General Assembly called upon the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, especially the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WMO, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the International Council for Science, the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction, the Pan American Health Organization and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to adopt, within the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, a comprehensive approach to the study of El Niño and related phenomena and to intensify their cooperation with the affected regions with special reference to small island developing States and landlocked countries.

9. The General Assembly also invited States and other organizations participating in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to provide technical and financial assistance, including national capacity-building, to developing countries to support global and regional observation systems and research, including the dissemination of data on El Niño and related phenomena, to prevent, mitigate and redress the negative effects.

III. Working Group on Climate and Disasters

A. Structure

10. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters was set up with the understanding that the principal factor responsible for the increase in the social and economic impacts of natural disasters is the increasing level of vulnerability of many communities. The extent to which climate change and variability add to or reinforce vulnerability depends upon many factors. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters is seeking to ensure that climatic timescale factors are appropriately incorporated in the work carried out under the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

11. The structure of the Working Group is based on the need for effective dialogue and cooperation on climate information amongst the scientific and technical areas of the United Nations system and its operational responsibilities in the fields of disaster management, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, technical cooperation and capacity-building, including data collection, monitoring and early warning systems, at all levels. The objectives of this cooperation are to ensure the concrete application of knowledge and technology in building coping capacities, stimulating economic development, constructing safe infrastructures and networks and promoting sustainable approaches to environmental issues. In keeping with its lead role on science and technology in the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, WMO has been designated as the Working Group leader by the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction. The members of the Working Group comprise UNDP, UNESCO, UNEP, the United Nations University, FAO, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction, the South African Development Community (SADC)/Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) drought monitoring centres (DMC) and the Munich Reinsurance (Munichre).

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B. Priorities

12. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters, which met in Geneva on 10 and 11 April 2001, established two priority areas of focus. Its initial product is a review of sectoral monitoring and warning systems, both within and outside the United Nations System. Phenomena related to ENSO and other large-scale climatic systems, such as monsoons, negatively affect various sectors of society, principally through the extreme events associated with them on a range of timescales. Medium- to long-term climate forecasts linked to systematic assessments of related vulnerabilities are becoming increasingly important for successful risk reduction activities in all domains. Sectors such as public health, agriculture and food security, natural resource management, tourism and private enterprises can increase their resilience to extreme events through increased access, better understanding and judicious use of medium- to long-term climate forecasts.³ Such climate forecasts, if used appropriately, can also provide key advanced information for disaster reduction in support of prevention and preparedness.

13. The purposes of the review are to:

(a) Identify medium- and long-range climate forecasting capabilities at the regional level, including key actors and stakeholders in sectoral monitoring processes;

(b) Assess how regional climate forecasts on medium- and long-range time scales are communicated to users by the National Meteorological Services;

(c) Assess how, at the national level, medium- and long-range climate forecasts are scaled down to the local level, including the identification of deficiencies in the information transfer process and the support needed in particular countries.

The review will also identify capacities that exist at the national level for interpretation and application of medium- to long-range climate forecasts for different sectors and for the development of sectoral responses, including capacities across different sectors to reduce related vulnerabilities as well as shortfalls in the coverage (sectoral and geographical) of climate monitoring.

14. The second priority relates to the continuation of the mandate of the Inter-Agency Task Force on El

Niño, namely to support international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon and, in particular, to prepare for the next El Niño event. Prior to the establishment of the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, the United Nations system was not in a position to provide optimal support for the dissemination of early warnings and for the channelling of technical assistance and capacity-building resources to Member States threatened by El Niño/La Niña related disasters. The Working Group will therefore support, on an ongoing basis, the broad framework of the United Nations system to operate more effectively when there is a raised level of probability that an El Niño event might develop.

IV. Related activities

15. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 52/200, a number of activities were carried out at the global, regional and national levels, aimed at reducing the impact of future El Niño phenomena and similar climatic variables. Such efforts relate to the study of lessons learned from the 1997/98 El Niño event, both from a scientific and technical perspective and through the application of seasonal to interannual forecasts and related societal efforts to reduce vulnerability.

16. With the generous support of the Government of Ecuador, the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño and the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific convened the first global assessment of the 1997/98 El Niño event in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 9 to 13 November 1998. The meeting provided an opportunity for a substantive dialogue between the scientific and technological constituencies and their operational partners in disaster prevention, humanitarian disaster management and operational development, as well as an opportunity for the Inter-Agency Task Force to commission a thorough scientific and technical analysis of the 1997/98 El Niño event. This analysis was prepared by WMO, with financial and technical support from UNEP, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and the International Council for Science. The report was published just prior to the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

17. The Guayaquil meeting also inspired the development of a project to assess the impact of the El Niño event on 16 developing countries around the world, carried out by UNEP, WMO, the National

Center for Atmospheric Research, the United Nations University and the United Nations secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The 16 countries are Bangladesh, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines and Viet Nam. The project entitled "Reducing the impact of environmental emergencies through early warning and preparedness: the case of the 1997/98 El Niño", is a review of both forecasts and impacts of the 1997/98 event, as well as climate-related early warning and natural disaster preparedness, for the improvement of ENSO and other climate related coping mechanisms in these countries.

18. The overriding purpose of the project was to identify what worked and what did not work with regard to societal responses to the forecasts and impacts of the 1997/98 El Niño event. The approach adopted was to assess what might have been done differently had a perfect forecast been available several months in advance of the onset of El Niño in March 1997. Based on this assessment, several lessons were learned in each country and many of the lessons proved to be applicable to other countries. The project was initiated with support from the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships. A report was presented at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly (A/55/99-E/2000/86).

19. In accordance with its lead role on science and technology in the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, WMO carried out a feasibility study for an international centre for the research on the El Niño phenomenon to be established in Guayaquil, as advocated in the Declaration of Guayaquil. The study benefited from discussions carried out during a WMO mission to Ecuador from 27 January to 7 February 1999. The proposed centre has the full support of the Government of Ecuador and the national and regional institutions with which it would cooperate. Tangible support might also be expected from the wider international climate science constituency. The centre would have two main functions: to promote and undertake research on the ENSO phenomenon and mathematical modelling to permit "downscaling" of global climate predictions to regional and national scales; and to provide outreach services to the community of users of ENSO data and predictions.

20. The World Climate Programme/Climate Information and Prediction Services project is working

on developing a coherent, global framework for effective seasonal to interannual climate prediction and dissemination to serve national meteorological and hydrological services. This project carries out pilot/demonstration projects, training seminars and workshops on operational climate, which include climate computing (CLICOM)/Climate Information and Prediction Services (CLIPS) training activities, to address regional capacity-building, early warning of El Niño-related climate extremes and associated disasters.

21. A number of regional climate outlook forums were held during the last El Niño phenomenon and the subsequent La Niña event. The climate outlook forums are held in view of the level of understanding of the causes of seasonal to internal climate variables, which has improved substantially. In addition to the development of this understanding is the enhanced capability to provide outlooks of the climatic atmospheric state for one or more seasons in advance, which facilitates advance planning and hence contributes to the reduction of climatic shocks.

22. In October 2000 in Pretoria, a Global review of regional climate outlook forums was carried out. Participants recognized the significant role the regional Climate Outlook Forums had played in capacity-building in many parts of the world, as well as the links the forums had helped to develop between meteorologists and end-users of seasonal forecasts. The Forums stimulated interest in and created recognition of the impact of internal climate variability and provided the assistance to develop capacities that both mitigate against these impacts and help adapt to climate variabilities, such as El Niño. The review provided a number of recommendations to further enhance the service provided by the Climate Outlook Forums in respect of regional issues, capacity-building, the delivery of products and other technical subjects.

23. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, in collaboration with the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and with support from the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, initiated the Extreme Climate Events programme, as a follow up to the Asian regional meeting on the El Niño-related crisis, held in February 1998. The programme sets out to improve the understanding of the impact of extreme climate events, such as the El Niño and La Niña, on society and the environment in selected Asian countries through the effective application of climate forecast information.

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24. In September 1999, the Inter-American Development Bank and WMO signed an agreement to carry out a study on the prediction and amelioration of socio-economic impacts of El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) in Latin America and the Caribbean countries, which began on March 2000. It will be carried out over a period of 18 months (see annex).

25. A regional workshop to assess climate variability impacts on water resources was convened by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission and held in Nadi, Fiji, in October 1999. It was supported by the British High Commission (Fiji), UNEP, NOAA, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and WMO. The workshop brought together climate scientists/meteorologists, water resources managers and disaster managers from all Pacific Island countries. Discussions and recommendations focused on the identification of the users of climate forecast information and recognition of their needs; the identification of adaptation and mitigation strategies; and the strengthening of linkages between the producers and users of climate information. Scientists from the Pacific ENSO Application Centre (Honolulu), NOAA's Climate Prediction Center and the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction worked with regional scientists as resource personnel. The country papers presented by national Governments were the first compilation of information on the impacts of the 1997/98 El Niño event throughout the region.

26. Meteorologists identified the need for free and unrestricted flow of information and the upgrading of skills in ENSO forecasts. Disaster and water resources managers urged more detailed analysis of the hydrological output of rainfall data, specifically the development of local capacity to generate simple, timely and accessible forecasts of monthly rainfall and streamflows. In the widely dispersed region of the Pacific, the small island developing States need to freely access the technical information available in developed countries and professional institutions.

27. Other activities that bridge the gap between forecasts and end-users include the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme's (IGBP) Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START) Climate Prediction and Agriculture (CLIMAG) programme, which focuses on applications of forecasts in agriculture, with pilot projects in several

areas of the world. A European project, "PROMISE", also has a major component on agricultural applications. The NOAA Office of Global Programs and the international research institute for climate prediction have arranged a number of pilot projects around the world. Other key players include the Pacific ENSO Application Center in Hawaii, the Agricultural Production Systems Research Unit in Queensland, Australia, as well as national meteorological services in a number of countries.

V. Recommendations

28. During the 1997/98 event, the El Niño Task Force assisted in the coordination of the information flow between different agencies of the United Nations system on the development of the event. The information brought together under this arrangement also proved valuable for a wider audience seeking an authoritative voice on the event, including predictions of its likely course over time. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters, under the leadership of WMO should continue to gather information on how climate information is generated and distributed globally, regionally and locally. It should also give consideration to how improvements can be made in the distribution and transfer of this information, including climate forecasts, to different sectors can improve its effectiveness in disaster preparedness.

29. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters should continue activities in the areas of advocacy and education. It is important, for example, that the recommendations attributable to the lessons learned from the 1997/98 El Niño be made widely available to Governments, decision-makers and communities. These guidelines should also be provided to United Nations organizations, related specialized agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in this field. In particular, the Working Group on Climate and Disasters should ensure the experience gained from the intergovernmental meeting of experts held in Guayaquil in November 1998, the scientific and technical retrospective of the 1997/98 El Niño, the study entitled "Once Burned, Twice Shy", the relevant lessons learned exercises from Asia, Latin America and Africa, the review of the Climate Outlook Forum and other pertinent studies be made available to all interested parties.

30. With respect to sector specific activities, events such as regional workshops to examine the impacts of extreme weather and climate-related phenomena on social and economic activities in the field of agriculture, water resources and human health should be encouraged, especially in developing countries. These forums should also be supported in which the scientific community can interact with user communities on an ongoing basis, providing weather and climate information to develop best strategies for minimizing the adverse effects of expected patterns of climate variability and extremes.

31. The Working Group on Climate and Disasters should continue supporting studies such as the review of sectoral monitoring and warning systems, both within and outside of the United Nations system in order to establish shortfalls in the coverage (sectoral and geographical) of climate monitoring, as well as to explore further applications of climate monitoring information and forecasts.

32. The secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, supported by the Working Group on Climate and Disasters of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, should promote strategies to reduce the negative impacts caused by climate anomalies, such as ENSO, in the 10-year review of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, both globally and in regional preparations, in order to ensure that the issue is included in the proceedings of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in 2002. These activities should be linked to other relevant strategic platforms, such as Agenda 21, the Climate Agenda and the environmental-related conventions that emerged from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

33. The inseparability of El Niño from broader issues of climate change underscores the importance of a concerted effort on the part of Governments and NGOs to maintain a healthy observation system, to continue research into climate variability, to improve forecast skills and to develop appropriate policies for reducing the impact of climate extremes. The 1997/98 El Niño event clearly demonstrated the usefulness of developing capabilities in the areas of climate monitoring and prediction.

34. In recent years the level of scientific understanding of the causes of seasonal to interannual climate variability has improved substantially, owing in large part, to the sustained availability of real-time in situ and remotely-sensed satellite data from the present ENSO observing system. These data are essential for further model development. However, continued progress in filling existing gaps in our knowledge depends on maintaining and improving the ENSO observing system. The system currently consists of a mix of operational and prototype sub-systems including drifting buoys, the Tropical Atmosphere Ocean Project (TAO)-Triangle Trans-Ocean Buoy Network (TRITON) moorings, the observing ship lines of the Ship of Opportunity (SOOP) and the Voluntary Observing Ship (VOS) programmes, tide gauges and satellite instruments. Components of the operational system are under continuous national budget pressures and critical satellite follow-on missions for measurements of winds, altimetry, and the like, are not assured in the future. The high potential for significant improvements in seasonal to interannual climate forecasting, as demonstrated by the growing but still limited skill of computer-based climate models, will not be realized without continued support for and enhancement of the observing system.

35. Experience has highlighted the need for the different working groups established by the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction to ensure complementarity in their projected outputs. Given the inextricable relationships between climate variability, social and economic vulnerability and the effectiveness of early warning systems for natural disasters, it is imperative that the Inter-Agency Task Force and the United Nations secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction ensure functional synergies between the various working groups dealing with these matters.

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Notes

¹ The changes in weather and climate patterns across the Pacific Ocean associated with El Niño are one extreme of what is referred to as the Southern Oscillation and the overall coupled ocean-atmosphere processes are referred to as El Niño Southern Oscillation, or ENSO. The other extreme of the Southern Oscillation is associated with colder than normal waters over the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and a piling up of warm waters in the west and is referred to as a La Niña event. The two extremes are often referred to as the warm phase and cold phase of ENSO, respectively, indicating that they appear to be part of a single phenomenon.

² The Climate Agenda is the organizational framework under Agenda 21 for coordinating international climate activities and for further developing regional and global infrastructures for understanding the climate system.

³ Climate forecasts on monthly through seasonal to interannual forecasts are sometimes referred to simply as long-range (weather) forecasts. It must be stressed, however, that forecasts on this timescale cannot predict the occurrence or onset of any particular weather event. Typically, climate forecasts are expressed in terms of probabilities of specific thresholds being met, for example, below average, average, above average. Some inferences about extreme event probabilities might also be included.

Annex**Study on the feasibility of forecast and reduction of the socio-economic impacts of the El Niño Southern Oscillation in Latin America and the Caribbean**

1. A project financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, with the technical support of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), is currently being carried out in Latin American and Caribbean countries. This study, which started in March 2000 and is due to be finalized in September 2001, is examining the question of prediction and amelioration of the socio-economic impacts of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) in Latin America and the Caribbean countries.

2. The study will establish a regional system to provide an early warning of an impending El Niño and thus ameliorate its socio-economic impacts. The project will:

(a) Evaluate existing institutional and technical capabilities for data analysis and quantify the human resources and capacity-building needed;

(b) Analyse vulnerability to El Niño in selected countries to identify the more vulnerable sectors and population groups, prepare case studies, assess institutional preparedness to cope with El Niño effects and produce simulations to predict the impacts of El Niño events on the economy;

(c) Make a preliminary system design and feasibility study of the requirements for an early warning system; this component will include a training session aimed at user communities in agriculture, fisheries, energy, water management, disaster-preparedness and health;

(d) Determine the economic value of additional information using a cost-benefit analysis;

(e) Hold a policy workshop to inform and obtain inputs from policy-makers and advisers;

(f) Design implementation plans and project proposals for early warning systems for interested countries or groups of countries, with at least one subregional proposal for Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

3. Preliminary findings highlight some of the difficulties encountered in implementing a potential early warning system in the context of a climatic variable such as El Niño. These include: (a) limited capacity to develop weather reports; (b) the lack of strategies for broadcasting technical information to a number of users; and (c) the failure of institutional communication to translate forecast information into concrete preventative action.

4. Some of the initial recommendations point to the current opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean for implementing El Niño early warning systems and supporting disaster prevention owing to the fact that legal standards related to the prevention of natural disasters are currently being improved in a number of countries. These changes have taken place following the negative experiences related to the 1997/98 El Niño.

5. Encouragingly, it can be noted that, as a result of the lessons learned from the 1997/98 El Niño, a number of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are carrying out initiatives aimed at reducing their vulnerability in the face of abnormal weather conditions. Several countries have improved their legislation in order to take proactive measures to reduce the impact of future events.

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Economic and environmental questions:
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**International cooperation to reduce the impact of the
El Niño phenomenon**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/220. It builds on previous reports of the Secretary-General on this topic (A/53/487 and A/54/135-E/1999/88). It reviews the context of the El Niño phenomenon (sect. I), ongoing activities (sect. II) and future arrangements for the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño (sect. III), and provides recommendations (sect. IV). An annex, prepared with the support of the World Meteorological Organization, concerns country and agency reviews on the impacts of the 1997/98 El Niño event.

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I. Context

1. The term El Niño, although not rigorously defined, is associated with a major warming of the surface layers of the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. An El Niño event occurs when warm water flows eastward from the warm pool of the western tropical Pacific Ocean and there is a reduction in upwelling of cold water in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and along the Pacific coast of the Americas. Once initiated, an El Niño event typically lasts about a year, although climate anomalies in some parts of the globe may persist longer. Such an event occurred during much of 1997 and faded rapidly around mid-1998. This event is generally recognized now to have been one of the most intense and devastating in recorded history, although in a number of locations, notably in Southern Africa and Australia, its impacts were not as severe as the previous severe event of 1982/83.
2. The dramatic changes in weather and climate patterns across the Pacific Ocean associated with El Niño are one extreme of what is referred to as the Southern Oscillation, and the overall coupled ocean-atmosphere processes are referred to as El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO). The other extreme of the Southern Oscillation is associated with colder than normal waters over the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean and a piling up of warm waters in the west, and is referred to as a La Niña event. The two extremes are often referred to as the warm phase and cold phase, respectively, of ENSO, indicating that they appear to be part of a single phenomenon.
3. The shifting of seasonal weather patterns that was triggered by the 1997/98 El Niño event produced climate extremes over many parts of the globe, often with major socio-economic impacts. More than 24,000 lives were lost because of high winds, floods or storm tides that occurred during intense storms. In addition, some 110 million people were affected, including more than 6 million people who were displaced as community infrastructures, including housing, food storage, transport and communications, were lost during storms. The direct value of losses exceeded US\$ 34 billion. While waterlogging of fields led to reduced agricultural production in many parts of the world, in other regions the absence of the usual seasonal storms and rains led to prolonged dry spells, loss of crops and reduction in water supplies. Further, increased incidence of disease occurred due to the prolonged disruption to weather and rainfall patterns that resulted in contamination of water supplies and a more favourable environment for disease-carrying insect vectors.
4. The intense 1997/98 El Niño event was rapidly replaced by La Niña conditions, which set in during the latter half of 1998, prevailed through 1999 and continued into 2000. This La Niña phase appears to have brought its own set of disasters in many areas of the world; however, a thorough analysis such as that carried out on the preceding La Niña phase has not been carried out. There is considerably less confidence at this stage, therefore, in attributing recent incidences of drought and flood, such as the extensive flooding in Mozambique, solely to ENSO.
5. The 1997/98 El Niño event clearly demonstrated useful and developing capabilities in the areas of climate monitoring and prediction. However, gaps in knowledge of the climate system and monitoring coverage and the early stage of development of climate forecasting models indicate the potential for significant improvement.
6. In response to General Assembly resolution 52/200, the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño was created in December 1997 within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR). The General Assembly welcomed its establishment for cooperative work between member agencies and their partner agencies outside the United Nations system. The Task Force provided a platform for combining efforts to improve understanding of the El Niño phenomenon, for disseminating early warnings prior to the events and for channelling technical assistance and capacity-building resources to Member States threatened or affected by El Niño/La Niña-related disasters.
7. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 52/200 and with the generous support of the Government of Ecuador, the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño and the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific convened the first global assessment of the 1997/98 El Niño event. An international seminar was held in Guayaquil, Ecuador from 9 to 13 November 1998, which provided a substantive interface between the scientific and technological constituencies and their operational partners in disaster prevention, humanitarian disaster management and

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operational development. Experience with the 1997/98 El Niño event demonstrated once again the potentially devastating effects of El Niño-related climate extremes on the sustainable development efforts of developing countries, where most of the socially damaging impacts occur.

8. The Guayaquil seminar provided the opportunity for IDNDR to commission a thorough scientific and technical analysis of the 1997/98 El Niño event. This analysis was prepared by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), with financial and technical support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). The report was published just prior to the fifty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Also stimulated by the Guayaquil meeting was a project to assess the impact of the El Niño event on 16 developing countries around the world. This project was initiated with support from the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP).

9. The closing stages of IDNDR provided a number of opportunities to assess the efforts carried out so far by the international community to reduce the impact of the ENSO phenomenon. For example, an IDNDR programme forum, held in Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, convened a panel on the theme: "Climate variabilities and extremes: El Niño, La Niña". The ENSO phenomenon was discussed at several other international forums, as well.

10. The seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development requested the Secretary-General to gather information on all aspects of the impact of ENSO, through national reports on the implementation of Agenda 21, and to provide this information to the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño. This information would provide a base for the development of an international comprehensive strategy towards the assessment, prevention, mitigation and rehabilitation of the damage caused by ENSO.

11. At the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted a report on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon (A/54/135-E/1999/88), as requested in General Assembly resolution 53/185. The General Assembly, in its resolution 54/220, noted with appreciation the efforts made to reduce the impact of

natural disasters related to the El Niño phenomenon through improved scientific understanding, close monitoring and the dissemination of timely forecasts to communities affected, in particular the efforts of the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, in close cooperation with member agencies of the Inter-Agency Committee on the Climate Agenda.

12. The Climate Agenda is the organizational framework under Agenda 21 for coordinating international climate activities and for further developing regional and global infrastructures for understanding of the climate system. The agencies and programmes that make up the Climate Agenda provide the scientific and technical capability necessary to support a global, multidisciplinary approach to reducing vulnerability, building resilience and mitigating the negative impacts of climate extremes and for the promotion of sustainable development. Co-sponsors of the Climate Agenda are relevant agencies of the United Nations, led by WMO, and non-governmental bodies led by ICSU. The four pillars of the Climate Agenda for addressing global climate issues are: dedicated observations of the climate system; new frontiers for climate science and prediction; studies of climate impact assessments and response strategies to reduce vulnerability; and climate services for sustainable development.

13. IDNDR came to a close in December 1999. As a successor arrangement to IDNDR, the Secretary-General established an inter-agency task force and an inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. The International Strategy of Disaster Reduction (ISDR) was established in Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 and General Assembly resolution 54/219; since January 2000, steps have been taken to implement those resolutions. The ISDR Task Force will assess trends of risk from natural, environmental and technological hazards, and will assess the relevance of risk reduction in relation to existing and/or emerging strategic domains of the United Nations system.

14. The ISDR Task Force will also provide platforms for action by establishing thematically specific ad hoc working groups, which relate to strategic domains, such as ENSO, early warning and the quantification of risk, and the vulnerability and impact of disasters. Such ad hoc working groups would be chaired and coordinated by the ISDR Task Force member entity

most concerned with regard to existing or evolving mandates. Within their areas of specific concern, the ad hoc working groups would develop proposals for concrete (model) activities, which involve the respective constituencies at large. They will also work out specific action plans on the implementation of such activities.

II. Ongoing activities

15. In accordance with its lead role on science and technology in the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, WMO embarked on a feasibility study for an international centre for the research of the El Niño phenomenon in Guayaquil, as requested in the Declaration of Guayaquil. The study began with a WMO mission to Ecuador from 27 January to 7 February 1999.

16. The proposed centre has the full support of the Government of Ecuador and the national and regional institutions with which it would cooperate, and tangible support is also expected from the wider international climate science constituency. The centre would have two main functions: to promote and undertake research on the ENSO phenomenon and mathematical modelling to permit "downscaling" of global climate predictions to regional and national scales; and to provide outreach services to the community of users of ENSO data and predictions. The probable annual costs involved would include an estimated US\$ 1.1 million from the host country, US\$ 300,000 from external resources, and US\$ 2.62 million for equipment capital costs.

17. In September 1999, the Inter-American Development Bank and WMO signed an agreement for a study on the prediction and amelioration of socio-economic impacts of ENSO in Latin America and Caribbean countries, which began in March 2000 and will run for 18 months. In the study, the feasibility of early warning systems, including climate prediction on seasonal to inter-annual time scales, will be analysed in selected countries and subregions from the technical, economical, social, environmental, legal and institutional points of view. The study includes an evaluation of the existing institutional and technical forecasting capability in Latin America and Caribbean nations, as well as the formulation of project proposals and the analysis of the economic value of improved early warning systems.

III. Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño: future arrangements

18. The Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, constituted within the framework of IDNDR, recognized the need for and the potential of applying science and technology in this field of climate variabilities to more effectively prevent natural disasters caused by ENSO events. WMO has agreed to take the lead in respect of the science and technology roles of the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño, in particular in relation to the understanding, observing and predicting of the El Niño phenomenon and its related meteorological and hydrological impacts.

19. At its fifty-third session, the General Assembly noted, *inter alia*, that any credible strategy for the reduction of the natural disaster effects of future El Niño occurrences must be based on effective dialogue and cooperation between the scientific and technological areas of the United Nations system and its operational responsibilities in the fields of disaster management, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, technical cooperation and capacity-building, including data collection, monitoring and early warning systems, at all levels.

20. The first meeting of the ISDR Task Force on Disaster Reduction was convened in Geneva from 27 to 28 April 2000. The ISDR Task Force members agreed that it should be regarded as an interdisciplinary forum for advancing disaster reduction, identifying areas of common concern and devising guidelines for the implementation of the Strategy. It was also agreed that ad hoc working groups would be created for areas mandated by relevant General Assembly resolutions or identified by the Task Force as areas of common concern. The working groups would be comprised of a maximum of 10 entities/persons, with a majority being Task Force members. They would start work immediately, with the support of the ISDR secretariat, and would prepare recommendations to be submitted to the ISDR Task Force for endorsement.

21. The working group on El Niño/La Niña was established, under the leadership of WMO, with the participation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNEP, the Organization of American States and the South Pacific Applied

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Geoscience Commission (SOPAC). Additional members would also be included.

processing and adaptation to their specific needs. The regional ENSO centres could facilitate the distribution of relevant information to users in countries within relatively homogeneous climatic regions, and could promote the best possible utilization of such information to reduce the impact of disasters.

IV. Recommendations

22. The experience gained following the 1997/98 El Niño and subsequent La Niña events have highlighted the need for concerted action among United Nations system partners and counterparts outside the system. The ISDR Task Force working group on El Niño/La Niña, under the leadership of WMO, should take on the role of the former IDNDR Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño and build on its concrete outputs to date.

23. ISDR activity on ENSO should be linked to other relevant strategic platforms, such as the Climate Agenda and the environmentally related conventions that have emerged from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Severe Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biodiversity.

24. Given the inextricable relationships between climate variability, social and economic vulnerability and the effectiveness of early warning systems for natural disasters, it is imperative that functional synergies be created between the various working groups of the ISDR Task Force dealing with these matters.

25. Concrete activities in the domains of advocacy, coordination of action and wide dissemination of information should continue. Such events as workshops to examine the impacts of extreme weather and climate-related events on social and economic activities in the field of agriculture, water resources and human health should be encouraged, especially in developing countries. Forums should also be supported in which the scientific community can interact with user communities on an ongoing basis, providing weather and climate information, to develop approaches for minimizing the adverse effects of expected patterns of climate variability and extremes.

26. Support should be given to the proposed regional ENSO centres, such as the Guayaquil centre. Despite the existence of rich sources of information, data on the ENSO phenomenon has not always been easily interpreted by user communities due to lack of

Annex

Country and agency reviews on the impacts of the 1997/98 El Niño event

1. Communities and economies that were affected by the 1997/98 El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) event experienced very different impacts. The United Nations Environment Programme is taking the lead within the framework of the Climate Agenda for coordinating and arranging support for impact assessment studies. A study of 16 countries* affected by the event, which was launched in April 1999 with the participation of the United States National Center for Atmospheric Research, the United Nations University, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat and supported through the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, is currently under way.

2. The assessment will review forecasts and impacts of the 1997/98 El Niño, as well as the climate-related early warning and natural disaster preparedness systems in the selected countries in order to improve their ENSO coping mechanisms. Based on the assessment, the project will identify research and policy needs and develop preliminary guidelines for regional and national natural disaster management plans for ENSO warm and cold events and their impacts. The review and assessment will form the basis for:

(a) Identifying policy needs which can then be developed or incorporated into appropriate operational disaster management and research programmes. This would include but would not be limited to needs relating to the potential yet-to-be-identified linkages between ENSO and climate change;

(b) Developing a preliminary set of guidelines for national and regional preparedness for ENSO;

(c) Designing a capacity-building programme for fellowship and training of mid-level resource and sector managers, postgraduate education and outreach to the international academic and scientific community.

3. There will be three major outputs from this study:

(a) Individual country study reports that will explain in some detail the extent to which each country was able to prepare and respond to El Niño-related events as they unfolded and to cope with the after-effects;

(b) A brief for policy makers on the general lessons learned by the 16 countries, with the identification, where possible, of lessons that may be regional or unique but important in nature;

(c) A publication that will highlight the major features of each country study and set down the general cross-cutting lessons to be drawn from the chronology of the event, from the initial detection/forecast through its evolution and its eventual demise.

4. Through an improved understanding of early warning, the project will ultimately contribute to the safety and welfare of people and the environment by enhancing preparedness for the impacts of future ENSO events.

* Countries participating in the project are: Mozambique, Viet Nam, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea, Ecuador, China, Philippines, Panama, Fiji, Kenya, Cuba, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Peru, Paraguay and Indonesia.



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Other Relevant Document on El Niño

A/C.2/56/2	4 October 2001
	General Assembly, Environment and sustainable development: International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.
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Second Committee

Agenda item 98 (b)

**Environment and sustainable development:
international strategy for disaster reduction**

Letter dated 2 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the matter of "international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon" which is part of agenda item 98 (b) of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

In that connection, I am pleased to report that, pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 55/197, the Government of the Republic of Ecuador signed, on 19 September 2001, a memorandum of cooperation with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the text of which is enclosed (see appendix).

The purpose of this instrument is to strengthen cooperation between the Government of Ecuador and WMO, for the purpose of initiating activities related to the establishment of the International Research Centre for the El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Phenomenon

To that end, that same instrument constituted a Special Trust Fund within the WMO accounts.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its appendix circulated as a document of the Second Committee.

(Signed) **Mario Alemán Salvador**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

01-56423 (E) 121001 181001



Appendix to the letter dated 2 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR AND THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO)

Constitution of Special Trust Agreement Funds Within the WMO Accounts, for "Establishment, Operation and Development of the International Research Center for the El Niño/ Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Phenomenon – IRCEN"

RECALLING United Nations General Assembly resolutions 52/200, as of December 18, 1997; 53/185, as of December 15, 1998; 54/220, as of December 22, 1999; and 55/197, as of December 20, 2000; and the Economic and Social Council resolutions 1998/46, as of July 28, 1998; 1999/63, as of July 30, 1999; and 2000/33, as of July 28, 2000, on "International Cooperation to Reduce the Impact of the El Niño Phenomenon" and the recommendations contained therein to take the necessary measures for the prompt establishment of the International Research Center for the El Niño/ Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Phenomenon – IRCEN in Guayaquil, Ecuador;

CONSIDERING THAT the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Government of the Republic of Ecuador, through the National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, have maintained a beneficial relationship of Institutional Cooperation in the areas of atmospheric weather, climate, water and environmental resources, by means of various technical cooperation activities;

CONSIDERING THAT the WMO is a United Nations agency specialized in Meteorology, Operational Hydrology and related Sciences, the main purposes of which are (i) to coordinate the activities of their Members in the generation and exchange of information on weather, water and climate, according to international research standards at national, international and world-wide level; and in the training of professionals according to internationally recognized standards, and (ii) to facilitate the development of services in order to improve the well-being and security of communities, nations and humanity as a whole;

CONSIDERING THAT the Government of Ecuador has offered to host the Establishment of the International Research Center for the El Niño/ Southern Oscillation Phenomenon, establishing as its headquarters the City of Guayaquil, with the initial participation of the following national entities: National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, Oceanographic Institute of the Navy, National Institute of Fishery, University of Guayaquil, Higher School of Polytechnics of the Coast, and the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil;

CONSIDERING THAT the WMO has recognized the urgent necessity of carrying out a feasibility study, organizing a mission from January 28 to February 7, 1999 to execute that task. That Feasibility Study describes the scientific and organizational context, scope and functions of the Center, its possible headquarters, necessary staff and equipment, as well as the probable costs arising for both the host country and the international community;

CONSIDERING THAT the interest of both the international and national scientific communities, as well as the Government of Ecuador, in facilitating the realization of activities that allow to carry out studies to issue early warnings before the Events of El

Niño/ Southern Oscillation and La Niña make themselves manifest, in order to reduce their future impacts;

THEREUPON the World Meteorological Organization and the Government of the Republic of Ecuador hereby agree as follows:

1. Purpose

To strengthen collaboration between the Government of Ecuador and the WMO, for the purpose of initiating the activities related to the Establishment of the Center, based on the indications contained in the previously carried out Feasibility Study.


2. Implementation

For this cooperation to take effect, the Government of Ecuador shall create Funds within the WMO accounts, under the conditions contained in the annexed "TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SPECIFIC MODALITIES" which constitute an integral part of this Memorandum. Any modifications to the Memorandum and/or their Annex shall be realized by request of any one of the parties, through exchange of notes and upon agreement between the parties.

In witness whereof, the undersigned Representatives being duly authorized thereto by their respective Government and Organization have signed the present Agreement in Quito, on the 19th of September 2001, in two originals in the English language and two originals in the Spanish language, one of each for each Party.

For the Government of Ecuador

For the World Meteorological
Organization


Jaime Marchán
Minister of Foreign Affairs
(In Charge)


O. P. Obasi
Secretary General


Honorary Witness


Gustavo Noboa Bejarano
President of the Republic of Ecuador

ANNEX

Trust Agreement for the Establishment, Operation and Development of the International Research Center for the El Niño/ Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Phenomenon-IRCCEN

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SPECIFIC MODALITIES

1.- FUNDS DEFINITION.- The funds are the monetary or financial values that constitute the assets of the present trust agreement, represented by the amounts of money and the values proceeding from the CONTRIBUTOR (i.e., the Government of Ecuador), in possession of THE TRUSTEE (i.e., the WMO), referred to in the present Agreement, and the proceeds of the said values arising from investments carried out by THE TRUSTEE, less any commissions, withdrawals or pending liabilities and other expenses attributable to the trust funds.

2.- FUNDS CONSTITUTION.- The trustor or contributor grants to deposit the amount of THREE HUNDRED EIGHTY-FIVE THOUSAND (US\$385,000) Dollars of the United States of America, into the Trustee's bank account, as a contribution for the purpose of guaranteeing Ecuador's disposition to initiate the activities that should lead to the establishment and commissioning of the International Research Center for the El Niño/ Southern Oscillation Phenomenon-IRCCEN. Other values granted by other contributors or donors may be added thereto.

3.- WMO CONTRIBUTION.- THE WMO shall assist in the activities concerning the design on the project document and the implementation of the future Center.

4.- PURPOSE OF THE TRUST AGREEMENT.- The main purpose of the trust agreement is the administration by THE TRUSTEE of the funds' financial resources and the annual proceeds these produce, which shall be destined to finance the activities stipulated in the above paragraph.

5.- TECHNICAL COMMITTEE.- A Technical Committee in charge of operational procedures shall be created for the selection process of acquisitions to be financed out of the Funds, as well as for authorization of any payments to be carried out. The Technical Committee shall be composed of representatives of the following institutions: National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (INAMHI), Oceanographic Institute of the Navy (INOCAR), National Institute of Fishery (INP), University of Guayaquil, Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil and Higher School of Polytechnics of the Coast, who shall all be sufficiently credited. The Technical Committee shall reach its decisions by consent, which shall be communicated to THE TRUSTEE for acquisitions to be effected or specific expenses to be made.

6.- RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE.- The Technical Committee shall have the following rights and obligations:

- To keep books of contributions into the Funds.
- To review and approve financial and accounting statements submitted by the trustee on the operations carried out.
- To assess and select all acquisitions and expenses to be financed out of the funds, in conformity with the guidelines and regulations contained in the feasibility study.
- To supervise and control all acquisitions and expenses financed out of the funds.

- To produce and submit statements concerning the funds' financial situation and performance.
- To submit statements to the CONTRIBUTOR on the Trust Agreement's management situation.

7.- RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE TRUSTEE.-

The trustee shall have the following rights and obligations:

- To manage the values under this trust agreement as, in its discretion, it deems best convenient for the interests of the trust funds, for which it may carry out, upon previous mandatory authorization by the Technical Committee, secure and profitable investments and reinvestments of high liquidity.
- To submit quarterly financial statements to the Technical Committee.
- To keep the accounting books corresponding to operations carried out in respect of trust values at all times available to the Technical Committee.
- To effect any payments in conformity with these Terms of Reference and Specific Modalities.
- To carry out all other administrative, financial and accounting actions the TRUSTEE considers necessary or desirable in benefit of the trust agreement and which are in conformity with WMO procedures and regulations.
- To assist the Government of Ecuador and the project authorities in the international resource mobilization for the future implementation of the Center.

8.- PAYMENTS AGAINST THE FUNDS.- The trustee shall manage the funds according to WMO financial regulations.

9.- TRUSTEE COMMISSIONS .- The TRUSTEE shall be entitled to six percent (6%) of the calculated total of the monthly executed funds, for the administration of the said funds, in accordance with payment instructions by the Technical Committee.

10.- CONTRACT PERIOD.- The present trust agreement shall have the duration that is necessary for carrying out the purposes for which it was constituted, and may be terminated by canceling or suppressing the establishment and implementation of the IRCEN. In this event, the Technical Committee shall immediately notify the TRUSTEE, so that, in conformity with the Committee's provisions, it may proceed to distribute the funds in favor of those entitled.

11.- WINDING UP OF THE TRUST AGREEMENT.- At the end of this trust agreement, the TRUSTEE shall submit the Technical Committee a comprehensive balance of the state of the funds account, which shall be approved by the said Committee within fifteen days following that action. It shall be entitled to make observations or request any corresponding explanations, in which event the said term shall restart upon reception of the new statement. In case there is no explicit approval within the said term, the submitted statements shall tacitly be understood as approved. The approval of the balance and the statements submitted shall conclude the present contract. The TRUSTEE shall submit the Government of Ecuador the trust funds' available net balance resulting after deduction of the contributions made and the gross revenues proceeding from any investments in respect of the funds, as well as any expenses, payments, paid or pending commissions, in conformity with the provisions under the present contract.

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12.- NOTICES.- Any notification or communication between the parties on any matter related to the present contract, shall be made in writing and mailed to the following addresses:

- **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE:** INOCAR, as a Focal Point IRCEN National Address.
- **TRUSTEE:** WMO - Technical Cooperation Department, for all technical aspects, Administration of Resources Department, for all financial aspects.

13.- DISPUTE SETTLEMENT.- The parts commit themselves to carry out all the necessary efforts to settle any dispute arising in relation to this trust agreement by mutual agreement. In the event a dispute cannot be settled in the said way, a solution shall be sought through the pertinent diplomatic channels.

For the Government of Ecuador

**For the World Meteorological
Organization**



Jaime Marchán
Minister of Foreign Affairs
(In Charge)



O. P. Obasi
Secretary General

Section II

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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (e)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.5)]

57/260. Convention on Biological Diversity

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/201 of 20 December 2000 and 56/197 of 21 December 2001 on the Convention on Biological Diversity,¹

Reaffirming that the Convention on Biological Diversity is the key international instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources,

Underlining the importance of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, their development and wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices, their protection subject to national legislation, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of their commercial use, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development² and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),³

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups and announced at the Summit,

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of the Netherlands for hosting the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, held at The Hague from 7 to 26 April 2002,

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

² *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

³ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

Also expressing its deep appreciation for the generous offer of the Government of Malaysia to host the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur in 2004,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly;⁴

2. *Notes* the outcome of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,⁵ hosted by the Government of the Netherlands from 7 to 19 April 2002;

3. *Also notes* the outcome of the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, held at The Hague from 22 to 26 April 2002;

4. *Welcomes* the fact that one hundred eighty-five States and one regional economic integration organization have become parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,¹ and urges States that have not joined the Convention to become parties to it;

5. *Invites* parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity⁶ as soon as possible;

6. *Reiterates* the importance of the decision of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization to examine, through the World Trade Organization Council for Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, the relationship between the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights⁷ and the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the protection of traditional knowledge;

7. *Recalls* the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to pursue a more efficient and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the achievement by 2010 of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity, which will require the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries and includes actions at all levels, and in this regard calls upon the international community to provide the necessary support to developing countries, and stresses the importance of the effective use of resources;

8. *Also recalls* the commitment made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to negotiate within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, bearing in mind the Bonn Guidelines,⁸ an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. And invites the Conference of the Parties to take appropriate steps in this regard;

⁴ See A/57/220.

⁵ Bearing in mind the procedural concerns of some States relating to decision VI/23, and in this regard noting the deliberations and decisions of the Bureau of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, with a view to addressing these concerns at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (see paras. 294-324 of the report of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the minutes of the meeting of the Bureau of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Montreal, Canada, on 23 and 24 September 2002).

⁶ See UNEP/CBD/ExCOP/1/3 and Corr.1, part two, annex.

⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1869, No. 31874.

⁸ Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising out of their Utilization (decision VI/24 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity).

9. *Further recalls* the commitment made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to implement the expanded action-oriented work programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity on all types of forest biological diversity, in close cooperation with the United Nations Forum on Forests, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other forest-related processes and conventions, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders;

10. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁹ the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa¹⁰ and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and encourages continued cooperation to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status;

11. *Calls upon* the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to continue to work closely with the Global Environment Facility and other relevant institutions to help developing countries to build the required national capacities to prepare for the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, including in the areas of risk assessment and risk management;

12. *Welcomes* the launching of the pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing House, and calls for strengthened international support for developing countries to build their national capacities to interact with it and to benefit from its expeditious strengthening so that it becomes fully functional at the time of the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

13. *Emphasizes* the need for a substantial increase in financial and technical resources for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety by developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and in this regard welcomes the successful and substantial third replenishment of the Global Environment Facility;

14. *Invites* the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to continue to report to the General Assembly on the ongoing work regarding the Convention;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity".

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*

⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.



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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (f)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.6)]

57/262. Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/122 of 19 December 1994 on the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling also its resolutions 51/183 of 16 December 1996, 52/202 of 18 December 1997 and 53/189 of 15 December 1998, the review document adopted by the Assembly at its twenty-second special session,¹ and its resolutions 54/224 of 22 December 1999, 55/199 of 20 December 2000, 55/202 of 20 December 2000 and 56/198 of 21 December 2001, and recalling further the Declaration of Barbados² and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,³

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development⁴ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),⁵ the particular emphasis given to small island developing States in the Declaration and the Plan of Implementation, and the call for the General Assembly to consider convening an international meeting for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in 2004,

Recalling the report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on its tenth session,⁶

¹ See resolution S-22/2, annex.

² *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

³ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁴ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁵ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

⁶ TD/390.

Welcoming the establishment of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and emphasizing the importance of issues related to small island developing States within the United Nations system,

Recognizing that, within the context of the challenges of development, small island developing States experience specific problems arising from small size, remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, fragile ecosystems, constraints on transport and communication, isolation from markets, vulnerability to exogenous economic and financial shocks, limited internal markets, lack of natural resources, limited freshwater supply, heavy dependence on imports and limited commodities, depletion of non-renewable resources and migration,

Recognizing also the significant efforts of small island developing States to achieve sustainable development and the need to continue to enhance their capacities to participate effectively in the multilateral financial and trading system,

Reiterating the importance of the vulnerability index as a tool for assessing, and thereby addressing, the vulnerability of small island developing States, as well as identifying the challenges to their sustainable development,

Recognizing the relevance of such work to the mandate of the Committee for Development Policy concerning criteria for the identification, including designation and graduation, of the least developed countries,

Noting the efforts to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States at the national, regional and international levels and the need for regional and global institutions to continue to supplement the efforts being made at the national level, inter alia, through the provision of adequate financial and technical support,

Emphasizing the continuing need for the technical and financial support of projects that were presented within the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action, inter alia, at the meeting of representatives of donor countries and small island developing States, held in New York from 24 to 26 February 1999,⁷ as well as the partnership initiatives presented by small island developing States and their organizations during the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Noting in this regard the preparatory activities undertaken at the national and regional levels for the Summit, and expressing its appreciation to the Government of Singapore for hosting the interregional meeting of the Alliance of Small Island States held in preparation for the Summit from 7 to 11 January 2002,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;⁸
2. *Reiterates* the urgent need for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States³ and of the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session¹ to assist small island developing States in their efforts to achieve sustainable development;
3. *Welcomes* the efforts made at the national, subregional and regional levels to implement the Programme of Action;

⁷ See A/S-22/4.

⁸ A/57/131.

4. *Requests* the relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as the regional commissions and organizations, to undertake concrete measures, within their respective mandates, for the further implementation of the Programme of Action in the context of their programmes;

5. *Decides* to convene an international meeting in 2004, which will include a high-level segment, to undertake a full and comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, as called for in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,⁹ and welcomes the offer of the Government of Mauritius to host the international meeting;

6. *Also decides* that the comprehensive review referred to in paragraph 5 above should seek a renewed political commitment by all countries to, and should focus on, practical and pragmatic actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action, inter alia, through the mobilization of resources and assistance for small island developing States;

7. *Further decides* to convene regional preparatory meetings of small island developing States in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions, as well as an interregional preparatory meeting for all small island developing States, to undertake the review of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional and regional levels and to identify and develop input for the above-mentioned review that is specific to small island developing States, while maximizing coherence and complementarity with respect to other preparatory work;

8. *Welcomes* the initial efforts of the small island developing States to develop the national and regional modalities necessary for the regional preparatory meetings, and calls upon the United Nations system in general and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in particular, as well as the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the multilateral financial institutions and the Global Environment Facility, to put in place modalities at the international level that will facilitate the meetings referred to in paragraphs 5 and 7 above in a timely manner;

9. *Requests* that, in facilitating the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, the United Nations system seek country input that is short and well-focused and that draws upon, inter alia, material prepared for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in order to minimize the burden on participating States while maximizing the usefulness of the information gathered;

10. *Invites* the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session, to consider its role in the preparatory process for the comprehensive review of the Programme of Action;

11. *Invites* all Member States and States members of the specialized agencies, relevant regional and international agencies and organizations and the major groups identified in Agenda 21,¹⁰ in accordance with the rules of procedure of

⁹ See *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex, para. 61.

¹⁰ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II. The major groups are women, young people, indigenous people and their communities, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and their trade unions, business and industry, including transnational corporations, the scientific and technological community, and farmers.

the Commission on Sustainable Development¹¹ and the rules of procedure of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,¹² as well as the established practices of the Commission, to participate fully in the activities identified for the further implementation of and effective follow-up to the Programme of Action and in the preparations for the comprehensive review;

12. *Invites* all international meetings of relevance to small island developing States, including the regional and interregional meetings of small island developing States, to provide relevant input into the comprehensive review and its preparatory process;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General, pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 56/198, to give further consideration to strengthening the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, inter alia, through the regularization of the current post of Interregional Adviser for Small Island Developing States at the earliest opportunity, thereby enabling the Unit to assist in the preparations for the comprehensive review of the Programme of Action;

14. *Calls* for the participation of associate members of regional commissions in the comprehensive review of the Programme of Action, and in the preparatory process therefor, as observers, in the same capacity specified for their participation in the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in 1994, and in the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, held in 1999 to review the implementation of the Programme of Action;

15. *Decides* to establish a voluntary fund for the purpose of assisting small island developing States, including the least developed among them, to participate fully and effectively in the international meeting referred to in paragraph 5 above, as well as in the various preparatory processes referred to in paragraph 7 above, and invites Governments, intergovernmental organizations and the major groups accredited to the Commission on Sustainable Development to contribute to the fund;

16. *Urges* all relevant organizations to finalize, by 2004, the work on the vulnerability index, taking into account the particular circumstances and needs of small island developing States;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States";

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

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20 December 2002*

¹¹ See E/5975/Rev.1.

¹² A/CONF.199/2 and Corr.1.



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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (f)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.6)]

57/261. Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the principles and commitments enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development¹ and the principles embodied in the Declaration of Barbados² and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,³ as well as other relevant declarations and international instruments,

Recalling the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,⁴

Taking into account all other relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolutions 54/225 of 22 December 1999 and 55/203 of 20 December 2000,

Taking into account also the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development⁵ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),⁶

Noting with interest the respective partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by Governments, international organizations and major groups and announced at the Summit,

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

² *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

³ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁴ See resolution S-22/2, annex.

⁵ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁶ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

Reaffirming the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁷ which provides the overall legal framework for ocean activities, and emphasizing its fundamental character,

Conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach,

Emphasizing the importance of national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector as recognized by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in chapter 17 of Agenda 21,⁸

Recalling the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, signed at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 24 March 1983,⁹ which contains the definition of the wider Caribbean region of which the Caribbean Sea is part,

Welcoming the adoption, on 6 October 1999 in Aruba, of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities¹⁰ to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

Welcoming also the entry into force, on 18 June 2000, of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife¹⁰ to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

Recalling the relevant work done by the International Maritime Organization,

Considering that the Caribbean Sea area includes a large number of States, countries and territories, most of which are developing countries and small island developing States that are ecologically fragile, structurally weak and economically vulnerable and are also affected, inter alia, by their limited capacity, narrow resource base, need for financial resources, high levels of poverty and the resulting social problems and the challenges and opportunities of globalization and trade liberalization,

Recognizing that the Caribbean Sea has a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystem,

Emphasizing that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change and climate variability, associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes,

⁷ See *The Law of the Sea: Official Texts of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 and of the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 with Index and Excerpts from the Final Act of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.V.10).

⁸ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1506, No. 25974.

¹⁰ Available on the Internet at www.cep.unep.org/law/sub_law/htm.

Underlining the importance of the ongoing work of the working group on climate change and natural disasters established by the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction,

Bearing in mind the heavy reliance of most of the Caribbean economies on their coastal areas, as well as on the marine environment in general, to achieve their sustainable development needs and goals,

Recognizing the Caribbean Environment Outlook process currently being undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme, and welcoming the support being provided by the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme towards its implementation,

Acknowledging that the intensive use of the Caribbean Sea for maritime transport, as well as the considerable number and interlocking character of the maritime areas under national jurisdiction where Caribbean countries exercise their rights and duties under international law, present a challenge for the effective management of the resources,

Noting the problem of marine pollution caused, inter alia, by land-based sources and the continuing threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and sewage as well as from the accidental release of hazardous and noxious substances in the Caribbean Sea area,

Taking note of resolutions GC(44)/RES/17 of 22 September 2000¹¹ and GC(46)RES/9 of 20 September 2002¹² of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency on safety of transport of radioactive materials,

Mindful of the diversity and dynamic interaction and competition among socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources,

Mindful also of the efforts of the Caribbean countries to address in a more holistic manner the sectoral issues relating to the management of the Caribbean Sea area and, in so doing, to promote an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, through a regional cooperative effort among Caribbean countries,

Noting the efforts of the Caribbean countries, within the framework of the Association of Caribbean States, to develop further support for their concept of the Caribbean Sea as an area of special importance, in the context of sustainable development and in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,

Welcoming the decision by the Association of Caribbean States to establish the Working Group of Experts on the Caribbean Sea Initiative to further advance the implementation of resolution 55/203, inter alia, through the preparation of a technical report,

Cognizant of the importance of the Caribbean Sea to present and future generations and its importance to the heritage and the continuing economic well-being and sustenance of people living in the area, and the urgent need for the

¹¹ See International Atomic Energy Agency, *Resolutions and Other Decisions of the General Conference, Forty-fourth Regular Session, 18–22 September 2000* (GC(44)/RES/DEC(2000)).

¹² *Ibid.*, *Forty-sixth Regular Session, 16–20 September 2002* (GC(46)/RES/DEC(2002)).

countries of the region to take appropriate steps for its preservation and protection, with the support of the international community,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹³
2. *Recognizes* the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development;
3. *Encourages* the further promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolution 54/225, as well as the provisions of Agenda 21,⁸ the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,³ the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly,⁴ the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,⁵ the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation⁶ and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;⁷
4. *Also encourages* the continued efforts of the Caribbean countries to develop further an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development and, in this regard, to continue to develop regional cooperation in the management of their ocean affairs in the context of sustainable development, in order to address such issues as land-based pollution, pollution from ships, physical impacts on coral reefs and the diversity and dynamic interaction of, and competition among, socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources;
5. *Calls upon* States to continue to prioritize action on marine pollution from land-based sources as part of their national sustainable development strategies and programmes, in an integrated and inclusive manner, and also calls upon them to advance the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities,¹⁴ and the Montreal Declaration on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities;¹⁵
6. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and the international community to assist, as appropriate, Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, and from illegal dumping or accidental release of hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals, in violation of relevant international rules and standards, as well as pollution from land-based activities;
7. *Calls upon* all relevant States to take the necessary steps to bring into force, and to support the implementation of, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities¹⁰ to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region⁹ in order to protect the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from land-based pollution and degradation;

¹³ A/57/131.

¹⁴ A/51/116, annex II.

¹⁵ E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/15, annex, sect. 1.

8. *Calls upon* the international community to support the efforts of the Working Group of Experts on the Caribbean Sea Initiative of the Association of Caribbean States to further implement resolution 55/203, and invites the Association to submit a report on its progress to the Secretary-General for consideration during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly;

9. *Calls upon* all States to become contracting parties to relevant international agreements to promote the protection of the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from pollution and degradation from ships;

10. *Supports* the efforts of Caribbean countries to implement sustainable fisheries management programmes by strengthening the recently established Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism;

11. *Calls upon* States, taking into consideration the Convention on Biological Diversity,¹⁶ to develop national, regional and international programmes for halting the loss of marine biodiversity in the Caribbean Sea, in particular fragile ecosystems, such as coral reefs;

12. *Invites* intergovernmental organizations within the United Nations system to continue their efforts to assist Caribbean countries in becoming parties to the relevant conventions and protocols and to implement them effectively;

13. *Calls upon* the international community, the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions, and invites the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support actively the above-mentioned approach;

14. *Calls upon* Member States to improve as a matter of priority their emergency response capabilities and the containment of environmental damage, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, in the event of natural disasters or of an accident or incident relating to maritime navigation;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-ninth session, under the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*

¹⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.



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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (d)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.4)]

57/259. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 56/196 of 21 December 2001 and other resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,¹

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Italy for the organization of the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention in Rome, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, from 11 to 22 November 2002,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development² and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),³

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups and announced at the Summit,

Welcoming the outcomes of the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, held in Beijing from 16 to 18 October 2002, particularly the decision on making land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, a new focal area of the Facility,

Recognizing the strong commitment of the international community, demonstrated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, to make the Facility available as a

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

² *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

³ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

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financial mechanism of the Convention, pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, and in this regard encourages the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, as the supreme body of the Convention, to take the appropriate decision to that effect at its next ordinary session in 2003,

Expressing its deep appreciation for the generous offer of the Government of Cuba to host the sixth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held at Havana from 25 August to 5 September 2003,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;⁴
2. *Welcomes* the decision taken by the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility that the Facility shall be available to serve as a financial mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,¹ pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, if the Conference of the Parties to the Convention should so decide, and in this regard notes with satisfaction that the Assembly of the Global Environment Facility has requested the Council of the Facility to consider any such decision of the Conference of the Parties with a view to making the necessary arrangements;
3. *Invites* the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session, in response to the call of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the decision of the Second Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, to consider making the Facility a financial mechanism of the Convention as a means of promoting the availability of financial mechanisms, pursuant to article 21 of the Convention, while recognizing the complementary roles of the Facility and the Global Mechanism in providing and mobilizing resources for the elaboration and implementation of action programmes;
4. *Encourages* the Conference of the Parties and the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to continue to collaborate closely and effectively to facilitate the financing of the successful implementation of the Convention by supporting financial mechanisms such as the Facility, so as to fully achieve the objectives of the Convention;
5. *Invites* the Council of the Global Environment Facility at its May 2003 meeting to finalize and adopt the operational programme for land degradation, particularly desertification and deforestation;
6. *Emphasizes* that, in the light of the ongoing assessment of the implementation of the Convention, the affected developing countries that are parties to the Convention need the full and effective support of the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, and other partners for capacity-building and other activities which assist them in meeting their obligations under the Convention;
7. *Welcomes* the successful and substantial third replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund which will provide additional resources necessary to enable the Facility to continue to be responsive to the needs and concerns of its recipient countries;
8. *Calls upon* all countries and other entities in a position to do so to make additional contributions to the Global Environment Facility;

⁴ A/57/177.

9. *Notes with appreciation* the increased number of developing countries that are parties to the Convention and that have adopted their national, subregional and regional action programmes, and urges the affected parties that have not yet done so to accelerate the process of elaboration and adoption of their action programmes, with a view to finalizing them as soon as possible;

10. *Invites* affected developing countries to place the implementation of their action programmes to combat desertification high among their priorities in their dialogue with their development partners;

11. *Notes with satisfaction* the steps being taken by affected developing countries that are parties to the Convention, with the assistance of international organizations and bilateral development partners, to implement the Convention and the efforts being made to promote the participation of all actors of civil society in the elaboration and implementation of national action programmes to combat desertification, and in that regard encourages countries to cooperate at the subregional and regional levels, as appropriate;

12. *Welcomes* the strengthened cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the Global Mechanism, and encourages further efforts in that regard for the effective implementation of the Convention;

13. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to contribute to the implementation of action programmes through, inter alia, the conclusion of partnership agreements as well as the bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes that are available to implement the Convention, including contributions from non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and to support the efforts of the developing countries to implement the Convention;

14. *Invites* all parties to pay promptly and in full the contributions required for the core budget of the Convention for the biennium 2002-2003, and urges all parties that have not yet paid their contributions for the year 1999 and/or the biennium 2000-2001 to do so as soon as possible in order to ensure continuity in the cash flow required to finance the ongoing work of the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

15. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁵ the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity,⁶ and encourages continuing cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

16. *Invites* the United Nations Development Programme to implement decision 2000/23 of 29 September 2000 of its Executive Board,⁷ pertaining to the cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the United Nations Development Programme, in order to mainstream activities to combat desertification at the national, subregional and regional levels;

17. *Calls upon* Governments, and invites multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

⁷ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 15 (E/2000/35)*, part four.

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other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to contribute generously to the General Fund, the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties,⁸ and welcomes the financial support already provided by some countries;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

19. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa".

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⁸ ICCD/COP (1)/11/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 2/COP.1, annex, paras. 7-11.



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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (c)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.3)]

57/258. World Climate Change Conference

The General Assembly,

Acknowledging that change in the earth's climate and its adverse effects are a common concern of humankind,

Acknowledging also that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation, consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹

Welcoming the ongoing work in the United Nations system on climate change, in particular within the framework of the Convention, which is the key instrument for addressing this global concern,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development² and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),³

Taking into account also the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

Recognizing with concern the findings of the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,⁴ in which the Panel confirmed that significant cuts in global emissions will be necessary to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention, and recognizing the ongoing consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice of the implications of the report,

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

² *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

³ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

⁴ *Climate Change 2001* (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, July 2001 and March 2002), four volumes.

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Reaffirming the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, in which States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change⁵ strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner,⁶

Recognizing the need for strengthening scientific and technological capabilities and networks for the exchange of scientific data and information,

Stressing that the World Climate Change Conference will be supportive of the Convention process,

Noting the importance of broad participation in this process by Governments, parliaments, international and national organizations, the scientific community, the private sector and other representatives of civil society,

1. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Government of the Russian Federation to convene the World Climate Change Conference at Moscow from 29 September to 3 October 2003 as a forum for the exchange of views among the scientific community, Governments, parliaments, international and national organizations, the private sector and other representatives of civil society and for facilitating the implementation of existing policies related to climate change;

2. *Encourages* Member States and relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as other international and national organizations, parliaments, the scientific community, the private sector and other representatives of civil society, to participate actively in the Conference;

3. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Conference in order to increase awareness of the importance of international efforts to address climate change.

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⁵ FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

⁶ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex, para. 38.



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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (c)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.3)]

57/257. Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 54/222 of 22 December 1999, its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000 and its resolution 56/199 of 21 December 2001 and other resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

Noting that most States and one regional economic integration organization have acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹

Recalling the provisions of the Convention, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Taking into account the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative impacts of climate change,

Noting that, to date, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change² has attracted ninety-seven ratifications,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development³ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),⁴

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

² FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁴ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

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Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of India for hosting the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁵

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁶ in which heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,⁷

1. *Calls upon* States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;¹

2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change² strongly urge the States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

3. *Takes note* of the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session;

4. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,⁸ and the Convention on Biological Diversity,⁹ and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

5. *Invites* the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to report in a timely manner to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

6. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

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20 December 2002*

⁵ See A/57/359.

⁶ See resolution 55/2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 23.

⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.



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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.1)]

57/254. United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

The General Assembly,

Recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on promoting education, public awareness and training, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992,¹

Reaffirming the internationally agreed development goal of achieving universal primary education, in particular that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling,

Appreciating the contribution made by the Commission on Sustainable Development to the issue of education for sustainable development since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Welcoming the fact that the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”) confirmed the importance of education for sustainable development and recommended that the General Assembly consider adopting a decade of education for sustainable development starting in 2005,²

Emphasizing that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development,

1. *Decides* to proclaim the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 2005 the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development;

2. *Designates* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the lead agency for the promotion of the Decade, and requests it to develop a draft international implementation scheme, clarifying its relationship with the existing educational processes, in particular the Dakar Framework for Action

¹ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

² See *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

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adopted at the World Education Forum³ and the United Nations Literacy Decade,⁴ in consultation with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, with a view to providing recommendations for Governments on how to promote and improve the integration of education for sustainable development in their respective educational strategies and action plans at the appropriate level;

3. *Invites* Governments to consider the inclusion of measures to implement the Decade in their respective educational strategies and action plans by 2005, taking into account the international implementation scheme to be prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

4. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session an item entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development".

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³ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000* (Paris, 2000).

⁴ See resolution 56/116.



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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.1)]

57/253. World Summit on Sustainable Development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/199 of 20 December 2000 and 56/226 of 24 December 2001,

Recalling also the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,¹ Agenda 21² and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,³

Having considered the report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,⁴

Reaffirming, in this regard, the commitment to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration⁵ and in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992,

Welcoming the adoption by the Summit of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development⁶ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”)⁷ on 4 September 2002,

Expressing its satisfaction that the Summit and its Preparatory Committee provided for the active participation of all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies, observers and various intergovernmental

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

² *Ibid.*, annex II.

³ Resolution S-19/2, annex.

⁴ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum).

⁵ See resolution 55/2.

⁶ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁷ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

organizations, including the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, at the highest level, as well as the major groups representing all the regions of the world,

Reaffirming the need to ensure a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development,

Reaffirming also that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development,

Recognizing that good governance within each country and at the international level is essential for sustainable development,

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and announced at the Summit,

Expressing its profound gratitude to the Governments and the peoples of Indonesia and South Africa for hosting, respectively, the fourth Preparatory Committee meeting and the Summit, for the excellent arrangements, for the hospitality extended to participants and for the facilities, staff and services placed at their disposal,

1. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;⁴

2. *Endorses* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development⁶ and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;⁷

3. *Decides* to adopt sustainable development as a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities, in particular for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁵ and to give overall political direction to the implementation of Agenda 21² and its review;

4. *Urges* Governments and all relevant international and regional organizations, the Economic and Social Council, United Nations funds, programmes and regional economic commissions, specialized agencies, international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and major groups, to take timely actions to ensure the effective implementation of and follow-up to the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

5. *Encourages* the implementation of partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and calls for further discussion of this matter within the Commission on Sustainable Development;

6. *Calls* for the implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the Summit and, to this end, for the fulfilment of the provisions of the means of implementation, as contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

7. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to ensure that the Commission on Sustainable Development holds an organizational meeting of its next session in January 2003 and its session in April/May 2003;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a report containing proposals on the modalities of the future work of the Commission, taking into account the decisions contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

9. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to implement the provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation relevant to its mandate and, in particular, to promote the implementation of Agenda 21 by strengthening system-wide coordination;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take into full account the outcomes of the Summit, in particular the decisions made on the institutional framework for sustainable development as contained in chapter XI of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, in the ongoing process of reform of the United Nations and in his contribution to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session an item entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development", and requests the Secretary-General, at that session, to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*



General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 87

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/532/Add.7)]

57/252. Activities undertaken in preparation for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/196 of 20 December 2000, in which it proclaimed 2003 the International Year of Freshwater, and its resolution 56/192 of 21 December 2001 on the status of preparations for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003,

Recalling also the provisions of Agenda 21,¹ the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session,² decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixth session,³ relating to freshwater, and those contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),⁴

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups and announced at the Summit,

Recalling the commitment made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to launch programmes of action, with financial and technical assistance, to achieve the Millennium development goal on safe drinking water, namely, to halve by 2015 the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, as outlined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁵ and the goal of the Summit to halve the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation,⁶

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

² Resolution S-19/2, annex.

³ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 9 (E/1998/29)*.

⁴ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

⁵ See resolution 55/2, para. 19.

⁶ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex, para. 25.

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Recalling also its resolution 53/199 of 15 December 1998 on the proclamation of international years,

Noting the efforts made in preparation for the Third World Water Forum and International Ministerial Conference, to be held in Japan in March 2003, and for the elaboration of the "World Water Development Report",

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,⁷

1. *Welcomes* the activities undertaken by States, the Secretariat, and the organizations, programmes and funds of the United Nations system that are engaged in inter-agency work related to freshwater and by major groups in preparation for the observance of the International Year of Freshwater, and encourages them to continue their efforts;

2. *Encourages* all Member States, relevant international organizations and major groups to support activities related to the Year, inter alia, through voluntary contributions, and to link their relevant activities to the Year;

3. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations system and major groups to take advantage of the Year to raise awareness of the essential importance of freshwater resources for satisfying basic human needs and for health and food production and the preservation of ecosystems, as well as for economic and social development in general, and to promote action at the local, national, regional and international levels, and calls for high priority to be given to the serious freshwater problems facing many regions, especially in the developing countries;

4. *Encourages* voluntary partnerships among Member States, international organizations and major groups to promote activities related to the Year;

5. *Calls upon* Member States that have not already done so to create national committees or designate focal points in their respective countries to facilitate and promote activities related to the Year at the local and national levels;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to promote closer coordination to elaborate and support proposals and undertake activities related to the Year;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*

⁷ A/57/132.



General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 86

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/57/531/Add.5)]

57/245. International Year of Mountains, 2002

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 53/24 of 10 November 1998, in which it proclaimed 2002 as the International Year of Mountains,

Recalling also its resolution 55/189 of 20 December 2000,

Recognizing chapter 13 of Agenda 21¹ and all relevant paragraphs of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”),² in particular paragraph 42 thereof, as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable mountain development,

Noting the voluntary International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions, launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development with the committed support of twenty-nine countries, sixteen intergovernmental organizations and sixteen organizations from the major groups, as an important approach to addressing the various interrelated dimensions of sustainable mountain development,

Taking note of the Bishkek Mountain Platform, the outcome document of the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit, held at Bishkek from 28 October to 1 November 2002, which was the concluding event of the International Year of Mountains,

1. *Takes note* of the interim report transmitted by the Secretary-General on the International Year of Mountains, 2002;³

2. *Welcomes* the success achieved during the International Year of Mountains, during which numerous activities and initiatives were undertaken at all levels, including major international meetings held in Bhutan, Canada, Ecuador, Germany, India, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Peru and Switzerland, which catalysed a

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

² *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

³ A/57/188.

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strengthened interest for sustainable development and poverty eradication in mountain regions;

3. *Recommends* that the experience gained during the International Year of Mountains be valued in the context of an appropriate follow-up;

4. *Notes with appreciation* the effective role played by Governments, as well as major groups, academic institutions and international organizations and agencies, in the activities related to the International Year of Mountains, including the establishment of seventy-four national committees;

5. *Also notes with appreciation* the work undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as the lead agency for the International Year of Mountains, as well as the valuable contributions made by the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations University, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund;

6. *Encourages* Governments, the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, and all relevant stakeholders from civil society organizations and the private sector to provide support, including through voluntary financial contributions, to the local, national and international programmes and projects resulting from the International Year of Mountains;

7. *Invites* the international community and other relevant partners to consider joining the voluntary International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions;

8. *Notes* that all stakeholders in the voluntary International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions have initiated a consultative process, with a view to determining the best options for further assisting stakeholders in the implementation of the Partnership, including through consideration of the offer made by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to host a secretariat financed through voluntary contributions;

9. *Encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to continue their constructive collaboration in the context of the follow-up to the International Year of Mountains, taking into account the inter-agency group on mountains, and the need for the further involvement of the United Nations system, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations University, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, international financial institutions and other relevant international organizations, consistent with the mandates specified in the Bishkek Mountain Platform;

10. *Decides* to designate 11 December as International Mountain Day, as from 11 December 2003, and encourages the international community to organize on this day events at all levels to highlight the importance of sustainable mountain development;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session a report on the achievements of the International Year of

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Mountains, under a sub-item entitled “Sustainable mountain development” of the item entitled “Environment and sustainable development”.

*78th plenary meeting
20 December 2002*



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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 21 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.64 and Add.1)]

57/153. Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, other relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Council,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,¹

Taking note also of the note by the Secretary-General on enhancing the functioning and utilization of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund,² submitted pursuant to resolution 56/107 of 14 December 2001,

Stressing the need to address further the issues of funding, coordination and strategic planning in the context of natural disasters and complex emergencies, in particular in the transition from relief to development activities,

Deeply concerned about the aggravating effects that major diseases, in particular the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic, cause in the context of natural disasters and complex emergencies,

Concerned at the need to mobilize adequate levels of financing for emergency humanitarian assistance,

Noting with interest the efforts of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to develop the Plan of Action on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises,

Welcoming the efforts of Member States, with the facilitation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and in cooperation with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of international urban search and rescue assistance,

¹ A/57/77-E/2002/63.

² A/57/613.

A/RES/57/153

and recalling its resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002, entitled "Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance",

1. *Welcomes* the outcome of the fifth humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council during its substantive session of 2002;

2. *Also welcomes* the progress made by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat in strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of the discussion of humanitarian policies and activities in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

4. *Calls upon* relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other relevant international organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations to cooperate with the Secretary-General and the Emergency Relief Coordinator to ensure timely implementation of and follow-up to resolutions and agreed conclusions of the humanitarian affairs segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council;

5. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to continue to consider ways to enhance further the humanitarian affairs segment of the future sessions of the Council, including through the adoption of negotiated outcomes of its deliberations;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to inform Governments regularly about the use of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the utilization of the Fund;

7. *Calls upon* the relevant humanitarian and development organizations of the United Nations system, other relevant international organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, Governments and non-governmental organizations to review and work towards greater alignment of their planning and resource mobilization tools so as to facilitate the transition from relief to development, and to report to the Secretary-General on actions taken in this respect;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to address, as appropriate and in collaboration with relevant actors, in particular the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, ways and means of strengthening the humanitarian response and for the mobilization of greater resources in connection with emergency humanitarian assistance in areas with a high prevalence of major diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, taking into account the impacts of major diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, on vulnerable communities and the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,³ and to report on actions taken in this respect;

9. *Stresses* the importance of the timely implementation of the Plan of Action on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and urges the Standing Committee to continue to refine the Plan and follow-up activities consistent with experience gained at the field level;

10. *Commends* the Emergency Relief Coordinator and his staff for their activities in emergency information management, and stresses that there is a need for national authorities, relief agencies and other relevant actors to continue to improve the sharing of relevant information related to natural disasters and complex

³ Resolution S-26/2, annex.

emergencies, including on disaster response and mitigation, and to take full advantage of United Nations emergency information services, such as ReliefWeb and the Integrated Regional Information Network;

11. *Emphasizes* that coordination of humanitarian assistance within the United Nations system is a mandate of the Secretary-General, as reflected in resolution 46/182, and that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs should benefit from adequate and more predictable funding, and requests the Secretary-General to report on the progress made in this regard;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2003, on the progress made in strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, including the implementation of and follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/32 of 26 July 2002 and the present resolution.

*75th plenary meeting
16 December 2002*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 March 2003

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 21 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.63 and Add.1)]

57/152. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, the annex to which contains the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, and its resolutions 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, 54/219 and 54/233 of 22 December 1999, 55/163 of 14 December 2000 and 56/103 of 14 December 2001, and recalling agreed conclusions 1999/1 of the Economic and Social Council¹ and Council resolutions 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2002/32 of 26 July 2002,

Recognizing the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Emphasizing that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory, and in the facilitation of the work of humanitarian organizations in mitigating the consequences of natural disasters,

Emphasizing also the responsibility of all States to undertake disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the impact of natural disasters,

Welcoming the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,

Stressing that national authorities need to enhance the resilience of populations to disasters through implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction so as to reduce risks to people, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources,

Welcoming the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme to strengthen the coordination of their activities in the field of disaster prevention, mitigation and management,

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1)*, chap. VI, para. 5.

Emphasizing the importance of raising awareness among developing countries of the capacities existing at the national, regional and international levels that could be deployed to assist them,

Emphasizing also the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all their phases, including prevention, preparedness, mitigation and recovery and reconstruction, and of strengthening the response capacity of affected countries,

Welcoming the efforts of Member States, with facilitation by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and in cooperation with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of international urban search and rescue assistance, and in this context noting its resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 entitled “Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance”,

Mindful of the effects that shortfalls in resources can have on the preparedness for and response to natural disasters,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General entitled “International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development”² and “Strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations”,³

2. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively the long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters;

3. *Calls upon* all States to adopt, where required, and to continue to implement effectively necessary legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, inter alia, by disaster prevention, including building regulations and appropriate land use, as well as disaster preparedness and capacity-building in disaster response and mitigation, and requests the international community to continue to assist developing countries, as appropriate, in this regard;

4. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of strengthening international cooperation, particularly through the effective use of multilateral mechanisms, in the provision of humanitarian assistance for all phases of a disaster, from relief and mitigation to development, including through the provision of adequate resources;

5. *Also stresses* that humanitarian assistance for natural disasters should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the annex to resolution 46/182 and should be determined on the basis of the human dimension and needs arising out of the particular natural disasters;

6. *Recognizes* that economic growth and sustainable development contribute to improving the capacity of States to mitigate, respond to and prepare for natural disasters;

7. *Reaffirms* that disaster risk analysis and vulnerability reduction form an integral part of sustainable development strategies and need to be considered in

² A/57/578.

³ A/57/77-E/2002/63.

development plans of all vulnerable countries and communities, including, where appropriate, in plans relating to the transition from relief to development, and also affirms that within such preventive strategies, disaster preparedness and early warning systems must be further strengthened at the country and regional levels, inter alia, through better coordination among relevant United Nations bodies and cooperation with Governments of affected countries and regional and other relevant organizations with the aim of maximizing the effectiveness of natural disaster response and reducing the impact of natural disasters, particularly in developing countries;

8. *Emphasizes* the importance of enhanced international cooperation, including with the United Nations and regional organizations, to assist developing countries in their efforts to build capacities and to predict, prepare for and respond to natural disasters;

9. *Stresses* the need for partnership among Governments of the affected countries, organizations of the United Nations system, relevant humanitarian organizations and specialized companies to promote training to strengthen preparedness for and response to natural disasters;

10. *Also stresses* the need to promote the access to and transfer of technology related to early warning systems and to mitigation programmes to developing countries affected by natural disasters;

11. *Encourages* the further use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, where appropriate;

12. *Also encourages* in such operations the sharing of geographical data, including remotely sensed images and geographic information system and global positioning system data among Governments, space agencies and relevant international humanitarian organizations, as appropriate, and also notes in that context initiatives such as those undertaken by the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters and the Global Disaster Information Network;

13. *Stresses* that particular international cooperation efforts should be undertaken to enhance and broaden further the utilization of national and local capacities and, where appropriate, regional and subregional capacities of developing countries for disaster preparedness and response, which may be made available in closer proximity to the site of a disaster, more efficiently and at lower cost;

14. *Welcomes* the role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat as the focal point within the overall United Nations system for the promotion and coordination of disaster response among the United Nations humanitarian agencies and other humanitarian partners;

15. *Also welcomes* the establishment of the positions of regional disaster response advisers by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as the initiative of the United Nations Development Programme to establish regional disaster reduction adviser positions, and encourages the further development of these initiatives in a coordinated and complementary manner in order to assist developing countries in capacity-building for disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response;

16. *Encourages* further cooperation between the United Nations system and regional organizations in order to increase the capacity of these organizations to respond to natural disasters;

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17. *Encourages* States that have not signed or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, adopted at Tampere, Finland, on 18 June 1998, to consider doing so;

18. *Invites* the United Nations system to explore further the concept of transitional recovery teams for providing assistance for bridging relief assistance and development cooperation;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with relevant organizations and partners, to continue progress on compiling a directory of disaster mitigation capacity at the national, regional and international levels as well as the Directory of Advanced Technologies for Disaster Response as a new part of the Central Register of Disaster Management Capacities;⁴

20. *Welcomes* the global review of disaster reduction initiatives coordinated by the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and emphasizes the importance of periodic review as a means of discussing disaster trends, assessing policies aimed at mitigating the impact of disaster and offering examples of successful initiatives;

21. *Encourages* donors to consider the importance of ensuring that assistance in the case of higher-profile natural disasters does not come at the expense of those that may have a relatively lower profile, bearing in mind that the allocation of resources should be driven by needs, as well as the importance of making efforts to increase the level of assistance for disaster reduction and preparedness programmes and for disaster response and mitigation activities;

22. *Requests* the Secretary-General to examine the overall situation regarding the mobilization of resources for response to natural disasters and to consider concrete recommendations to improve the international response to natural disasters, as necessary, based on his examination, keeping in mind also the need to address any geographical and sectoral imbalances and shortfalls in such responses, where they exist, as well as the more effective use of national emergency response agencies, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

*75th plenary meeting
16 December 2002*

⁴ www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/programs/response/register.html.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 February 2003

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 21 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.60 and Add.1)]

57/150. Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, the annex to which contains the guiding principles for strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, and its resolutions 54/233 of 22 December 1999, 55/163 of 14 December 2000, 56/103 of 14 December 2001 and 56/195 of 21 December 2001, and recalling agreed conclusions 1998/1¹ and 1999/1² of the Economic and Social Council and Council resolution 2002/32 of 26 July 2002,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development,³

Deeply concerned by the increasing number and scale of disasters, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, as well as their long-term consequences, especially severe for developing countries,

Reaffirming that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States must be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and, in this context, humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and, in principle, on the basis of an appeal by the affected country,

Reaffirming also that each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory and, hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory,

Recognizing the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 3 and corrigendum (A/53/3 and Corr.1), chap. VII, para. 5.*

² *Ibid., Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1), chap. VI, para. 5.*

³ A/57/578.

Emphasizing the responsibility of all States to undertake disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the impact of disasters,

Noting the critical role played by local rescuers in natural disaster response as well as existing in-country capacities,

Emphasizing the importance of timely, coordinated and technically sound international assistance provided in close coordination with the receiving State, in particular in the field of urban search and rescue following earthquakes and other events resulting in structural collapse,

Noting with appreciation, in this respect, the important contribution made by international urban search and rescue teams in the aftermath of disasters, which has helped to reduce loss of life and human suffering,

Commending the work of the United Nations Disaster Assistance and Coordination teams in facilitating rapid need assessments and assisting Member States to organize the on-site coordination of international urban search and rescue operations,

Concerned at the procedural requirements applicable to the movement of foreign nationals and equipment to and within a country that may impinge on the timely acceptance, deployment to the disaster site and activities of international urban search and rescue teams,

Also concerned that an additional burden may be placed on the resources of the affected countries by those international urban search and rescue teams which are inadequately trained or equipped,

Noting the efforts made by Member States, facilitated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of international urban search and rescue assistance,

Noting also that the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is identifying the current state of international law relating to disaster response for a report to be submitted to States and national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2003, and emphasizing the need for intergovernmental oversight of this process, particularly with regard to its principles, scope and objectives,

Recognizing, in this regard, the Guidelines developed by the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, as a flexible and helpful reference tool for disaster preparedness and response efforts,

1. *Stresses* the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of international urban search and rescue assistance, with the aim of contributing towards saving more human lives;

2. *Encourages* efforts aiming at the strengthening of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group and its regional groups, particularly through the participation in its activities of representatives from a larger number of countries;

3. *Urges* all States, consistent with their applicable measures relating to public safety and national security, to simplify or reduce, as appropriate, the customs and administrative procedures related to the entry, transit, stay and exit of international urban search and rescue teams and their equipment and materials, taking into account the Guidelines of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, particularly concerning visas for the rescuers and the quarantining of their

animals, the utilization of air space and the import of search and rescue and technical communications equipment, necessary drugs and other relevant materials;

4. *Also urges* all States to undertake measures to ensure the safety and security of international urban search and rescue teams operating in their territory;

5. *Further urges* all States that have the capacity to provide international urban search and rescue assistance to take the necessary measures to ensure that international urban search and rescue teams under their responsibility are deployed and operate in accordance with internationally developed standards as specified in the Guidelines of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, particularly concerning timely deployment, self-sufficiency, training, operating procedures and equipment, and cultural awareness;

6. *Reaffirms* the leadership role of the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator in supporting the authorities of the affected State, upon their request, in coordinating multilateral assistance in the aftermath of disasters;

7. *Encourages* the strengthening of cooperation among States at the regional and subregional levels in the field of disaster preparedness and response, with particular respect to capacity-building at all levels;

8. *Encourages* Member States, with the facilitation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and in cooperation with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, to continue efforts to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of international urban search and rescue assistance, including the further development of common standards;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, a comprehensive, updated report with recommendations on progress in the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of international urban search and rescue assistance, taking into account the extent of utilization of the Guidelines of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group.

*75th plenary meeting
16 December 2002*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 February 2003

II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 44

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.61)]

57/144. Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, by which it adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration as the outcome of the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, held at Headquarters from 6 to 8 September 2000, as well as its resolutions 55/162 of 14 December 2000 and 56/95 of 14 December 2001 on the follow-up,

Recognizing the important contributions made by the conferences and special sessions, in particular the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Doha, the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa,

Reaffirming the importance of the implementation of and follow-up to the Millennium Declaration in a comprehensive, integrated, coordinated and balanced manner at the national, regional and international levels,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration;¹

2. *Recognizes* the uneven progress made so far in achieving the objectives agreed upon in the Millennium Declaration, and urges Member States to continue to undertake with determination appropriate measures towards its implementation;

3. *Invites* the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, and encourages other interested parties, including civil society and the private sector, to continue to pursue vigorously the achievement of the objectives and goals contained in the Millennium Declaration;

4. *Also invites* the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization to engage in the review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, and in this context

¹ A/57/270 and Corr.1.

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requests the Secretary-General to include in his next report information on the support to be provided by the United Nations system in this regard;

5. *Calls upon* Member States to support, as appropriate, the measures set forth in the thematic sections of the report on preventing armed conflict, and the treatment and prevention of major diseases, including the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), malaria and tuberculosis;

6. *Decides* to consider, at its fifty-eighth session, convening a high-level plenary meeting during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly on the review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and consideration of the quinquennial comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the progress achieved towards implementing the Millennium Declaration;

7. *Also decides* that the review process of the implementation of the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration will be considered within the framework of the integrated and coordinated follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, while taking into account the need to attach more importance, coherence and visibility to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and its review process;

8. *Invites* the United Nations system, in cooperation with Member States, to promote awareness of the Millennium Declaration, and the development goals contained therein, through increased dissemination of information and widespread publicity;

9. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit".

*75th plenary meeting
16 December 2002*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 February 2002

II

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 98 (e)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/56/561/Add.5)]

56/198. Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/122 of 19 December 1994 on the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling also its resolutions 51/183 of 16 December 1996, 52/202 of 18 December 1997, 53/189 of 15 December 1998, 54/224 of 22 December 1999 and 55/202 of 20 December 2000,

Recalling further the Declaration of Barbados¹ and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States² adopted by the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,³

Recalling also the report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on its tenth session,⁴

Recognizing that, within the context of the challenges of development, small island developing States can experience specific problems arising from small size, remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, fragile ecosystems, constraints on transport and communication, isolation from markets, vulnerability to exogenous economic and financial shocks, limited internal markets, lack of natural resources, limited freshwater supply, heavy dependence on imports and limited commodities, depletion of non-renewable resources and migration,

¹ *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

² *Ibid.*, annex II.

³ See resolution S-22/2, annex.

⁴ TD/390.

A/RES/56/198

Recognizing also the efforts of small island developing States to achieve sustainable development and the need to continue to enhance their capacities to participate effectively in the multilateral trading system,

Noting the report of the first workshop of the Alliance of Small Island States on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety,⁵ held in Saint Kitts and Nevis from 4 to 6 December 2000,⁶ and the report of the third workshop of the Alliance of Small Island States on climate change, energy and preparations for the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in Cyprus from 15 to 19 January 2001,⁷

Noting also the significant efforts to implement the Programme of Action at the local, national, regional and international levels and the need for regional and global institutions to continue to supplement the efforts being made at the national level, including through necessary financial support in partnership with the international community,

Acknowledging the efforts of small island developing States to convene, in cooperation with the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, a series of capacity-building workshops targeted at issues of specific relevance to small island developing States,

Welcoming the preparatory activities undertaken at the national and regional levels for the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Expressing its appreciation to the Government of Jamaica for hosting the first workshop of the Alliance of Small Island States on trade, sustainable development and small island developing States from 12 to 15 December 2001,

Noting the current efforts of the Alliance of Small Island States to organize an interregional preparatory meeting of small island developing States for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Singapore from 7 to 11 January 2002, and calls upon all relevant international organizations actively to support the meeting,

Emphasizing the continuing need for the financing of projects that were presented within the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action, inter alia, at the meeting of representatives of donor countries and small island developing States, held in New York from 24 to 26 February 1999,⁸

Noting with appreciation the contribution made by some donor countries towards further implementation of the Programme of Action, and underlining the need for those efforts to be intensified and supplemented by other donor countries and agencies,

Emphasizing the need to complete, without delay, the quantitative and analytical work on the vulnerability index mandated in the review document of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, taking into account Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/43 of 24 October 2001, in particular paragraph 6 thereof, and emphasizing the relevance of such work to the work of the Committee for Development Policy on criteria for the identification, including

⁵ See UNEP/CBD/ExCOP/1/3 and Corr.1, part two, annex.

⁶ A/55/765, annex.

⁷ E/CN.17/2001/11, annex.

⁸ See A/S-22/4.

designation and graduation, of least developed countries and its importance to relevant small island developing States,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;⁹
2. *Reiterates* the urgent need for strong and effective implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States² and of the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session³ to assist those States in their efforts to enhance their capacities to achieve sustainable development;
3. *Welcomes* efforts made at the national, subregional and regional levels to implement the Programme of Action;
4. *Invites* the relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and organizations, within their respective mandates, to reflect measures for the implementation of the Programme of Action in their programmes;
5. *Invites* donors, as well as all relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations and other regional and international organizations, to provide appropriate support to the interregional preparatory meeting of small island developing States for the World Summit on Sustainable Development;
6. *Invites* all relevant stakeholders, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to participate fully in the activities identified for the further implementation of and effective follow-up to the Programme of Action;
7. *Urges* all relevant organizations to finalize, as a matter of urgency, the work on the development of a vulnerability index, taking into account the particular circumstances and needs of small island developing States;
8. *Welcomes* the strengthened Small Island Developing States Unit, and requests the Secretary-General to consider ways to strengthen the Unit further, inter alia, by establishing the Small Island Developing States Information Network within the Unit and by assisting small island developing States with, inter alia, project implementation advice and assistance in the identification of short- and long-term capacity needs through coordination with regional and international institutions, and to make proposals in that regard;
9. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to consider further cost-effective ways and means of increasing and improving the United Nations system-wide coordination and dissemination of information on activities in support of small island developing States and the Programme of Action, through the Small Island Developing States Unit, including concrete measures for improving coordination within the United Nations system;
10. *Welcomes* the contributions of donor countries to the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Unit and the Small Island Developing States Information Network, and encourages other Member States to make contributions, in particular in support of the Network;
11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item

⁹ A/56/170.

A/RES/56/198

entitled “Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States”;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

*90th plenary meeting
21 December 2001*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 February 2002

II

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 98 (c)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/56/561/Add.3)]

56/196. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/204 of 20 December 2000 and other resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,¹

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Germany for the generous manner in which it hosted and provided facilities for the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention,

Noting with satisfaction that the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties was held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 1 to 12 October 2001,

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Switzerland for the organization of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties and its special events in Geneva,

Welcoming the decision taken by the Council of the Global Environment Facility at its May 2001 session to pursue the designation of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, as a focal area of the Facility, as a means of enhancing its support for the successful implementation of the Convention,

Acknowledging that desertification and drought are problems of a global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world and that joint actions of the international community are needed to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought, including the integration of strategies for poverty eradication,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;²

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

² A/56/175.

2. *Welcomes* the outcome of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, in particular the adoption of the Declaration on the Commitments to Enhance the Implementation of the Obligations under the Convention;³

3. *Also welcomes* the outcome of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties;

4. *Notes* the establishment of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties, and invites parties and other actors to participate in the first session of the Committee, which shall be held at Bonn, Germany, from 18 to 29 November 2002, in accordance with Conference of the Parties decision 2/COP.5 of 12 October 2001;⁴

5. *Also notes* that the mandate and functions of the Committee shall be subject to renewal at the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties, in the light of lessons learned during the overall review of the Committee;⁵

6. *Encourages* the conferences of the parties to and the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁶ the Convention on Biological Diversity,⁷ the Convention to Combat Desertification and other international instruments related to environment and sustainable development, as well as relevant organizations, especially the United Nations Environment Programme, with, as appropriate, the involvement of the Environmental Management Group, to continue their work on enhancing mutual complementarities, with full respect for the status of the secretariats of the conventions and the autonomous decision-making prerogatives of the conferences of the parties to the conventions concerned, to strengthen cooperation with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of those conventions at the international, regional and national levels and to report thereon to their respective conferences of the parties;

7. *Welcomes* the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification to submit to the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as inputs, the Chairman's summary of the Ministerial and High-level Interactive Dialogue sessions held at the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, including the challenges of and opportunities in combating desertification, controlling land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought in affected developing countries, as well as those relating to financial resources and achieving sustainable development,⁸ and the comprehensive report of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the in-depth review and analysis of reports submitted at the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties;⁹

8. *Also welcomes* the decision taken by the Council of the Global Environment Facility, under item 7 of the agenda of its meeting in December 2001,

³ ICCD/COP(4)/11/Add.1, decision 8/COP.4, annex.

⁴ See ICCD/COP (5)/11/Add.1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, decision 1/COP.5, para. 3.

⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

⁷ See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

⁸ ICCD/COP(5)/11/Add.1, decision 8/COP.5, annex.

⁹ *Ibid.*, decision 3/COP.5, annex.

to consider at its next meeting proposed amendments to the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured Global Environment Facility¹⁰ to designate land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, as a focal area of the Facility, as a means of enhancing its support for the successful implementation of the Convention, with a view to the Council recommending approval of such amendments by the Assembly of States participating in the Facility at its meeting in October 2002;

9. *Encourages* the Conference of the Parties and the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to work cooperatively and effectively to facilitate the financing of the full implementation of the Convention by the Facility to achieve the objectives of the Convention in the area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation;

10. *Notes with appreciation* that some affected developing countries have adopted their national, subregional and regional action programmes, and urges affected developing countries that have not yet done so to accelerate the process of elaboration and adoption of their action programmes, with a view to finalizing them as soon as possible;

11. *Calls upon* the international community to contribute to the implementation of those programmes through, inter alia, the conclusion of partnership agreements and through the bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes that are available to implement the Convention, including contributions from non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and to support the efforts of the developing countries to implement the Convention;

12. *Invites* affected developing countries to place the implementation of their action programmes to combat desertification high among their priorities in their dialogue with their development partners;

13. *Notes with satisfaction* the steps being taken by affected developing countries that are parties to the Convention, with the assistance of international organizations and bilateral development partners, to implement the Convention, and the efforts being made to promote the participation of all actors of civil society in the elaboration and implementation of national action programmes to combat desertification, and in that regard encourages countries to cooperate at the subregional and regional levels, as appropriate;

14. *Welcomes* the strengthened cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the Global Mechanism, and encourages further efforts in that regard for the effective implementation of the Convention;

15. *Invites* all parties to pay promptly and in full the contributions required for the core budget of the Convention for the biennium 2002–2003, and urges all parties that have not yet paid their contributions for the year 1999 and/or the biennium 2000–2001 to do so as soon as possible in order to ensure continuity in the cash flow required to finance the ongoing work of the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

16. *Calls upon* Governments, multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private

¹⁰ DP/1994/60, annex.

A/RES/56/196

sector, to contribute generously to the General Fund, the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties,¹¹ and welcomes the financial support already provided by some countries;

17. *Decides* to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2002–2003 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, including the sixth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies;

18. *Encourages* the United Nations Development Programme to continue implementing decision 2000/23 of 29 September 2000 of its Executive Board pertaining to the cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the United Nations Development Programme in order to mainstream activities to combat desertification at the national, subregional and regional levels;¹²

19. *Approves* the continuation of the current institutional linkage and related administrative arrangements between the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariat of the Convention for a further five-year period, to be reviewed by the General Assembly and the Conference of the Parties not later than 31 December 2006;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session the sub-item entitled “Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa”.

*90th plenary meeting
21 December 2001*

¹¹ ICCD/COP(1)/11/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 2/COP.1, annex, paras. 7-11.

¹² See DP/2000/1, para. 231.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 February 2002

II

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 20 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/56/L.51 and Corr.1 and Add.1)]

56/103. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, the annex to which contains the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, and its resolutions 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, 54/219 and 54/233 of 22 December 1999 and 55/163 of 14 December 2000, and recalling agreed conclusions 1999/1 of the Economic and Social Council¹ and Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999,

Recognizing the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Emphasizing that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory, and in the facilitation of the work of humanitarian organizations in mitigating the consequences of natural disasters,

Emphasizing also the responsibility of all States to undertake disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the impact of natural disasters,

Welcoming the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,

Emphasizing the importance of raising awareness among developing countries of the capacities existing at the national, regional and international levels that could be deployed to assist them,

Emphasizing also the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all their phases, including prevention, preparedness, mitigation and recovery and reconstruction, and of strengthening the response capacity of affected countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1), chap. VI, para. 5.*

to development² and on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;³

2. *Expresses deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively the long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters;

3. *Calls upon* all States to adopt, where required, and to continue to implement effectively necessary legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, inter alia, by disaster prevention, including building regulations and appropriate land use, as well as disaster preparedness and capacity-building in disaster response, and requests the international community in that context to continue to assist developing countries, where appropriate;

4. *Stresses*, in that context, the importance of strengthening international cooperation in the provision of humanitarian assistance in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all their phases, from relief and mitigation to development, including through the provision of adequate resources, and encourages the effective use of multilateral mechanisms;

5. *Also stresses* that humanitarian assistance for natural disasters should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the annex to resolution 46/182, and should be determined on the basis of the human dimension and needs arising out of the particular natural disasters;

6. *Recognizes* that economic growth and sustainable development contribute to improving the capacity of States to mitigate, respond to and prepare for natural disasters;

7. *Reaffirms* that disaster reduction forms an integral part of sustainable development strategies and needs to be considered in the development plans of all vulnerable countries and communities, and also reaffirms that within such preventive strategies, disaster preparedness and early warning systems must be strengthened further at the country and regional levels, inter alia, through better coordination among relevant United Nations bodies and cooperation with Governments of affected countries and regional and other relevant organizations with the aim of maximizing the effectiveness of natural disaster response and reducing the impact of natural disasters, particularly in developing countries;

8. *Emphasizes* the importance of enhanced international cooperation, including with the United Nations and regional organizations, to assist developing countries in their efforts to build capacities, and to predict, prepare and respond to natural disasters;

9. *Stresses* the need for partnership among Governments of the affected countries, relevant humanitarian organizations and specialized companies to promote training in, access to and use of technologies to strengthen preparedness for and response to natural disasters, and to enhance the transfer of current technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed;

² A/56/307.

³ A/56/95-E/2001/85.

10. *Encourages* the further use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, where appropriate;

11. *Also encourages* in such operations the sharing of geographical data, including remotely sensed images and geographic information system and global positioning system data among Governments, space agencies and relevant international humanitarian organizations, as appropriate, and notes in that context the work being done by the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters and the Global Disaster Information Network;

12. *Stresses* that particular international cooperation efforts should be undertaken to enhance and broaden further the utilization of national and local capacities and, where appropriate, regional and subregional capacities of developing countries for disaster preparedness and response, which may be made available in closer proximity to the site of a disaster, more efficiently and at lower cost;

13. *Welcomes* the role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat as the focal point within the overall United Nations system for the promotion and coordination of disaster response preparedness among the United Nations humanitarian agencies and other humanitarian partners;

14. *Also welcomes* the establishment of the positions of regional disaster response advisers by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as the initiative of the United Nations Development Programme to establish regional disaster reduction adviser positions, and encourages the further development of those initiatives in a coordinated and complementary manner in order to assist developing countries in capacity-building for disaster prevention, preparedness mitigation and response;

15. *Takes note* of the initiatives taken by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and by the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of international urban search and rescue assistance in the aftermath of natural disasters;

16. *Encourages* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to continue its efforts to promote greater international cooperation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of urban search and rescue assistance;

17. *Encourages* further cooperation between the United Nations system and regional organizations in order to increase the capacity of those organizations to respond to natural disasters;

18. *Encourages* States that have not signed or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, adopted at Tampere, Finland, on 18 June 1998,⁴ to consider doing so;

19. *Invites* the United Nations system to explore further the concept of transitional recovery teams for providing assistance for bridging relief assistance and development cooperation;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with relevant organization partners, to continue progress on compiling a directory of disaster

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1586, No. 27688.

A/RES/56/103

mitigation capacity existing at the national, regional and international levels and developing the Directory of Advanced Technologies for Disaster Response as a new part of the Central Register of Disaster Management Capacities;

21. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to complete the project of issuing a global report on disaster reduction as undertaken by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

22. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to continue to consider mechanisms to improve the international response to natural disasters, inter alia, by addressing any geographical and sectoral imbalances in such a response, where they exist, as well as by more effective use of national emergency response agencies, taking into account their comparative advantages and specializations, as well as existing arrangements, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", with a view, inter alia, to contributing towards the comprehensive report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, to be submitted to the Assembly at that session under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*87th plenary meeting
14 December 2001*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 January 2002

II

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 20 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/56/L.14 and Add.1)]

56/99. Emergency response to disasters

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, including the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance contained therein,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 54/30 of 22 November 1999 and 54/219 of 22 December 1999,

Welcoming the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,

Deeply concerned by the fact that natural disasters in every corner of the globe continue to claim high numbers of casualties and cause immense material damage and that the frequency and magnitude of these catastrophes place an ever-increasing material and moral burden on nations,

Reiterating the importance of mounting prompt and effective relief operations in the aftermath of such deadly calamities in the future,

Welcoming the ongoing efforts, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, aimed at promoting preparedness for disaster response at the international, regional and national levels, including, in collaboration with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of international urban search and rescue assistance in the aftermath of natural disasters,

1. *Expresses its solidarity* with the peoples of the countries that have been struck by natural calamities as they cope with the consequences of these disasters;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to all States of the international community, international agencies and organizations and non-governmental organizations and individuals that are providing emergency relief to the areas affected by natural disasters;
3. *Notes with satisfaction* the progress achieved by the Governments of Turkey and Greece, in cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, on the formation of a joint Hellenic-Turkish standby disaster response unit, which will be operational in the near future, with no financial implications for the programme budget of the United Nations;

A/RES/56/99

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to continue work on the modalities for the utilization of the standby disaster relief unit by the United Nations system;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*87th plenary meeting
14 December 2001*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
30 January 2002

II

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 29

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/56/L.48)]

56/95. Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, by which it adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration as the outcome of the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, held at Headquarters from 6 to 8 September 2000,

Recalling also its resolution 55/162 of 14 December 2000, in which it, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to prepare a long-term “road map” towards the implementation of the Millennium Declaration within the United Nations system and to submit it to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session,

Reaffirming the need to maintain the will and momentum of the Millennium Summit, as well as the importance of a comprehensive and balanced approach in the implementation of and follow-up to the Millennium Declaration,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration”;¹

2. *Recommends* that the “road map” be considered as a useful guide in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration by the United Nations system, and invites Member States, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and other interested parties to consider the “road map” when formulating plans for implementing goals related to the Declaration;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare an annual report and a comprehensive report every five years on progress achieved by the United Nations system and Member States towards implementing the Millennium Declaration, drawing upon the “road map” and in accordance with resolution 55/162, and requests that the annual reports focus on cross-cutting and cross-sectoral issues, as well as on the major areas set forth in the “road map”, while the quinquennial comprehensive reports examine progress achieved towards implementing all the commitments made in the Declaration;

¹ A/56/326.

A/RES/56/95

4. *Invites* the United Nations system, in cooperation with Member States, to adopt specific measures to give widespread publicity to the Millennium Declaration and to increase the dissemination of information on the Declaration;

5. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session the item entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit".

*86th plenary meeting
14 December 2001*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 February 2001

II

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 95 (e)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/55/582/Add.5)]

55/204. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 54/223 of 22 December 1999 and other relevant resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,¹

Noting with satisfaction that the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention was held at Recife, Brazil, from 15 to 26 November 1999,

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Brazil for the generous manner in which it hosted and provided facilities for the third session of the Conference of the Parties,

Acknowledging that desertification and drought are problems of a global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world and that joint action of the international community is needed to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought, including the integration of strategies for poverty eradication,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,²

1. *Welcomes* the convening of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, at Bonn, Germany, from 11 to 22 December 2000;

2. *Also welcomes* the very large number of ratifications of the Convention, and calls upon all remaining countries that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible;

3. *Further welcomes* the progress made in producing a draft additional regional implementation annex to the Convention for the countries of Central and

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

² A/55/331.

Eastern Europe,³ and invites the Conference of the Parties to consider adopting it at its fourth session;

4. *Stresses* the importance of a coherent and timely implementation of the provisions of the Convention at all levels, including the general provisions and obligations of all States parties, in accordance with the provisions of part II of the Convention;

5. *Notes with satisfaction* the steps being taken by affected developing country parties to the Convention, with the assistance of international organizations and bilateral development partners, to implement the Convention, and the efforts being made to promote the participation of all actors of society in the elaboration of national action programmes to combat desertification, and in this regard encourages countries to cooperate at the subregional and regional levels, as appropriate;

6. *Welcomes* the strengthened cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the Global Mechanism, and encourages further efforts in this regard for the effective implementation of the Convention;

7. *Also welcomes* the financial support already provided on a voluntary basis by some countries, and urges Governments, the private sector and all relevant organizations, including non-governmental organizations, to make or continue to make voluntary contributions to the Global Mechanism to enable it to implement its mandate effectively and fully;

8. *Calls upon* the Global Environment Facility to continue to enhance, within its mandate, its ongoing support for land degradation activities in developing countries;

9. *Welcomes* the decision of the Council of the Global Environment Facility, at its meeting held from 1 to 3 November 2000, to request the Chief Executive Officer to explore the best options for enhancing the support of the Facility in assisting affected countries, especially those in Africa, in implementing the Convention, taking into account the third replenishment;⁴

10. *Calls upon* the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies to strengthen their cooperation with the Global Mechanism and the secretariat of the Convention;

11. *Encourages* the parties to the Convention to provide the necessary support to the secretariat so as to enable it to discharge effectively its responsibilities to the Convention;

12. *Welcomes* decision 2000/23 of 29 September 2000 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme aimed at developing cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the United Nations Development Programme in order to mainstream activities to combat desertification at the national, subregional and regional levels;⁵

13. *Urges* all parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to pay promptly and in full their contributions to the core budget of the Convention so as to ensure continuity in the cash flow required to finance the ongoing work of the

³ ICCD/COP(3)/16, annex.

⁴ See ICCD/COP(4)/11/Add.1, decision 9/COP.4, para. 2.

⁵ See DP/2001/1, para. 231.

Conference of the Parties, the subsidiary bodies, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

14. *Calls upon* Governments, multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to contribute generously to the General Fund, the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties;⁶

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make a provision in the proposed calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2002-2003 for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, including the sixth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties and meetings of its subsidiary bodies;

16. *Invites* the Conference of the Parties to contribute towards the preparation of the ten-year review of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21⁷ and other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, inter alia, by elaborating proposals, including options for funding, aimed at enhancing the implementation of the Convention at the national, subregional and regional levels, and requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its tenth session to this end;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution, as well as on the outcome of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties;

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa".

*87th plenary meeting
20 December 2000*

⁶ ICCD/COP(1)/11/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 2/COP.1, annex, paras. 7-11.

⁷ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 February 2001

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 95 (d)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/55/582/Add.4)]

55/203. Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the principles and commitments enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development¹ and the principles embodied in the Declaration of Barbados² and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,³ as well as other relevant declarations and international instruments,

Recalling the Declaration⁴ and review document⁴ adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,

Taking into account all other relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, including resolution 54/225 of 22 December 1999,

Reaffirming the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁵ and emphasizing the fundamental character of the Convention,

Conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and that they need to be considered as a whole,

Recalling the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, signed at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 24 March 1983, which contains the definition of the wider Caribbean region of which the Caribbean Sea is part,⁶

¹ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex I.

² Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

³ Ibid., annex II.

⁴ See resolution S-22/2, annex.

⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.V.10.

⁶ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1506, No. 25974.

Welcoming the adoption, on 16 October 1999 in Aruba, of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities⁷ to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

Welcoming also the entry into force, on 18 June 2000, of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife⁷ to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

Recalling the relevant work done by the International Maritime Organization,

Considering that the Caribbean Sea area includes a large number of States, countries and territories, most of which are developing countries and small island developing States that are ecologically fragile, structurally weak and economically vulnerable and are also affected, inter alia, by their limited capacity, narrow resource base, need for financial resources, high levels of poverty and the resulting social problems and the challenges and opportunities of globalization and trade liberalization,

Recognizing that the Caribbean Sea has a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystem,

Emphasizing that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change and variability, associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño/Southern Oscillation phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes,

Welcoming the establishment of the working group on the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon within the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction,

Bearing in mind the heavy reliance of most of the Caribbean economies on their coastal areas, as well as on the marine environment in general, to achieve their sustainable development needs and goals,

Recognizing the Caribbean Environment Outlook process currently being undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme, and welcoming the support being provided by the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme towards its implementation,

Acknowledging that the intensive use of the Caribbean Sea for maritime transport, as well as the considerable number and interlocking character of the maritime areas under national jurisdiction where Caribbean countries exercise their rights and duties under international law, present a challenge for the effective management of the resources,

Noting the problem of marine pollution caused, inter alia, by land-based sources and the continuing threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and sewage as well as from the accidental release of hazardous and noxious substances in the Caribbean Sea area,

⁷ See www.cep.unep.org/law.

Taking note of resolution GC(44)/RES/17 of 22 September 2000 of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency on safety of transport of radioactive materials,⁸

Mindful of the diversity and dynamic interaction and competition among socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources,

Mindful also of the efforts of the Caribbean countries to address in a more holistic manner the sectoral issues relating to the management of the Caribbean Sea area and, in so doing, to promote an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, through a regional cooperative effort among Caribbean countries,

Noting the efforts of the Caribbean countries, within the framework of the Association of Caribbean States, to develop further support for their concept of the Caribbean Sea as an area of special importance, in the context of sustainable development and in conformity with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁵

Cognizant of the importance of the Caribbean Sea to present and future generations and its importance to the heritage, the continuing economic well-being and sustenance of people living in the area, and the urgent need for the countries of the region to take appropriate steps for its preservation and protection, with the support of the international community,

1. *Recognizes* the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development;

2. *Encourages* the further promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolution 54/225, as well as the provisions of Agenda 21,⁹ the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,³ the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly⁴ and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁵

3. *Also encourages* the continued efforts of the Caribbean countries to develop further an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development and, in this regard, to continue to develop regional cooperation in the management of their ocean affairs in the context of sustainable development, to address such issues as land-based pollution, pollution from ships and the diversity and dynamic interaction of, and competition among, socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources;

4. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and the international community to assist Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from

⁸ See International Atomic Energy Agency, *Resolutions and Other Decisions of the General Conference, Forty-fourth Regular Session, 18-22 September 2000* (GC(44)/RES/DEC(2000)).

⁹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, from illegal dumping or accidental release of hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals, in violation of relevant international rules and standards, as well as pollution from land-based activities;

5. *Calls upon* all relevant States to take the necessary steps to bring into force, and to support the implementation of, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities,⁷ in order to protect the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from land-based pollution and degradation;

6. *Calls upon* all States to become contracting parties to relevant international agreements to promote the protection of the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from pollution and degradation from ships;

7. *Invites* intergovernmental organizations within the United Nations system to continue efforts to assist Caribbean countries to become parties to the relevant conventions and protocols and to implement them effectively;

8. *Calls upon* the international community, the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions, including the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support actively the above-mentioned approach;

9. *Calls upon* Member States to improve as a matter of priority their emergency response capabilities and the containment of environmental damage, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, in the event of natural disasters or of an accident or incident relating to maritime navigation;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-seventh session, under the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

*87th plenary meeting
20 December 2000*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 February 2001

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 95 (d)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/55/582/Add.4)]

55/202. Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/122 of 19 December 1994 on the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling also its resolutions 51/183 of 16 December 1996, 52/202 of 18 December 1997, 53/189 of 15 December 1998 and 54/224 of 22 December 1999,

Recognizing that small island developing States, given their size, limited resources, geographic dispersion and, in most cases, isolation from markets, face special challenges and unique vulnerabilities of an environmental and economic nature in their efforts to achieve sustainable development and the need to enhance their capacity to effectively benefit from the opportunities presented by trade liberalization and globalization, while minimizing their negative impact on small island developing States,

Recalling the Declaration of Barbados¹ and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States² of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling also the Declaration³ and review document³ adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,⁴

Having also considered the report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on its tenth session,⁵

¹ *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

² *Ibid.*, annex II.

³ See resolution S-22/2, annex.

⁴ A/55/185.

⁵ TD/390.

Taking note of the report of the second Alliance of Small Island States workshop on climate change negotiations, management and strategy, which was held at Apia, Samoa, from 26 July to 4 August 2000,⁶

Noting the significant efforts to implement the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels and the need for regional and global institutions to continue to supplement the efforts being made at the national level, including through effective financial support,

Acknowledging the efforts of small island developing States to convene, in cooperation with the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, a series of capacity-building workshops targeted at issues of specific relevance to small island developing States,

Welcoming the offer of the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis to host the first Alliance of Small Island States workshop on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety⁷ in December 2000 and the offer of the Government of Cyprus to host the third Alliance of Small Island States workshop on climate change, energy and preparations for the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in January 2001,

Bearing in mind the continued need for the financing of projects that were presented within the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action, inter alia, at the meeting of representatives of donor countries and small island developing States held in New York from 24 to 26 February 1999,⁸

Noting with appreciation the contribution by some donor countries towards further implementation of the Programme of Action, and underlining the need for those efforts to be intensified and supplemented by other donor countries and agencies,

Noting the work being undertaken by the Committee for Development Policy and other international organizations on a vulnerability index, which incorporates, inter alia, environmental and economic vulnerability factors,

1. *Reiterates* the urgent need for strong and effective implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States² and of the Declaration³ and review document³ adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session;

2. *Welcomes* efforts at the national, subregional and regional levels to implement the Programme of Action;

3. *Invites* the relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and organizations, within their respective mandates, to reflect measures for the implementation of the Programme of Action in their programmes;

4. *Invites* the relevant agencies within the United Nations system, in the preparation of the ten-year review of the progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to identify measures that would ensure the effective implementation of the Programme of Action;

⁶ A/C.2/55/3.

⁷ See UNEP/CBD/ExCOP/1/3 and Corr.1, part two, annex.

⁸ See A/S-22/4.

5. *Calls upon* Member States, in particular the donor community, as well as the relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and organizations, to support the efforts of small island developing States in the further implementation of the Programme of Action through, inter alia, the provision of adequate technical and financial resources, taking into account the Declaration and review document for further implementation and effective follow-up;

6. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations system to assist small island developing States in their efforts to enhance their capacities to effectively utilize the benefits and mitigate the implications of globalization, including by bridging the digital divide and fostering digital opportunities in the field of information and communication technologies;

7. *Invites* all relevant stakeholders, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to participate fully in the activities identified for the further implementation of and effective follow-up to the Programme of Action;

8. *Urges* all relevant organizations to finalize, as a matter of urgency, the work on the development of a vulnerability index;

9. *Welcomes* the strengthened Small Island Developing States Unit, and requests the Secretary-General to consider ways to further strengthen the Unit, inter alia, by establishing the Small Island Developing States Information Network within the Unit and by assisting small island developing States with, inter alia, project implementation advice and assistance in the identification of short and long-term capacity needs through coordination with regional and international institutions, and to make proposals in that regard;

10. *Welcomes* the contributions of Germany, Italy, Japan and Norway to the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Unit, and encourages other Member States to make contributions, in particular, in support of the Small Island Developing States Information Network;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States";

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

*87th plenary meeting
20 December 2000*



General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 February 2001

II

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 20 (a)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.38/Rev.1 and Add.1)]

55/163. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, which contains in its annex the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, and its resolutions 52/12 B of 19 December 1997 and 54/219 and 54/233 of 22 December 1999, and recalling agreed conclusions 1999/1 of the Economic and Social Council¹ and Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations,²

Recognizing the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Emphasizing that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory, and in the facilitation of the work of humanitarian organizations in mitigating the consequences of natural disasters,

Emphasizing also the responsibility of all States to undertake disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the impact of natural disasters,

Emphasizing further, in this regard, the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected State in dealing with natural disasters in all its phases,

Stressing the need to optimize and disseminate the listings of organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian and scientific organizations, as well as the need to develop further a directory of the specialized national, regional and international institutions and agencies working in the field of international response to natural disasters, together with an inventory of national

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1), chap. VI, para. 5.*

² A/55/82-E/2000/61.

capacities, in order to lay the foundation for an efficient and effective use of resources available and collaborative efforts,

Noting the establishment of the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the need to strengthen cooperation and coordination among all relevant bodies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, in dealing with all phases of natural disasters,

1. *Expresses deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively the long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disaster;

2. *Stresses* that humanitarian assistance for natural disasters should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the annex to resolution 46/182 and should be determined on the basis of the human dimension and needs arising out of the particular natural disasters;

3. *Calls upon* all States to adopt, where required, and to continue to implement effectively necessary legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, inter alia, by disaster prevention, including building regulations and appropriate land use, as well as disaster preparedness and capacity-building in disaster response, and requests the international community in this context to continue to assist developing countries, where appropriate;

4. *Stresses*, in this context, the importance of strengthening international cooperation in the provision of humanitarian assistance for all phases of a disaster, from relief and mitigation to development, including through the provision of adequate resources;

5. *Recognizes* that economic growth and sustainable development contribute to improving the capacity of States to mitigate, respond to and prepare for natural disasters;

6. *Stresses* the need to strengthen efforts at all levels, including at the domestic level, to improve natural disaster awareness, prevention, preparedness and mitigation, including early warning systems, as well as international cooperation in response to emergencies, from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, bearing in mind the overall negative impact of natural disasters, the resulting humanitarian need and requests from affected countries, as appropriate;

7. *Recognizes* efforts by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, the members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and other members of the United Nations system in promoting preparedness for response at the national, regional and international levels and in strengthening the mobilization and coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system in the field of natural disasters, and in this context welcomes the expansion of the United Nations disaster assessment and coordination teams to include experts from all areas of the world;

8. *Notes* that the transition phase after natural disasters is often excessively long and characterized by a number of gaps and that Governments, in cooperation with relief agencies, as appropriate, when planning for meeting immediate needs, should place these needs in the perspective of sustainable development whenever such an approach is possible, and in this context takes note of the work of the United Nations disaster assessment and coordination teams;

9. *Encourages* enhanced cooperation among Governments, in particular through the United Nations and regional organizations, in order to strengthen early warning and preparedness mechanisms for natural disasters;

10. *Encourages* Governments, in particular through their disaster management or response agencies, as appropriate, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, to continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator to maximize the effectiveness of the international response to natural disasters, based, inter alia, on humanitarian need, from relief to development, and also to maximize the effectiveness of disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts at all levels;

11. *Encourages* further cooperation between the United Nations system and regional organizations in order to increase the capacity of those organizations to respond to natural disasters;

12. *Encourages* States that have not signed or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, adopted at Tampere, Finland, on 18 June 1998,³ to consider doing so;

13. *Stresses* the need for partnership among Governments of the affected countries, relevant humanitarian organizations and specialized companies to promote training in, access to and use of technologies to strengthen preparedness for and response to natural disasters and to enhance the transfer of current technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed;

14. *Encourages* the further use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, where appropriate;

15. *Also encourages* in such operations the sharing of geographical data, including remotely sensed images and geographic information system and global positioning system data among Governments, space agencies and relevant international humanitarian organizations, as appropriate, and also notes in this context the work being done by the Global Disaster Information Network;

16. *Further encourages* compatibility and complementarity of telecommunications and other technological equipment required in humanitarian and disaster relief operations;

17. *Stresses* the need to ensure close links, as set out in resolution 54/219, between disaster prevention activities and the improvement of natural disaster preparedness and response;

18. *Encourages* Governments in natural-disaster-prone countries to establish, with the support of the international community, in particular the donors, national spatial information infrastructures relating to natural disaster preparedness, early warning, response and mitigation, including the necessary training of personnel;

19. *Also encourages* innovative efforts that link various phases of international assistance, from relief to development, such as the joint Disaster

³ United Nations Treaty registration No. 27688.

A/RES/55/163

Response and Recovery Mission undertaken by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization in all countries affected by hurricane Mitch, and reiterates the need to ensure adequate assessment of and follow-up to these approaches, with a view to further developing and applying them, as appropriate, in other natural disasters;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with relevant bodies of the United Nations system, to prepare recommendations on how to improve the potential of the United Nations to mitigate natural disasters including, in particular, through the development of an inventory of the existing capacities at the national, regional and international levels;

21. *Notes* the submission by the Secretary-General of his note on enhancing the functioning and utilization of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund,⁴ pursuant to the request contained in resolutions 54/95 of 8 December 1999 and 54/233 for concrete proposals for enhancing the functioning and utilization of the Fund and the invitation to consider more active use of the Fund for timely and adequate natural disaster response, and decides to consider the note comprehensively at its fifty-sixth session;

22. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to consider innovative mechanisms to improve the international response to natural disasters, inter alia, by addressing any geographical and sectoral imbalances in such a response where they exist, as well as more effective use of national emergency response agencies, taking into account their comparative advantages and specializations, as well as existing arrangements, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", with a view, inter alia, to contributing towards the comprehensive report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, to be submitted to the Assembly at that session under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*85th plenary meeting
14 December 2000*

⁴ A/55/649.



General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 September 2000

II

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 60 (b)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.2)]

55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration

The General Assembly

Adopts the following Declaration:

United Nations Millennium Declaration

I. Values and principles

1. We, heads of State and Government, have gathered at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 6 to 8 September 2000, at the dawn of a new millennium, to reaffirm our faith in the Organization and its Charter as indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.
2. We recognize that, in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to all the world's people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs.
3. We reaffirm our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which have proved timeless and universal. Indeed, their relevance and capacity to inspire have increased, as nations and peoples have become increasingly interconnected and interdependent.
4. We are determined to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. We rededicate ourselves to support all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence, resolution of disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the right to self-determination of peoples which remain under colonial domination and foreign occupation, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion and international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.

5. We believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people. For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed. We recognize that developing countries and countries with economies in transition face special difficulties in responding to this central challenge. Thus, only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable. These efforts must include policies and measures, at the global level, which correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition and are formulated and implemented with their effective participation.
6. We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include:
 - **Freedom.** Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.
 - **Equality.** No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.
 - **Solidarity.** Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.
 - **Tolerance.** Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity. A culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations should be actively promoted.
 - **Respect for nature.** Prudence must be shown in the management of all living species and natural resources, in accordance with the precepts of sustainable development. Only in this way can the immeasurable riches provided to us by nature be preserved and passed on to our descendants. The current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants.
 - **Shared responsibility.** Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role.
7. In order to translate these shared values into actions, we have identified key objectives to which we assign special significance.

II. Peace, security and disarmament

8. We will spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, which has claimed more than 5 million lives in the

past decade. We will also seek to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction.

9. We resolve therefore:

- To strengthen respect for the rule of law in international as in national affairs and, in particular, to ensure compliance by Member States with the decisions of the International Court of Justice, in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, in cases to which they are parties.
- To make the United Nations more effective in maintaining peace and security by giving it the resources and tools it needs for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction. In this context, we take note of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations¹ and request the General Assembly to consider its recommendations expeditiously.
- To strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.
- To ensure the implementation, by States Parties, of treaties in areas such as arms control and disarmament and of international humanitarian law and human rights law, and call upon all States to consider signing and ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.²
- To take concerted action against international terrorism, and to accede as soon as possible to all the relevant international conventions.
- To redouble our efforts to implement our commitment to counter the world drug problem.
- To intensify our efforts to fight transnational crime in all its dimensions, including trafficking as well as smuggling in human beings and money laundering.
- To minimize the adverse effects of United Nations economic sanctions on innocent populations, to subject such sanctions regimes to regular reviews and to eliminate the adverse effects of sanctions on third parties.
- To strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers.
- To take concerted action to end illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, especially by making arms transfers more transparent and supporting regional disarmament measures, taking account of all the recommendations of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.
- To call on all States to consider acceding to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and

¹ A/55/305-S/2000/809; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-fifth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 2000*, document S/2000/809.

² A/CONF.183/9.

on Their Destruction,³ as well as the amended mines protocol to the Convention on conventional weapons.⁴

10. We urge Member States to observe the Olympic Truce, individually and collectively, now and in the future, and to support the International Olympic Committee in its efforts to promote peace and human understanding through sport and the Olympic Ideal.

III. Development and poverty eradication

11. We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want.
12. We resolve therefore to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty.
13. Success in meeting these objectives depends, *inter alia*, on good governance within each country. It also depends on good governance at the international level and on transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems. We are committed to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system.
14. We are concerned about the obstacles developing countries face in mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustained development. We will therefore make every effort to ensure the success of the High-level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, to be held in 2001.
15. We also undertake to address the special needs of the least developed countries. In this context, we welcome the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in May 2001 and will endeavour to ensure its success. We call on the industrialized countries:
 - To adopt, preferably by the time of that Conference, a policy of duty- and quota-free access for essentially all exports from the least developed countries;
 - To implement the enhanced programme of debt relief for the heavily indebted poor countries without further delay and to agree to cancel all official bilateral debts of those countries in return for their making demonstrable commitments to poverty reduction; and
 - To grant more generous development assistance, especially to countries that are genuinely making an effort to apply their resources to poverty reduction.
16. We are also determined to deal comprehensively and effectively with the debt problems of low- and middle-income developing countries, through various national and international measures designed to make their debt sustainable in the long term.

³ See CD/1478.

⁴ Amended protocol on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices (CCW/CONF.I/16 (Part I), annex B).

17. We also resolve to address the special needs of small island developing States, by implementing the Barbados Programme of Action⁵ and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly rapidly and in full. We urge the international community to ensure that, in the development of a vulnerability index, the special needs of small island developing States are taken into account.
18. We recognize the special needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries, and urge both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to this group of countries to meet their special development needs and to help them overcome the impediments of geography by improving their transit transport systems.
19. We resolve further:
 - To halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.
 - To ensure that, by the same date, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education.
 - By the same date, to have reduced maternal mortality by three quarters, and under-five child mortality by two thirds, of their current rates.
 - To have, by then, halted, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity.
 - To provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.
 - By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers as proposed in the "Cities Without Slums" initiative.
20. We also resolve:
 - To promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.
 - To develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.
 - To encourage the pharmaceutical industry to make essential drugs more widely available and affordable by all who need them in developing countries.
 - To develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication.

⁵ Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution I, annex II).

- To ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, in conformity with recommendations contained in the ECOSOC 2000 Ministerial Declaration,⁶ are available to all.

IV. Protecting our common environment

21. We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs.
22. We reaffirm our support for the principles of sustainable development, including those set out in Agenda 21,⁷ agreed upon at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.
23. We resolve therefore to adopt in all our environmental actions a new ethic of conservation and stewardship and, as first steps, we resolve:
 - To make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases.
 - To intensify our collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.
 - To press for the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity⁸ and the Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.⁹
 - To stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies.
 - To intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters.
 - To ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence.

V. Human rights, democracy and good governance

24. We will spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.
25. We resolve therefore:

⁶ E/2000/L.9.

⁷ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

⁸ See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

⁹ A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

- To respect fully and uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹⁰
- To strive for the full protection and promotion in all our countries of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for all.
- To strengthen the capacity of all our countries to implement the principles and practices of democracy and respect for human rights, including minority rights.
- To combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.¹¹
- To take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families, to eliminate the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia in many societies and to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies.
- To work collectively for more inclusive political processes, allowing genuine participation by all citizens in all our countries.
- To ensure the freedom of the media to perform their essential role and the right of the public to have access to information.

VI. Protecting the vulnerable

26. We will spare no effort to ensure that children and all civilian populations that suffer disproportionately the consequences of natural disasters, genocide, armed conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies are given every assistance and protection so that they can resume normal life as soon as possible.

We resolve therefore:

- To expand and strengthen the protection of civilians in complex emergencies, in conformity with international humanitarian law.
- To strengthen international cooperation, including burden sharing in, and the coordination of humanitarian assistance to, countries hosting refugees and to help all refugees and displaced persons to return voluntarily to their homes, in safety and dignity and to be smoothly reintegrated into their societies.
- To encourage the ratification and full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹² and its optional protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.¹³

VII. Meeting the special needs of Africa

27. We will support the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assist Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development, thereby bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy.

¹⁰ Resolution 217 A (III).

¹¹ Resolution 34/180, annex.

¹² Resolution 44/25, annex.

¹³ Resolution 54/263, annexes I and II.

28. We resolve therefore:

- To give full support to the political and institutional structures of emerging democracies in Africa.
- To encourage and sustain regional and subregional mechanisms for preventing conflict and promoting political stability, and to ensure a reliable flow of resources for peacekeeping operations on the continent.
- To take special measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa, including debt cancellation, improved market access, enhanced Official Development Assistance and increased flows of Foreign Direct Investment, as well as transfers of technology.
- To help Africa build up its capacity to tackle the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other infectious diseases.

VIII. Strengthening the United Nations

29. We will spare no effort to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for pursuing all of these priorities: the fight for development for all the peoples of the world, the fight against poverty, ignorance and disease; the fight against injustice; the fight against violence, terror and crime; and the fight against the degradation and destruction of our common home.

30. We resolve therefore:

- To reaffirm the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations, and to enable it to play that role effectively.
- To intensify our efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects.
- To strengthen further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter.
- To strengthen the International Court of Justice, in order to ensure justice and the rule of law in international affairs.
- To encourage regular consultations and coordination among the principal organs of the United Nations in pursuit of their functions.
- To ensure that the Organization is provided on a timely and predictable basis with the resources it needs to carry out its mandates.
- To urge the Secretariat to make the best use of those resources, in accordance with clear rules and procedures agreed by the General Assembly, in the interests of all Member States, by adopting the best management practices and technologies available and by concentrating on those tasks that reflect the agreed priorities of Member States.
- To promote adherence to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.¹⁴

¹⁴ Resolution 49/59, annex.

- To ensure greater policy coherence and better cooperation between the United Nations, its agencies, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization, as well as other multilateral bodies, with a view to achieving a fully coordinated approach to the problems of peace and development.
 - To strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in various fields, including peace and security, economic and social development, international law and human rights and democracy and gender issues.
 - To give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes.
31. We request the General Assembly to review on a regular basis the progress made in implementing the provisions of this Declaration, and ask the Secretary-General to issue periodic reports for consideration by the General Assembly and as a basis for further action.
32. We solemnly reaffirm, on this historic occasion, that the United Nations is the indispensable common house of the entire human family, through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development. We therefore pledge our unstinting support for these common objectives and our determination to achieve them.

*8th plenary meeting
8 September 2000*

UNITED
NATIONS

A



General Assembly

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A/RES/54/233
25 February 2000

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 20

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/54/L.74 and Add.1)]

54/233. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, which contains in its annex the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, and its resolutions 52/12 B of 19 December 1997 and 54/219 of 22 December 1999, and recalling Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1999/1,¹ which addressed the theme “International cooperation and coordinated responses to the humanitarian emergencies, in particular in the transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development”, and Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999,

Noting with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations,² in particular in the context of the transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development,

Recognizing the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

¹ A/54/3, chap. VI, para. 5. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1)*.

² A/54/154-E/1999/94 and Add.1.

Emphasizing that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory and in the facilitation of the work of the humanitarian organizations in mitigating the consequences of natural disasters,

1. *Expresses deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters;

2. *Stresses* that humanitarian assistance for natural disasters should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the annex to resolution 46/182 and should be determined on the basis of the human dimension and needs arising out of the particular natural disaster;

3. *Calls upon* States to adopt, where required, and to continue to implement effectively necessary legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, *inter alia*, by disaster prevention, including building regulations, as well as disaster preparedness and capacity-building in disaster response, and requests the international community in this context to continue to assist developing countries, where appropriate;

4. *Stresses* the need to strengthen efforts at all levels, *inter alia*, at the domestic level, to improve natural disaster awareness, prevention, preparedness and early warning systems, as well as international cooperation, in response to emergencies from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, bearing in mind the overall negative impact of natural disasters, the resulting humanitarian needs and requests from affected countries, as appropriate;

5. *Encourages* further efforts by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Inter-Agency Standing Committee members and other members of the United Nations system in promoting preparedness for response at the international, regional and national levels and strengthening the mobilization and coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system in the field of natural disasters, *inter alia*, through the effective deployment in all regions of the world and expansion of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination roster appropriately to include more representatives from countries of Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, bearing in mind that these representatives are funded by the participating countries;

6. *Also encourages* further efforts by the United Nations Development Programme to strengthen operational activities and capacity-building in natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness, taking due account of the evolving comprehensive strategy to maximize international cooperation in the field of natural disasters;

7. *Invites* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and concerned organizations, taking due account of the evolving comprehensive strategy to maximize international cooperation in the field of natural disasters, to strengthen their support to the United Nations disaster management teams which are dispatched upon request by host Governments and steered by the United Nations resident coordinator;

/...

8. *Recalls* the consideration of natural disasters contained in the report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,³ held in Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999, and encourages further use of space-based technologies for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, noting in this regard, the establishment of the Global Disaster Information Network;

9. *Takes note* of the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, adopted at Tampere, Finland, on 18 June 1998, and encourages States that have not signed the Convention to consider doing so;

10. *Welcomes* innovative efforts to link various phases of international assistance from relief to rehabilitation, such as the joint Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Children's Fund and World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization Disaster Response and Recovery Mission undertaken in all countries affected by hurricane Mitch, and stresses the need to ensure adequate assessment of and follow-up to these approaches with a view to further developing and applying them in other disasters;

11. *Encourages* Governments, in particular through their disaster response agencies, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, to continue to cooperate appropriately with the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator to maximize the effectiveness of the international response to natural disasters, based, *inter alia*, on humanitarian need, from relief to development;

12. *Recalls*, in this regard, its request to the Secretary-General to solicit the required input further to optimize and disseminate listings of organizations of civil protection and emergency response at all levels with updated inventories of available resources to help in natural disasters, as well as information, including handbooks, that guide the international cooperation in responding to natural disasters;

13. *Stresses* that particular international cooperation efforts should be undertaken to enhance and broaden further the utilization of national and local capacities and, where appropriate, regional and subregional capacities of developing countries for disaster preparedness and response, which may be made available in closer proximity to the site of a disaster, more efficiently and at lower cost;

14. *Notes* that the transition phase after natural disasters is often excessively long and characterized by a number of gaps, and that Governments, in cooperation with relief agencies, as appropriate, when planning for meeting immediate needs, should place these needs in the perspective of sustainable development whenever such an approach is possible;

15. *Stresses* the need to continue to provide adequate funds and to release funds quickly for natural disasters in order to contribute to a comprehensive recovery in the shortest time possible;

16. *Also stresses*, in this regard, that contributions for humanitarian assistance for natural disasters should be provided in a way that is not to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development or complex humanitarian emergencies;

³ A/CONF.184/6.

/...

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Page 4

17. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General, contained in resolution 54/95 of 8 December 1999, to submit to the General Assembly, early in 2000, concrete proposals in order to enhance the functioning and utilization of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund, and, in this regard, invites the Secretary-General to consider more active use of the Fund for timely and adequate natural disaster response;

18. *Invites* the Secretary-General further to consider innovative means for timely and adequate natural disaster response, *inter alia*, through mobilization of additional resources from the private sector;

19. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2000, in the context of the follow-up to its agreed conclusions 1999/1,¹ to consider ways to enhance further the effectiveness of international cooperation and coordination in respect of the provision of timely and adequate humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters;

20. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to consider innovative mechanisms to improve the international response to natural disasters and other emergencies, *inter alia*, through addressing any geographical and sectoral imbalances in such a response where they exist, as well as more effective use of national emergency response agencies, taking into account their comparative advantages and specialization, as well as existing arrangements, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance" with a view, *inter alia*, to contributing towards the comprehensive report on the implementation of the international strategy for disaster reduction to be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

87th plenary meeting
22 December 1999

II



II

B

Economic and Social Council Resolution

E/2002/32	26 July 2002
	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.
	(E/2002/INF/2/Add.2. Page 104-108).....212

United Nations

E/2002/INF/2/Add.2



Economic and Social Council

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**Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and
Social Council at its substantive session of 2002**

(1-26 July 2002)

Note: The provisional texts of the resolutions and decisions are circulated herein for information.
The final texts will be issued in *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002,
Supplement No. 1 (E/2002/99)*.

02-52842 (E) 091002

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2002/32
Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, and recalling that humanitarian assistance should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the annex to that resolution, and also recalling other relevant Assembly resolutions,

Recalling its agreed conclusions 1998/1 of 17 July 1998¹²⁵ and 1999/1 of 23 July 1999,¹²⁶

Emphasizing the importance of the discussion of humanitarian policies and activities in the Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming the need for the Council to continue to consider ways to enhance further the humanitarian affairs segment of future substantive sessions of the Council,

Welcoming the fact that the 2002 humanitarian affairs segment considered the theme “Strengthening of the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, with particular attention to reaching the vulnerable and the transition from relief to development”,

Deeply concerned about alleged sexual abuse, exploitation and misuse of humanitarian assistance by personnel involved in humanitarian assistance activities and stressing the need for appropriate measures in this regard,

Encouraging the direct participation of local communities and populations in the identification and implementation of humanitarian and transitional programmes,

¹²⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/53/3 and Corr.1 and Add.1)*, chap. VII, para. 5.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1)*, chap. VI, para. 5.

with a view to supporting overall peace-building, reconciliation, reconstruction and development efforts,

Stressing the need to address the funding and strategic planning gap between relief and development activities in the context of natural disasters and complex emergencies,

Emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected States in dealing with natural disasters and complex emergencies in all their phases,

Recognizing that special attention should be given to women as well as the most vulnerable, including children, older persons and persons with disabilities, as well as victims of terrorism,

Welcoming the efforts made by the United Nations system to strengthen the consolidated appeals process as a coordination and strategic planning tool for the provision of humanitarian assistance and transition from relief to development,

Noting with concern that, while the consolidated appeals process remains one of the most significant mechanisms for humanitarian resource mobilization, it has suffered consistent shortfalls and, in this regard, encouraging the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to continue to examine in greater depth the reasons for and implications of this,

Taking note of the assessment by the Secretary-General regarding criminal activities in the context of complex emergencies in pursuit of economic gain including, inter alia, illicit use by armed groups of natural resources and trafficking of women and children, and expressing concern over their impact on humanitarian assistance in such emergencies,

Bearing in mind that reaching the vulnerable is essential for providing adequate protection and assistance in contexts of natural disasters and complex emergencies as well as for strengthening local capacity to cope with humanitarian needs in such contexts,

Welcoming the Inter-Agency Standing Committee policy statement on the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian affairs and stressing the importance of its effective implementation,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;¹²⁷

2. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to strengthen the capacities of and consult with, where appropriate, regional and subregional organizations so as to respond to complex humanitarian crises and natural disasters and to report to the Economic and Social Council on practical steps taken in this regard;

3. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme to strengthen their coordination and regional activities so as to provide more effective support to disaster-prone countries and, to this end, calls on them, and other relief organizations and institutions to identify innovative ways to support those countries

¹²⁷ A/57/77-E/2002/63.

in building and, where necessary, strengthening local, national and regional capacities in disaster prevention, mitigation and management;

4. *Recalls* the efforts of the Emergency Relief Coordinator to expand participation in United Nations disaster assessment and coordination teams and encourages the further participation of United Nations organizations in United Nations disaster assessment coordination;

5. *Stresses* the continued need and relevance of integrating a gender perspective in the development and implementation of humanitarian assistance activities throughout all their phases and in prevention and recovery strategies;

6. *Calls upon* United Nations country teams in consultation with and in support of Governments to promote contingency planning for possible risks related to complex emergencies or natural disasters;

7. *Encourages* States that have not signed or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations,¹²⁸ adopted at Tampere, Finland, on 18 June 1998, to consider doing so;

8. *Also encourages* humanitarian agencies to engage in the further strengthening of humanitarian information centres, by providing timely and accurate information on assessed needs, and the activities developed to respond to them;

9. *Calls upon* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as well as the United Nations Development Programme, in consultation with Governments and the humanitarian and development community, with the support of international financial institutions where appropriate, to develop humanitarian strategies to support the engagement of local communities and institutions as a means of supporting humanitarian assistance activities and the transition from relief to development;

10. *Calls upon* Governments, when providing guidance to the United Nations system, including the agencies, funds and programmes through their governing bodies, to articulate areas of responsibility in addressing the transition from relief to development;

11. *Calls upon* Member States to support the incorporation and operationalization of disaster risk management analysis into humanitarian assistance activities, poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies;

12. *Urges* the United Nations system to strengthen and align its existing planning tools such as the consolidated appeals process and, where they exist, common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in order to facilitate the transition from relief to development and better to reflect disaster risk management;

13. *Requests* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, other members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, affected countries and other partners concerned to ensure that consolidated appeals contain adequate plans to align relief and transitional programmes, inter alia, in the area of resource mobilization;

¹²⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1586, No. 27688.

14. *Takes note* of its decision to consider creating ad hoc advisory groups to examine the humanitarian and economic needs of African countries emerging from conflict, and encourages relevant parts of the United Nations system, including existing coordination structures and mechanisms, to cooperate with such ad hoc advisory groups;

15. *Encourages* further strengthening of the consolidated appeals process as a coordination and strategic planning tool and urges donors to contribute to this objective and to address priority needs identified through the process, and also urges affected countries to reflect these priorities in their national efforts;

16. *Supports* the efforts of the Emergency Relief Coordinator to engage in a dialogue with other humanitarian actors, including non-governmental organizations, on strengthening their involvement in the development of common humanitarian action plans and consolidated appeals, and encourages them to contribute actively to their implementation;

17. *Calls upon* United Nations organizations to continue to improve needs-assessment methodologies in the consolidated appeals process and to strengthen efforts to report on results;

18. *Encourages* donors to ensure that financing of high-profile emergencies does not come at the expense of low-profile emergency appeals, *inter alia*, by making efforts to increase the overall levels of humanitarian assistance;

19. *Welcomes* the initiative of donors to meet and consider the global trend in humanitarian response to ensure that imbalances can be addressed when consolidated appeals are launched;

20. *Encourages* the development of a global humanitarian financial tracking system in order to contribute to improved coordination and accountability, and requests the Emergency Relief Coordinator to make proposals, without delay, for a comprehensive system for the collection and dissemination of data on humanitarian needs and contributions;

21. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law;

22. *Calls upon* all Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel in order to allow them to perform efficiently their task of assisting the affected population, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

23. *Reaffirms* the obligation of Member States to protect civilians in armed conflict in accordance with international humanitarian law, and invites them to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

24. *Urges* the international community and the United Nations system to strengthen their humanitarian and other assistance to civilians under foreign occupation;

25. *Encourages* efforts to provide education during and after humanitarian emergencies in order to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development;

26. *Invites* Member States and other partners, as appropriate, to participate actively in workshops on the protection of civilians in order to impart knowledge and improve practice based on shared experiences;

27. *Encourages* Governments, the United Nations system and humanitarian organizations to share experiences and lessons they may have learned with regard to the development of criteria and procedures for the identification of armed elements and their separation from the civilian population in situations of complex emergencies, and urges Governments and relevant United Nations bodies to strengthen measures in this regard;

28. *Notes* with appreciation the establishment of the non-operational inter-agency Unit on Internal Displacement in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and encourages Member States and relevant agencies to provide it with the necessary resources to enable it to carry out its activities;

29. *Notes* that an increasing number of States, United Nations organizations and regional and non-governmental organizations are making use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,¹²⁹ encourages the strengthening of legal frameworks on the protection of internally displaced persons and urges the international community to strengthen its support to affected States in their efforts to provide, through national plans or initiatives, protection and assistance to their internally displaced persons;

30. *Strongly urges* the United Nations system and all humanitarian organizations to adopt and implement appropriate measures, including codes of conduct, for all personnel involved in humanitarian assistance activities, to review protection and distribution mechanisms, and to recommend actions that protect against sexual abuse and exploitation and the misuse of humanitarian assistance, and requests the Secretary-General to report back to the Council in this regard;

31. *Welcomes* efforts to strengthen international urban search and rescue operations through, inter alia, activities of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue progress on the directories referred to in General Assembly resolution 56/103 of 14 December 2001;

33. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution in his next report to the Council and the General Assembly on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

*41st plenary meeting
26 July 2002*

¹²⁹ E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.



C

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A/57/578



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II

Fifty-seventh session

Agenda Item 21 (a)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report highlights some of the natural disaster management efforts being undertaken by the United Nations system. It provides examples of some of the work being carried out by the United Nations in cooperation with national and regional partners to help promote viable strategies that strengthen capacities to respond to and deal with the aftermath of natural disasters.

In stressing the fact that there has been a continued increase in natural disasters during the last decade, the report underlines the importance of eliminating future risks of natural hazards by integrating disaster reduction aspects when planning and implementing post-disaster activities. It also underlines the importance of incorporating vulnerability reduction activities as a key element in ensuring the successful transition from relief to development. It also recognizes the need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the international community so that there is increased understanding of the link between disaster reduction and sustainable development planning.

* The report was delayed due to the need to obtain inputs from a variety of sources.

02-66732 (E) 041102

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/103 of 14 December 2001. It should be read in conjunction with the reports of the Secretary-General on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/57/77-E/2002/63), the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/57/190) and international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon (A/57/189).

2. Over the past decade the highly disturbing upward trend in the occurrence and impact of natural disasters and its underlying causes has gone unbroken. Statistics show that there was real growth in the occurrence of windstorms, earthquakes and drought in the closing decade of the twentieth century. Climatic changes caused by human activities are contributing to the rise in the number of natural disasters. Communities in many countries around the world are increasingly exposed to the risk of natural disasters by virtue of growing urbanization, insufficient environmental management and land-use planning, poverty and the failure to incorporate disaster reduction in development planning. This situation is particularly threatening for many countries where the vulnerability of societies exposed to risks from natural disasters has gone largely unchecked, which also poses a major threat to sustainable development, particularly for the poorer communities.

3. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/57/190) elaborates on achievements and challenges relating to the process of implementing disaster reduction on a global scale. One major obstacle that still needs to be addressed is the poor understanding by decision makers of the close link between disaster reduction principles as advocated by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and sustainable, longer-term development planning. In the post-disaster recovery phase, it is particularly important to include vulnerability reduction measures into any development planning frameworks. This will contribute to the long-term reduction of damage and loss of life due to natural hazards.

II. Natural disaster response

4. The United Nations system has made marked progress in organizing and strengthening its capacity to respond to natural disasters. During the reporting period, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has continued to exercise his key functions of mobilizing and coordinating international assistance following natural disasters, as described in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991. This has been carried out with the overall goal of ensuring that international aid is both swift and effective. In this respect, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continuously evaluates and fine-tunes the response tools that it has developed over the years and put at the disposal of the international community. Such tools include the United Nations disaster assessment and coordination teams, the Military and Civil Defence Unit, the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, for which the Office acts as the secretariat, the regional disaster response advisers, the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot in Brindisi and the ReliefWeb web site (<http://www.reliefweb.int>).

5. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has extended its network of regional disaster response advisers by opening offices in India and South Africa. As a practical step for improved coordination, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office have developed a letter of understanding identifying key areas of collaboration between the UNDP regional disaster reduction programme and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs disaster response advisers.

6. United Nations disaster assessment and coordination team missions have continued to support the response to natural disasters during the reporting period. Missions were undertaken in seven countries, namely, Afghanistan, Bolivia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Nigeria, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey, as well as in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Refresher courses for the regional teams were held in Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and the Pacific, involving 29 developing countries. A large workshop on United Nations support for the coordination of humanitarian assistance in Central America was co-sponsored by the Pan American Health Organization of the World Health Organization and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America. As the secretariat of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, the Field Coordination Support Section of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs helped to organize a simulation exercise for search and rescue teams in Asia and the Pacific, which involved nine countries and five international organizations.

III. Natural disaster reduction and mitigation

7. The emphasis on response capacity must be matched by a similar effort in the area of risk reduction. The fact remains that vulnerability to natural hazards has increased and is a serious constraint for the attainment of such Millennium development goals (see General Assembly resolution 55/2) as poverty reduction and environmental protection. Poorer societies and the international community at large have to face a second set of risks and hazards, namely, those created by unchecked development activities. These can often have a devastating impact on the environment and can have a negative effect on the development gains for which they were conceived. The message is clear: development planning at the local, national and international levels has to include risk analysis and reduction measures. One challenge for the United Nations system is to assist in and advocate for the development of a focused and coherent strategy on natural disasters, one that also takes into account disaster response and reduction considerations.

8. The inclusion of vulnerability reduction measures is important in the transition from the relief phase to the development phase because decisions taken at this juncture will have an impact on the course of development of the countries concerned. Failure to incorporate vulnerability reduction in the post-disaster development phase constitutes a sure basis for a future increase in vulnerability. This will in turn be conducive to widespread damage and loss of life when a community becomes faced with the same or a similar natural hazard. UNDP has seen the erosion of development gains in many of its programme countries due to natural disasters over the past year. In addition to large-scale events, such as the floods in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hurricane Michelle in Cuba and Jamaica and

the floods in Senegal, smaller events continue to affect developing countries, representing an invisible but relentless erosion of development gains.

9. On the basis of its mandate to strengthen national capacity for disaster preparedness, mitigation and prevention, and following the creation of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in 2001, UNDP continued to reinforce its efforts to strengthen disaster reduction capacity in some 60 programme countries. The programmes included building local capacity for disaster reduction in Jamaica and Nicaragua, strengthening early warning capacity in Guatemala and Honduras and developing a new national risk and disaster management system in Haiti. Other initiatives include strengthening national disaster offices in the English-speaking Caribbean countries, developing a regional strategy for disaster management for southern African countries that are members of the Southern African Development Community, addressing the reduction of flood risk in the Tisza River Basin (Hungary, Romania and Ukraine), addressing drought risks in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and building disaster management capacities in Albania and Timor-Leste. New disaster reduction capacity-building programmes are currently being designed in Nepal and the Sudan.

10. A number of UNDP country offices are also making use of lessons learned. In partnership with national Governments, UNDP is developing large-scale programmes to reduce vulnerability and disaster risk. For example, building on successful experiences of post-disaster recovery in Gujarat and Orissa, the Government of India and UNDP have agreed to include disaster risk and vulnerability reduction as one of four core areas of the 2003-2007 country cooperation framework and have designed a \$20 million multi-year programme to significantly reduce disaster risk in the 50 most disaster-prone districts in India, which should be replicated in other high-risk countries.

11. Lessons learned in such a process can be applied to other countries to help minimize the impact of future disasters. In a concrete instance, the increasing use of space applications and data for disaster reduction, as recommended by the General Assembly, provides for analyses that can be shared with communities facing similar situations. These analyses can easily be collated into databases for future consultations. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites and the inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction are collaborating with other partners on the design of a global disaster management programme based on the use of satellite technology, particularly Earth observation techniques.

12. In support of the disaster management efforts of the United Nations system and the international community, the Central Register of Disaster Management Capacities continues to be expanded. At present, the register consists of eight directories containing data on available disaster management resources and capacities. They range from rosters of disaster management expertise and lists of emergency stockpiles and relief items to a host of emergency response services provided by national and international organizations. In response to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 20 of its resolution 56/103, the Directory of Advanced Technologies for Disaster Response is currently being developed. To strengthen disaster mitigation efforts, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has produced a preliminary version of a document entitled "Living with risk — a global review of disaster reduction", which is a compilation of information

on disaster risk-reduction initiatives and is intended for disaster management practitioners.

IV. Supporting regional disaster management efforts

13. The General Assembly, in its resolution 56/103, reaffirmed that disaster reduction formed an integral part of sustainable development strategies and needed to be considered in the development plans of all vulnerable countries and communities. This statement is particularly true in the case of the immediate post-disaster phase. Post-disaster recovery and development planning provide an invaluable opportunity for raising awareness and running risk and vulnerability assessment surveys and for factoring risk-reduction measures into forward-looking development policies. Both the Governments concerned and the relevant international organizations and programmes should seize this opportunity in order to factor risk-reduction criteria into existing planning tools and programming frameworks.

14. In order to achieve its capacity-building mandate, UNDP has continued to strengthen its partnerships with a range of national, regional and international organizations. Recognizing the need to increase synergy between efforts to manage and reduce disaster risks and efforts to adapt to climate change and variability, the UNDP Cuba office, together with other country offices in the Caribbean, in 2001 launched the Caribbean Risk Management Network. This brings together national, regional and international stakeholders to promote improved coordination and a more effective use of available resources in favour of small island developing States whose existing high degree of disaster risk will increase markedly as a result of global climate change. A UNDP expert group meeting, held in Havana in June 2002, called for an integrated approach to risk management based on strengthening national capacity to deal with existing and future risks and both rapid-onset and slow-impact climatic events.

15. In central and south-western Asia, UNDP launched a subregional initiative in 2001 with an international seminar hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and that brought together representatives of Governments and United Nations agencies from Afghanistan, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to document and promote innovative approaches to managing and reducing drought risk in the region. In Central America, UNDP is working with the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America to document successful approaches to building local capacity for disaster reduction and to improve national legislative and administrative systems.

16. In the field of risk-reduction education, the United Nations Disaster Management Training Programme, managed by UNDP, has continued to provide its services to both the United Nations system and Member States, especially disaster-prone developing countries. Following inter-agency assessments and dedicated workshops, a comprehensive plan for Central America for 2002-2004 was developed and preparations for country workshops in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama were begun. The United Nations Disaster Management Training Programme, in cooperation with the Southern African Development Community, designed a plan for southern Africa for 2002-2005, which is being completed with inter-agency support. National workshops were held in Georgia and Nepal, while

inter-agency programming for future initiatives has started in Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Romania and the Balkans, as well as in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. The Programme has also launched a database of disaster risk-reduction training programmes and resources that are available internationally.

17. In the context of the United Nations system, UNDP is also strengthening and further defining its areas of collaboration with both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat in order to ensure a coherent system-wide approach to disaster reduction issues. In 2002, UNDP began deploying five senior regional disaster reduction advisers to support national and subregional capacity-building efforts in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Arab States. They will work in close cooperation with the regional disaster response advisers and outposts of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat to ensure a coordinated system approach to working with national and regional partners.

V. Supporting post-disaster recovery efforts

18. To avoid an uncontrolled rise in vulnerability, especially in those developing countries affected by recurring disasters, the relief phase must be followed immediately by another post-disaster recovery stage where longer-term considerations of recovery, development and vulnerability management inform the design of dedicated strategies and plans. As recommended by the General Assembly in paragraph 3 of its resolution 56/103, this stage must include legislative and other appropriate measure to mitigate the effects of future disasters. These should include disaster reduction measures in line with the principles of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

19. If opportunities are grasped effectively, post-disaster recovery can break the vicious cycle of unsustainable development and disaster risk and lay the foundations for sustainable recovery that addressed the direct and indirect causes and trigger factors of disaster. Since 2000, UNDP has been pioneering an approach to post-disaster recovery that consists in providing support to local-level recovery processes immediately after a disaster and in integrating risk and vulnerability reduction considerations into all recovery activities. In this way, early recovery efforts can catalyse the transition to more sustainable development. This approach to post-disaster recovery has the potential to close the gap between emergency relief and sustainable recovery and break the downward spiral that can lead to unsustainable development, poverty, rising social tensions and environmental hazards.

20. In 2001, UNDP developed post-disaster recovery strategies and frameworks following the major earthquakes in El Salvador, Gujarat (India) and Peru, as well as following flash floods in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hurricane Michelle in Cuba, the volcanic eruption in Goma (Democratic Republic of the Congo), floods in Senegal, hailstorms and flash floods in Bolivia and earthquakes in Afghanistan and Georgia. Those strategies and frameworks have enabled UNDP to further refine its approach and to develop systems and mechanisms, with the support of the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, that make predictable and consistent results possible. This includes creating a smooth interface between United Nations disaster assessment

and coordination teams and UNDP recovery teams as well as the creation of rosters of recovery experts.

21. In support of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Inter-Agency Task Force, UNDP has chaired the Working Group on risk, vulnerability and disaster impact assessment, which has led to increased international collaboration on the development of risk and vulnerability indicators and indices as well as the development and implementation of proposals to improve the consistency, accuracy and coverage of disaster impact data. The Working Group is also working in collaboration with the Task Force to improve climate-related risk information by correlating climate and disaster databases.

22. UNDP has also contributed to a supportive policy framework for disaster risk management by developing policy in areas central to its mandate. At the third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels in May 2001, UNDP presented a disaster profile of the least developed countries focusing international attention on the impact of disasters on national and household economy and chronic poverty. UNDP, with the collaboration of the United Nations Environment Programme Global Resource Information Database and the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction at Columbia University in New York, has also developed a prototype global index of disaster, risk and vulnerability to be included in a world vulnerability report.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

23. **Major disasters are tragedies, but at the same time they create opportunities by eliminating accumulated risks and therefore open the possibility for recovery and reconstruction. To take full advantage of such opportunities, decision makers would need to ensure that vulnerability reduction elements are appropriately mainstreamed into developmental plans in order to help mitigate the effects of future disasters. The inclusion of vulnerability reduction measures is also a crucial element that would support and sustain the transition from relief to development. Special attention must also be paid to ensure that development practices do not exacerbate inequalities within societies and perpetuate the poverty trap by leaving the poor with land that is more at risk when natural disasters such as floods or landslides occur.**

24. **The role of international organizations in the transition from relief to development is also crucial. Concerned organizations and programmes are working to ensure that risk-reduction criteria are reflected in their existing planning tools and that national and local governments are supported with respect to their capacity to deal with disaster risk reduction as well as response and recovery. However, more needs to be done to strengthen and further clarify areas of collaboration within and between organizations to ensure that a coherent system-wide approach to disaster management becomes the norm.**

25. **The General Assembly may wish:**

(a) **To encourage Member States and the United Nations system to strengthen their efforts to effectively take advantage of post-disaster situations by introducing vulnerability reduction measures into recovery plans, thereby reducing further risks and laying the foundation for sustainable development;**

(b) To strengthen cooperation between Member States and the United Nations system to increase understanding among decision makers of the critical links between disaster reduction principles and longer-term development planning;

(c) To support efforts to include risk analysis and reduction measures in development planning at the local, national and international levels;

(d) To reiterate the importance of strengthening legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of disasters;

(e) To build upon the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction process to review disaster reduction initiatives and to encourage the United Nations to continue its efforts to document successful approaches to building national, regional and international mitigation capacity for possible inclusion in the Central Register of Disaster Management Capacities;

(f) To support the efforts of the United Nations system to develop the Directory of Advanced Technologies for Disaster Response.

United Nations

A/57/387



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Item 53 of the provisional agenda*

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

Two years ago, at the Millennium Assembly, Member States decided to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for pursuing the priorities adopted in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The need for a strong multilateral institution has never been more acutely felt than it is today, in the era of globalization.

Much has already been achieved. The reforms begun in 1997 were aimed at adapting the internal structures and culture of the United Nations to new expectations and new challenges. Since then, there have been some important achievements — not least the Millennium Declaration itself, which contains a clear set of priorities, including precise, time-bound development goals. These now serve as a common policy framework for the entire United Nations system.

The United Nations has been in the forefront of the battle to eradicate poverty and fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations peace operations is improving the Organization's capacity to deploy and manage peacekeeping and peace-building operations, and it has responded well to novel and unexpected challenges in Sierra Leone, Kosovo and Timor-Leste. The United Nations is showing greater coherence, and its disparate elements are working better together. Fruitful partnerships have been built with a wide range of non-State actors. In short, the Organization is evolving with the times. It is more efficient, more open and more creative.

* A/57/150.

** This report was prepared in the context of the Secretary-General's comprehensive review of the work of the Organization, and its submission had to be deferred accordingly.

But more changes are needed. The present report suggests a number of improvements aimed at ensuring that the Organization devotes its attention to the priorities fixed by the Member States, and that the Secretariat gives better service. However, the intergovernmental organs must also change. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council both need to adapt in order to realize their potential, while the stalled process of Security Council reform needs new impetus. The work programme of the Organization as a whole should be better focused, with fewer but more productive meetings and fewer but more useful documents.

Section II, Doing what matters. The United Nations must align its activities with the priorities defined by the Millennium Declaration and by the global conferences of the past decade. Activities which are no longer relevant must be dropped, while on new issues, or ones that have acquired new urgency — such as globalization and its impact on development, the pursuit of the millennium development goals, conflict prevention and the combat against terrorism — the United Nations must deepen its knowledge, sharpen its focus and act more effectively. Many other areas also deserve greater attention. **The Secretary-General will submit a thoroughly revised programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 to reflect the Organization's new priorities.**

In response to specific requests from the General Assembly, section II also reviews two areas in greater detail:

The promotion and protection of human rights is a bedrock requirement for the realization of the Charter's vision of a just and peaceful world. Good progress has been achieved in integrating human rights throughout the United Nations system. However, further measures are needed to improve the Organization's work in this area: **the capacity of the United Nations to help individual countries to build strong human rights institutions will be strengthened; the procedures of the treaty bodies will be reviewed in order to simplify reporting obligations; the system of special procedures (rapporteurs, working groups etc.) will be reviewed, with a view to making it more effective** by ensuring greater consistency, **and will be given better support; and the management of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will be strengthened.** The report also stresses the importance of the Commission on Human Rights, and the need for the Commission to stick firmly to its task of promoting better standards of human rights throughout the world.

The Department of Public Information has suffered from a fragmentation of its efforts as a result of too many mandates and missions. It **will be restructured** so as to be better able to develop coherent communications strategies and take advantage of new media and communication technologies. **A comprehensive evaluation of the impact and cost-effectiveness of all of the Department's activities will be carried out over the next three years. The existing network of United Nations information centres will be rationalized around regional hubs, starting with Western Europe. The Secretary-General will also introduce improvements in the management of United Nations libraries and the Secretariat's publications programme.**

Section III, Serving Member States better. The daily business of the Organization requires support in the form of background material and documents, facilities and interpretation services for meetings, and reports and records of

discussion. Section III outlines measures to **reduce the number of reports submitted each year and to facilitate a more focused and comprehensive approach** to the issues discussed. **It also identifies major improvements to the planning and servicing of meetings**, including the greater use of information technology.

Section IV, Working better together. This section explores ways to improve coordination, both among the component parts of the Organization and between them and civil society.

Important steps have been taken since 1997 to ensure effective coordination among the various United Nations entities working in a given country. Now, **under an implementation plan to be completed by 2003, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes working in each country will be able to pool their resources and undertake joint programming; common databases and knowledge networks will be established; the resident coordinators in larger and medium-sized countries will be given their own staff; and in countries emerging from conflict, the planning, budgeting and mobilization of resources for all United Nations operational activities will be integrated.**

If they are to be better coordinated and made more effective, the specific roles and responsibilities of the various United Nations entities must first be clearly defined. **A document spelling out who does what in the area of technical cooperation will be completed by September 2003. The management and strategic planning capacity of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will be strengthened, and the Secretariat's support for the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in their consideration of Africa-related issues will be better coordinated.**

Interaction between the United Nations and *civil society* has grown significantly in the past decade. Thousands of non-governmental organizations now have formal consultative status. Their contribution has enriched the debates and influenced the outcome of many intergovernmental deliberations. However, there have been problems along the way. The time has come to take stock and find better ways of organizing the relationship. **The Secretary-General will establish a high-level panel to make recommendations in this regard.**

The relationship of the United Nations with the *private sector* has also evolved significantly in recent years, with the Global Compact initiative and the establishment of many collaborative partnerships with companies and foundations, in particular the United Nations Foundation. **A Partnerships Office will be created to group these activities under a common umbrella.**

Section V, Allocating resources to priorities. The present United Nations planning and budgeting system is complex and labour-intensive. It involves three separate committees, voluminous documentation and hundreds of meetings. Changes proposed in section V include **a medium-term plan covering only two years (rather than the four as at present), which would be combined with the budget outline submitted one year before the actual budget is tabled. The budget document itself would be less detailed and more strategic, and would give the Secretary-General some flexibility to move resources according to needs.** The report also recommends that **intergovernmental review of plans and budgets should henceforth be conducted exclusively in the Fifth Committee of the General**

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Assembly, rather than being shared as at present between that body and the Committee for Programme and Coordination (which results in a great deal of unnecessary duplication). **Measures will be taken to streamline peacekeeping budgets, and to improve the management of the large number of trust funds** through which Member States provide voluntary contributions to supplement the regular budget.

Section VI, The Organization and its people: investing in excellence. Finally, the report puts forward proposals designed to ensure that the United Nations can count on an able, versatile and well-managed workforce. These new initiatives are intended to: **encourage and reward staff mobility between different locations, functions and even organizations; expand the opportunities open to General Service staff (who will henceforth be officially known, like their professional colleagues, as international civil servants); help staff to balance their professional and private lives; rejuvenate the Organization; further empower managers; strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to deal with HIV/AIDS in the workplace; better resolve internal disputes between management and staff; and enable the United Nations to offer more competitive rates of pay and benefits.**

* * *

The measures described in the present report add up to a very different way of doing business. They cannot be implemented automatically or overnight. Specific units and individuals must be tasked with managing the change, in particular in the Departments that will change most. Resources must be earmarked for retraining staff whose jobs will be affected, and for investment in information technology, which is central to the achievement of many of the measures proposed. The Secretary-General is seeking a strong endorsement from Member States for the entire package.

delegates and the Secretariat alike. The remainder — the structures, procedures, personnel and systems — is intended to ensure that whatever we do, we do well. Unless we make sure that the Organization is focusing on the issues that matter most today, as well as the issues that will matter most tomorrow, our goal of strengthening the Organization will elude us.

32. In the present section, I first examine our programme of work as a whole. I then examine in greater detail two particular areas, human rights and public information, in response to requests from the General Assembly in 2001.

A. Aligning activities with priorities

33. The programme of work of the Organization, is both complex and comprehensive, as is to be expected of an Organization asked to deal with almost every aspect of international cooperation. The programme responds to the many mandates accumulated over the years.

34. The Millennium Declaration, along with the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the outcomes of other international conferences, outlined a comprehensive vision of what Member States seek to accomplish. We must now ensure that our programme of work is adjusted to support these goals and priorities.

35. We must take a critical look at all our activities, and ask ourselves whether they are relevant to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and other conference outcomes and whether they have the desired impact. If the answer is no, we must be willing to let them go.

36. On the other hand, there is no shortage of issues on which the United Nations must deepen its knowledge, sharpen its focus and act upon more effectively.

37. Globalization and its impact on development will be a central issue in the years to come. The United Nations must have a greater capacity to help developing countries to take advantage of the opportunities that globalization offers, especially in trade and investment, while minimizing the risks. There is much to be done to ensure that the proper framework of rules, norms and standards are in place to

help the international community respond to effectively to the new challenges posed by globalization. The institutions of global governance must also evolve to permit the greater involvement of developing countries in decision-making.

38. The millennium development goals and the commitments agreed upon through the global conferences define critical objectives for the international community. The Organization must enhance its capacity to provide global direction with respect to these objectives, mobilize political will and resources, and assist countries in their effort to develop appropriate national strategies. It must also ensure that there is comprehensive follow-up to the global conferences, including the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The role that science and technology can play in achieving the millennium development goals deserves more attention than it has received to date. We also need greater coherence in United Nations action in support of Africa's development. Without such determined action, we will fail to reduce the unacceptable levels of poverty that affect billions of human beings.

39. I also believe that it is time to take a more comprehensive look at the various dimensions of the migration issue, which now involves hundreds of millions of people and affects countries of origin, transit and destination. We need to understand better the causes of international flows of people and their complex interrelationship with development. We must also prepare for the shift that has already started in the relative proportions of young people and the aged in most parts of the world and its implications for the labour force, social services and political processes.

40. Issues of water scarcity, water pollution, and water-borne diseases — which figured so prominently in Johannesburg at the World Summit on Sustainable Development — are of momentous consequence. These issues engage a great variety of stakeholders, including private sector and civil society actors. We must marshal the energies of the various stakeholders in order to ensure coordinated, effective and timely international action. Energy is another issue that merits greater and more coordinated attention. We must explore its many dimensions, including energy security, rural electrification, renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency. I also believe that we need to be better prepared for natural disasters and incorporate disaster

risk management into our poverty reduction, development and environmental strategies.

41. Central to the mission of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security is its capacity to prevent conflict and consolidate peace after conflicts. We must deepen our understanding of the economic and social causes of violent conflict, strengthen our capacity to help countries to cope with the challenges of promoting unity amid pluralism and diversity, reduce inequality and embed good governance in their public institutions. Indeed, good governance at the local, national and international levels is perhaps the single most important factor in promoting development and advancing the cause of peace. However, much of the good work in conflict prevention will be undone if the Organization does not also further develop its capacity to mitigate global threats, of the use of weapons, especially those involving weapons of mass destruction and the threat of large-scale civilian deaths from the use of conventional arms.

42. The Organization must also strengthen its capacity to play its role in the fight against terrorism, which has been a subject of constant preoccupation since the attacks of 11 September 2001. It must in particular be able to provide advice and assistance to its Member States in their efforts to reinforce their legislative and administrative frameworks. International efforts to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and international crime must expand as part of an integrated strategy to overcome the forces of "uncivil society".

43. There are certainly many other issues that deserve increased attention. We should take advantage of the fact that, in 2003, we will adopt the budget for the biennium 2004-2005. This gives us an opportunity to review and update the programme of work thoroughly, and to adopt a programme budget that is aligned with our agreed priorities.

Action 1. I will submit to the General Assembly in 2003 a thoroughly revised programme budget that better reflects the priorities agreed to at the Millennium Assembly.

44. The need to update the programme of work, and to identify and dispense with mandates and activities that are no longer relevant, will be a constantly recurring requirement. We need a mechanism to help us

do this systematically. I would like to reiterate the proposal for sunset provisions, contained in my 1997 report on reform (A/51/950 and Add.1-6). Each initiative that involves major commitments of funds should be subject to specific time limits, by which time it would be reviewed and renewed only by explicit action of the General Assembly.

B. Strengthening of human rights

45. The promotion and protection of human rights is a bedrock requirement for the realization of the Charter's vision of a just and peaceful world. The rise and diffusion of human rights norms and conventions was one of the truly great achievements of the last century, and the United Nations was at the centre of that effort. Its importance and relevance for the Organization's programme of work has grown over the past decade. The Millennium Declaration affirmed the continuing centrality of that mission: "We will spare no effort to promote ... respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms".

46. The Commission on Human Rights is a vital part of the Organization, with a glorious history, which includes the drafting of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. People all over the world look to it for protection of their rights and for help to win for themselves the better standards of life in larger freedom referred to in the Preamble to the Charter. I strongly urge Member States to keep in mind the true purpose of the Commission, and to seek ways of making it more effective. They must realize that, if they allow elections and debates to be dictated by political considerations, or by block positions, rather than by genuine efforts to strengthen human rights throughout the world, the credibility and usefulness of the Commission will inevitably be eroded.

47. As a worldwide organization, the United Nations provides a unique institutional framework to develop and promote human rights norms and practices, and to advance legal, monitoring and operational instruments to uphold the universality of human rights while respecting national and cultural diversity. The human rights machinery in the United Nations system works in three areas: information, analysis and policy development; provision of support to human rights bodies and organs; and promotion and protection of human rights. These activities are intended as complementary parts of a single strategy to support the



United Nations

II

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

**General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-seventh Session
Supplement No. 1 (A/57/1)**

Introduction

1. During the past year there have been extraordinary challenges to security and stability. The terrorist attacks in the United States of America on 11 September 2001 dramatized the global threat of terrorism and highlighted the need for a broad strategy to combat it. Already, the United Nations has played an important role in mobilizing international action in the global struggle against terrorism. We know, to our cost, that terrorism is not a new phenomenon; it has deep political, economic, social and psychological roots. I firmly believe that the terrorist menace must be suppressed, but States must ensure that counter-terrorist measures do not violate human rights.
2. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September the international community has focused its attention on the challenge of reconstructing weak or collapsed States, like Afghanistan, which provide fertile breeding grounds for terrorism. Simultaneously, there has been a sharp escalation of violence and tension in the Middle East, in South Asia, and in central Africa over the past year.
3. There were also positive developments on the international scene. East Timor gained independence and Sierra Leone held peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections. The conferences at Doha on trade, Monterrey on financing for development, and Johannesburg on sustainable development outlined steps that can help to meet the millennium development goals. The entry into force of the Statute of the International Criminal Court was an unprecedented step forward for world order and justice. There was also increasingly widespread recognition that respect for international treaties and international law is essential for human security, stability and progress.
4. One of the basic truths of our time is that no single country has the capacity to cope with the political, economic, environmental and technological challenges of an interconnected world. Problems such as terrorism, mass refugee movements, HIV/AIDS, overpopulation, environmental degradation and pollution transcend national borders, and require international solutions — and the number of global problems requiring global solutions is continually growing. All nations stand to benefit from the constructive change that multilateralism makes possible, as well as the opportunities and solutions that it provides. Moreover, multilateral action is possible in many cases where unilateral involvement would be impossible or undesirable.
5. Fulfilling its role as a universal organization, the United Nations has helped to develop the principles and practice of multilateralism. The Organization is a unique instrument available to the world for dealing with critical global problems that require the collective resources and cooperation of all countries. It provides the common structures and institutions by which we can further our profound universal human interests.
6. The main concerns of the United Nations are of relevance to all nations, and affect the lives of ordinary people all over the world in many ways. As is evident in this report, the agenda of the United Nations is vast: achieving peace and security, combating poverty, meeting humanitarian commitments, promoting development, extending international law and human rights, and establishing partnerships with wide sections of civil society. These issues reflect the changing nature and growing complexity of international affairs; and the breadth of cooperation noted in this report bears witness to a fundamental commitment to improving the human condition. The results of our efforts are sometimes immediate and direct; sometimes they take a long time to be realized.
7. The award of the centennial Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations was a fitting recognition of its role as an instrument for making and maintaining peace, and promoting human rights. As the Nobel Committee put it, “the only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations”.
8. The United Nations is an imperfect institution with limitations; but every Member State has a stake in ensuring that the Organization continues to strive to achieve its purposes. The choice before us is clear. We can continue to increase our efforts to achieve international order and justice through negotiation and consensus, or we can return to an earlier age when conflicts of interest between States were resolved by other means.
9. Fifty-seven years after the United Nations was founded, it continues to grow in numbers, and membership remains a potent symbol of a country's place in the community of nations. I am delighted to welcome East Timor and Switzerland as new Members, which will bring the number of Members of the United Nations to 191. I hope that all Member States, large and small, old and new, will continue to give their support to the United Nations and the principles for which it stands.

affected by food shortages and are threatened by a range of other factors, including increased vulnerability resulting from HIV/AIDS. The assessment found that up to 13 million people may be at risk of starvation. As a result of the findings, the United Nations launched appeals in July 2002 for the affected countries, seeking \$611 million for relief assistance. The initial response has been positive.

99. The United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UNICEF and UNDP are the principal entities involved in humanitarian mine action. UNICEF supports mine-awareness programmes in over 25 mine-affected countries and UNDP provides technical advice in 16 countries. The humanitarian mine action programme, coordinated by the Mine Action Service in the province of Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, came to an end in December 2001, after two and a half years; all areas known to be affected by landmines or unexploded ordnance have been cleared to an acceptable residual level.

100. Attacks on humanitarian workers over the past year highlighted the importance of staff safety and security and, conversely, the need for an uncontested humanitarian presence on the ground. The lack of adequate security for the maintenance of humanitarian operations leading to the withdrawal of international assistance has been the primary impediment to reaching the vulnerable.

101. As a result of a growing recognition that staff security should be funded from the regular budget, the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator now has a full-time Security Coordinator at the Assistant Secretary-General level and a core budget, and has deployed 100 field security officers in crisis areas. Initiatives to improve security management have included establishing minimum operating security standards (which define basic security measures for a given country or operational environment), mandatory security training for 4,500 United Nations staff members working in high-risk environments, and the dissemination of information, selection criteria for security personnel and training standards and methodologies through the Inter-Agency Security Management Network.

102. Yet, despite the best efforts of the United Nations to provide its staff with the skills and resources to ensure operational security, during the first seven

months of 2002 four United Nations staff members have been killed, and two abducted.

Natural disaster management: responding to emergencies and building capacities

103. The frequency and severity of natural disasters continue to increase, affecting, on average, around 200 million people per year, people who lose their homes, land and access to jobs. Increasingly, natural disasters have come to pose a threat to the gains made by development.

104. The United Nations system has been working closely with national Governments to strengthen their preventive and response capacities. UNDP has been advocating the inclusion of disaster risk considerations in all phases of national development planning, in particular for capacity-building in disaster prone countries in accordance with the goals of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

105. Where there are limited viable national mechanisms to respond to natural disasters, the United Nations assists through mobilization of resources and the provision of emergency and rehabilitation assistance to affected populations. In the first half of 2002, two natural disasters, both occurring within the context of ongoing complex emergencies, called for an integrated United Nations response in both the emergency and recovery phases of the disaster — the volcanic eruption in Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and an earthquake in Afghanistan.

106. Drought is currently affecting southern Africa and Central Asia, and floods have recently hit Afghanistan, Central Europe, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, the Philippines, the Russian Federation and South Asia. The severity of climatic variation is likely to increase, leading to more drought and flooding. To help countries to be better prepared to cope with weather-related disasters, including a possible new El Niño cycle, the United Nations system is strengthening existing early warning systems as well as providing advice, education and training to increase resilience in the event of natural disasters.

United Nations

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**Environment and sustainable development: protection of
global climate for present and future generations of mankind**

Outcome of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Note by the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly, pursuant to its resolution 56/199 of 21 December 2001, the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

* A/57/150.

** The report was delayed in view of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies held in June.

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Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, by resolution 56/199 of 21 December 2001, invited the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ to report to it at its fifty-seventh session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

II. Outcome of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties

A. Summary

2. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held its seventh session at Marrakesh, Morocco, from 29 October to 10 November 2001. The Conference adopted the Marrakesh Accords² which establish the initial rules and institutions for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention³ and decisions to advance the implementation of the Convention. The Conference also adopted the Marrakesh Ministerial Declaration⁴ as its input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

B. Outcome of the seventh session

3. The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties brought to a conclusion negotiations on the design and development of mechanisms and brought about a shift in their implementation. The Parties adopted decisions on three mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol — the clean development mechanism, joint implementation, and emissions trading. These mechanisms aim to maximize the cost-effectiveness of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by allowing Parties to take up opportunities outside their borders to supplement domestic action. The clean development mechanism, in particular, would allow an eligible industrialized country (a Party included in annex I to the Convention) to implement a project that reduces emissions beyond a pre-established baseline and

contributes to the sustainable development of an eligible developing country (a Party not included in annex I to the Convention). The clean development mechanism is supervised by an executive board, the members of which were elected by the Conference; the board has assumed its functions.

4. Procedures and mechanisms relating to compliance under the Kyoto Protocol were adopted. The Compliance Committee comprises a Facilitative Branch, which will provide advice and facilitation of assistance to Parties to promote compliance, and an Enforcement Branch, which will apply consequences on Parties in cases of non-compliance. A central feature is the emphasis on due process, including a provision for appeal against a decision of the Enforcement Branch relating to compliance with quantified emission limitation or reduction commitments on the grounds that due process has been denied. The legal character of these procedures and mechanisms, and whether there will be any binding consequences, will be decided by the first Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. Any legally binding consequences will need to be adopted through amendment, in accordance with article 18 of the Kyoto Protocol.

5. Guidelines under the Kyoto Protocol were adopted to ensure the credibility of the Protocol relating to the reporting and review of the data needed to assess Parties' compliance with their commitments. The guidelines determine how industrialized countries should account for and report their greenhouse gas emissions and removals, and how this information is to be reviewed. They provide for assessment of the fulfilment by Parties of their commitments to achieve their Protocol targets over time. The guidelines also define the supplementary information to be included by industrialized countries in their national communications in order to demonstrate compliance with other commitments under the Protocol.

6. The Conference of the Parties agreed on definitions, rules, modalities and guidelines relating to land use, land-use change and forestry activities under the Kyoto Protocol. A set of principles governs the treatment of agreed activities, which included

afforestation, reforestation, deforestation, forest management, revegetation, cropland management and grazing land management.

7. The decision on good practices in policies and measures outlines a road map for further cooperation among Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol with a view to enhancing the individual and combined effectiveness of policies and measures aimed at climate change mitigation. The main goal of the work mandated by this decision is to enhance transparency, effectiveness and comparability of policies and measures. In addition, it establishes linkages among the policies and measures, the issues of reporting on demonstrable progress and the need to minimize the adverse effects on developing countries of policies implemented by the industrialized countries.

8. The Global Environmental Facility, as the designated financial mechanism for the Convention, was requested to operate three new funds by the Conference of the Parties. Two of the funds, namely the special climate change fund and the least developed countries fund, were set up to support the implementation of the Convention. Resources to finance the activities of developing countries, such as programmes and measures in the areas of adaptation, transfer of technology, and management of energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste; and to provide assistance in the diversification of economies that are highly dependent on income generated from the production, processing and export and/or consumption of fossil fuels and associated energy-intensive products, will be provided under the special climate change fund. The Conference adopted guidance for the operation of the least developed countries fund to meet the agreed full cost of preparing national adaptation programmes of action in the least developed countries. An expert group was established to provide advice to Parties on such programmes of action.

9. The third fund, the adaptation fund, is related to the Kyoto Protocol. This fund was set up to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes when sufficient information was available to warrant such activities, as well as activities for improving the monitoring of diseases and vectors affected by climate change, supporting capacity-building for preparedness and management of disasters relating to climate change, and strengthening, and where needed establishing, national and regional centres and

information networks for rapid response to extreme weather events.

10. The Conference also provided specific guidance to the Global Environmental Facility to fund, from the trust fund, adaptation-related activities. These decisions on funding aim to enhance the prominence of adaptation in climate policy, in particular in the least developed countries, and stress the significance of adaptation as an integral part of sustainable development.

11. The Conference adopted a set of activities as a policy framework to enhance the transfer of technology under the Convention, and established an expert group. The work of the group includes analysing and identifying ways in which to facilitate and advance activities for the transfer of technology. The Conference of the Parties will review, at its twelfth session, the progress of work, terms of reference and status of the expert group.

12. The Conference of the Parties addressed the issue of its contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and adopted as its input the Marrakesh Ministerial Declaration. In the Declaration, ministers and heads of delegation state that addressing the many challenges of climate change would contribute to achieving sustainable development, and that the World Summit was an important opportunity for addressing the linkages between the two issues.

13. In the Declaration concern was expressed that all countries, in particular the developing countries, face an increased risk of negative impacts of climate change. In this context, it was recognized that the problems of poverty, land degradation, access to water and food and human health remained at the centre of global attention. Therefore, the synergies among the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity⁵ and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,⁶ should continue to be explored in order to achieve sustainable development.

14. The Declaration stressed the importance of capacity-building, developing and disseminating innovative technologies in respect of key sectors of development, in particular energy, and related investment. Such investment includes private sector

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involvement, market-oriented approaches, supportive public policies and international cooperation.

15. The Marrakesh Ministerial Declaration emphasized that climate change and its adverse impacts have to be addressed through cooperation at all levels, and welcomed the efforts of all Parties to implement the Framework Convention.

Notes

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

² See FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1-3.

³ FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3.

⁴ See FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1.

⁵ See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

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Item 44 of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

In its resolutions 55/162 of 14 December 2000 and 56/95 of 14 December 2001, the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General prepare an annual report on progress achieved by the United Nations system and Member States towards implementing the Millennium Declaration.

This, the first such annual report, focuses on commitments made in all chapters of the Declaration and on issues that were particularly salient over the past year, and pays particular attention to cross-cutting relationships among them. It contains a statistical annex that tracks the progress made in achieving the Millennium development goals, starting from a common baseline. The report also highlights the two themes designated for the current year: preventing armed conflict, and the treatment and prevention of major diseases, including HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

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** The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.

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Abuja in April 2001, African Governments pledged to strengthen their response to AIDS and other diseases by allocating at least 15 per cent of their national spending to health. This would be a significant increase in spending. The Governments of Botswana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa have all recently announced major increases in budgetary allocations for HIV/AIDS.

71. Donor funding — currently two thirds of HIV/AIDS spending — has increased sixfold since 1998. Despite this positive step towards addressing the global funding gap and the potential of the newly established Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the mobilization of additional resources remains a key challenge.

72. Broad-based **mobilization of the United Nations system** has intensified in the process of helping countries implement the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. Co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) — the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the International Labour Organization — have all scaled up and prioritized HIV/AIDS programmes and significantly increased their resources to support the response to HIV/AIDS. Even before the special session of the General Assembly on the subject, the United Nations system had drawn up a global strategy and a United Nations system strategic plan for HIV/AIDS covering the activities of 29 United Nations organizations and agencies. Rapid implementation of the plan, guided by the Declaration of Commitment, is under way with the support of the UNAIDS secretariat, a broker of policy, technical assistance and strategic information.

73. The depth and impact of the AIDS epidemic highlight the need for a **broad-based, community-wide approach**. In responding to AIDS, we should therefore be committed to uniting Governments, faith-based, cultural and community groups, employers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and the business sector for concerted action. The best results are seen in countries that have adopted a multisectoral approach, across the whole of government, built on partnerships. People living with HIV/AIDS are one of

the greatest potential resources in national and global responses to the epidemic.

74. **The way forward.** It is most important that everyone understand that achieving the Millennium development goal of halting and reversing AIDS will require continuing bold and innovative action on a number of fronts, including:

(a) **Establishing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS as a framework for action and accountability** based on time-bound, measurable targets to guide the response at all levels;

(b) **Scaling up national responses**, focusing expanded human and financial resources on what we know works, moving from a project-based to a programme-based approach that involves multisectoral partnerships;

(c) **Promoting human rights and reducing stigma and discrimination** through enforceable measures;

(d) **Focusing on the young** during all stages of the epidemic;

(e) **Raising the resources necessary to get the job done**, and to scale up prevention, care, support and treatment initiatives as capacity expands. Without a much greater mobilization of resources, the way forward will be nothing but a dead end.

IV. Protecting our common environment

75. Ten years after the convening of the first Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro, the state of the world's environment remains fragile. Achievement of the seventh Millennium development goal, that of ensuring environmental sustainability, is, if anything, receding rather than getting closer.

76. Globally, we are improving our record at protecting biodiversity, complying with chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) consumption agreements (as in the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer) and using energy more efficiently. Yet, we have also allowed a global net loss in forestry, seen little change in reducing indoor air pollution (caused by using solid fuels for heating and cooking) in developing countries, and have failed to bring into

force the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.⁷

77. Many regions of the world, including fast-growing East Asia, stand at risk of environmental crisis in the years ahead. Several regions face the prospect of water shortages, as underground aquifers are depleted and the process of diverting rivers for irrigation, power and drinking water reaches ecological limits. Soil nutrient depletion threatens many impoverished rural livelihoods, especially in Africa and parts of Asia. Tropical deforestation continued at a rapid rate in the 1990s, even after the world began to appreciate the vital ecosystem functions performed by tropical forests. Latin America, in particular, has failed to stop high levels of deforestation, which degrades ecosystems irreversibly. And of course the whole world bears the enormous risks from long-term climate change, induced mainly by the reliance on fossil fuels, although the consequences may well end up being much worse in the poor regions, which contributed least to the problem.

78. Since the late nineteenth century, the temperature of the Earth's surface has increased by about 1 degree Fahrenheit. Deforestation, increased dependence on fossil fuels for transport, and the expansion of industrial production and mining have all contributed to the rise in emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, increasing the planet's propensity to trap heat. The major tool that the international community has to combat further climate change is the **Kyoto Protocol**. Japan and the European Union have recently ratified the Protocol, but many countries that contributed significantly to past pollution levels have yet to do so.

79. Both industrialized and developing countries can cooperate to reduce emissions globally through, among other measures, environmentally sound technology transfers, emissions trading and ending subsidies and tax incentives for fossil fuels. Developed countries also need to assist those developing countries that are most vulnerable to climate change to adapt their economies. More efforts are needed to educate the public on environmental issues, to gather better data on climate change and to absorb carbon, for example, by planting trees.

80. Member States still need to take action to fulfil the commitments that they made at Rio de Janeiro 10 years ago. In 2002, as we approach the **World Summit**

on Sustainable Development, I have been urging Member States to assign priority to five key areas: **water and sanitation; energy; health; agriculture; and biodiversity**. Water management strategies must reduce leakage and waste, in particular in agriculture, to achieve "more crop per drop"; energy must be used more efficiently and a higher proportion of it drawn from renewable sources; access to safe drinking water, sanitation and affordable, clean energy must be expanded to reach the billions who are now suffering without them; health risks must be reduced through improved sanitation methods, immunization and the safe disposal of toxic waste; agricultural practices must be reformed to end land degradation and increase productivity; and biodiversity must be preserved through a much more rigorously selective exploitation of natural resources, combined with the provision of alternative solutions for communities whose current livelihoods depend on unsustainable practices.

81. If we add, as we must, the resources that making progress will require, committed action on these five priorities will offer all human beings the opportunity to rehabilitate our precious Earth and to live in sustainable prosperity — not just in our lifetimes, but in our children's, too.

V. Human rights, democracy and good governance

82. There have been advances and setbacks in the global protection of human rights over the past two years. Achievements include holding perpetrators of egregious human rights abuses accountable, including two former heads of State. Progress in the protection of human rights, however, has been compromised by violations of the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons, by a series of horrendous terrorist attacks, and by the spread of discriminatory laws and practices.

83. An important achievement in the past year has been the entry into force of the Statute of the **International Criminal Court** on 1 July 2002. It is the first permanent court capable of investigating and bringing to justice individuals who commit genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Although the jurisdiction of the Court is not retroactive, the establishment of the Court provides a permanent forum

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II

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 76
**International cooperation in the peaceful
uses of outer space**

Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III)

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report describes the mechanism established by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to implement the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) and reviews the latest developments in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies as well as of the Office for Outer Space Affairs. It indicates how the mechanism is creating synergy between the efforts made by the Committee, the Office and other entities of the United Nations system as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental entities towards the goal of using the benefits of space science and technology and their applications to promote sustainable development.

* The present report was prepared by the Office for Outer Space Affairs following the adoption of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on its work at the forty-fifth session, in order to reflect in particular the latest developments in the work of the Committee and the action teams.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 54/68 of 6 December 1999, took note with satisfaction of the report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III),¹ which was convened in Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999, and endorsed the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development".² In its resolution 56/51 of 10 December 2001, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. The present report has been prepared in response to that request.

II. Action taken by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies

2. In implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space takes two complementary approaches. One is for the Committee and its subcommittees to consider selected elements of the strategy contained in the Vienna Declaration as agenda items of those bodies. The other is for the action teams established by the Committee at its forty-fourth session to conduct work throughout the year. The action teams report on their work to the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at their annual sessions for review and approval during their consideration of the agenda item on "Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space".

A. Revised structure of the agendas of the Committee's subcommittees

3. In 1999, the Committee revised the structure of the agendas of its subcommittees, enabling the subcommittees to introduce new agenda items either under multi-year work plans with clear objectives to be achieved within a fixed time period or as single issues/items for discussion to be considered for one session only. A list of agenda items that have relevance

to the recommendations of UNISPACE III is contained in annex I to the present report.

4. Some of the items on the agendas of the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee have direct relevance to the work of the action teams. Recommendations made by the Committee and the Subcommittee under those agenda items provide policy guidelines to the respective action teams.

B. Action teams to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III

5. At its forty-fourth session, the Committee established 11 action teams to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III which had been accorded highest priority by Member States or for which there had been an offer by Member States to lead associated activities. The Committee had identified those recommendations based on the results of a survey conducted among Member States. As requested by the Committee, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had also conducted a survey among the entities of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with observer status with the Committee to identify the recommendations for which they wished to be members of the action teams. The list of the action teams and participating Member States and organizations is contained in annex II to the present report. The Office also compiled a list of contacts in those States and organizations participating in the action teams and made it available on its web site (http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/unisp-3/followup-teams_contact_list.html).

6. In 2002, all action teams reported to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the objectives, work plans and final products to be delivered, and to the Committee on further developments in their work. The Committee expressed its appreciation to all chairs of the action teams and agreed that Member States should provide full support to the action teams in conducting their work. Following the agreement of the Committee in 2001 that the action teams should actively consider non-governmental entities that could be invited to participate in their work, some action teams had involved many non-governmental entities in their work.

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7. As at 1 July 2002, 50 Member States had joined one or more action teams as members. In addition, 12 entities of the United Nations system, including the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and 23 intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental entities, including 9 organizations that have permanent observer status with the Committee, participated in the action teams.

C. Promotion of the participation of youth in space activities

8. The Vienna Declaration called for action to provide children and youth with opportunities to learn more about space science and technology and their importance to human development and to participate fully in activities related to space science and technology. The Vienna Declaration also called for action to create, within the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, a consultative mechanism to facilitate the continued participation of young people from all over the world in space-related activities.

9. Regarding the opportunities for children and youth, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee considered the agenda item entitled "Government and private activities to promote education in space science and engineering" at its thirty-eighth session. During its consideration of the new agenda item entitled "Space and society" at its forty-fifth session, the Committee noted that outer space was a theme that could attract children to science and mathematics and could increase the number of professionals entering those fields. The Committee stressed the importance of education in space science and engineering, through both government and private activities.

10. Regarding the above-mentioned consultative mechanism, the General Assembly, in its resolution 56/51, decided to grant permanent observer status with the Committee to the Space Generation Advisory Council, which originated from the Space Generation Forum, which was organized by and for young professionals and university students during UNISPACE III. The Office for Outer Space Affairs supported the activities of the Space Generation Advisory Council by holding a series of symposiums on enhancing the participation of youth in space activities (see para. 30, below).

D. Strengthening partnerships with non-governmental entities

11. UNISPACE III recognized the importance of involving civil society, including industry, in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit and in the interest of all States. Following a recommendation by UNISPACE III, the Subcommittee held symposiums to strengthen its partnership with industry, and with the participation of speakers from industry, at its sessions in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The theme of the 2002 symposium was "Expanding operational applications of very high resolution remote sensing: potential and challenges in civilian applications".

12. An increasing number of non-governmental entities have been participating in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies as observers. At present, 16 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have permanent observer status with the Committee. Following UNISPACE III, three non-governmental organizations, the European Association for the International Space Year, the National Space Society and the Space Generation Advisory Council were granted permanent observer status with the Committee. At its forty-fifth session, the Committee recommended that two more non-governmental entities, the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) and the Spaceweek International Association (SIA), should be granted observer status.

E. Preparations for the review of the recommendations of UNISPACE III in 2004

13. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/51, the Committee established a Working Group to prepare a report to be submitted to the General Assembly, in order for the Assembly to review and appraise, at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, the implementation of the outcome of UNISPACE III and to consider further actions and initiatives. The Committee requested the Working Group to make recommendations on the format, scope and organizational aspects of the above-mentioned review by the Assembly.

14. The Working Group recommended that, in order for the Assembly to review the progress, a separate item entitled "Review of the implementation of the

recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" should be included in the agenda of the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, for consideration in plenary. The Working Group also made recommendations on actions needed, sources of information, a draft outline and a timetable for preparing the report. The Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group as contained in its report.³

III. Implementation of the plan of action of the Office for Outer Space Affairs

15. In 2000, the Committee endorsed the plan of action proposed by the Office for Outer Space Affairs to implement recommendations of UNISPACE III.⁴ In its resolution 55/122, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure the full implementation of the plan with necessary resources beginning in 2002. Within its programme of work for the biennium 2002-2003, the Office has begun to carry out activities towards the full implementation of the plan of action with necessary resources.

A. Strengthening the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

16. The plan of action included a biannual global survey of existing mechanisms for international cooperation in space activities and an analytical study to identify areas of space-related activities where new and innovative mechanisms for cooperation were required. The Office for Outer Space Affairs has begun to undertake those actions by assisting and contributing to the work of the action teams. In implementing their respective recommendations, the action teams assess the existing opportunities and plans for international cooperation and aim to suggest actions that need to be undertaken, particularly through international cooperation.

B. Initiating a capacity-building programme in areas relating to space law

17. A capacity-building programme in areas relating to space law is a new, major area of the activities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs. It is also in line with a strategy to be pursued under the medium-term plan for the period from 2002 to 2005 to assist developing countries in the development of national space legislation and ratification of existing outer space treaties. The Office has made available on its home page a searchable index that provides information on the status of signatures and ratification of the five international treaties governing outer space activities (http://registry.oosa.unvienna.org/oosa/treaty_status/index.stm). The database can be searched by treaty, State or status. The Office also continues to develop, maintain and improve the database on national space laws.

18. The Office will organize the first workshop on capacity-building in space law (The Hague, 18-21 November 2002) in cooperation with the International Institute of Air and Space Law of the University of Leiden and the Government of the Netherlands. The Office is currently engaged in discussions with interested Member States to host space law workshops in the coming years.

C. Strengthening the activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications

19. Following UNISPACE III, the General Assembly, in its resolution 54/68, called for strengthening the activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and listed a number of activities to be included in the Programme. In response to that call, the Office for Outer Space Affairs reoriented the Programme and added new activities. The Programme now concentrates on a few themes of major importance for developing countries and aims to establish objectives that can be achieved in the short and medium term. The priority themes of the Programme are: (a) disaster management; (b) satellite communications for tele-education and telemedicine applications; (c) monitoring and protection of the environment, including the prevention of infectious diseases;

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(d) management of natural resources; and (e) education and capacity-building, including research areas in basic space science. Within each priority theme, the Programme will pursue the following main objectives: (a) capacity-building; and (b) building awareness among decision makers in order to strengthen local support for the operational use of space technologies.

1. Organization of workshops, seminars, symposiums and training courses

20. The plan of action includes the organization of workshops and conferences on advanced space applications and new system developments for programme managers and leaders of space technology development and applications activities in developing countries. The report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work at its forty-fifth session includes the list of workshops, training courses and symposiums carried out or planned by the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in 2002 and 2003: 13 activities have been carried out or planned in 2002, and 10 activities are currently being planned for 2003.⁵

2. Support to the regional centres for space science and technology education

21. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications continues to support the regional centres for space science and technology education and the Network of Space Science and Technology Education and Research Institutions for Central Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, which were established pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 45/72 of 11 December 1990 and 50/27 of 6 December 1995.

22. The African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education—in English Language completed its second nine-month course on remote sensing and satellite meteorology in June 2002. The African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology—in French Language has begun two nine-month courses, one on remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS) and the other on satellite meteorology. By the end of July 2002, the Centre will have completed four nine-month courses.

23. The Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, inaugurated in India in November 1995, has conducted 13 nine-month, postgraduate courses and 10 short-term courses, covering such subjects as remote sensing and GIS,

satellite communications, satellite meteorology and global climate and space science. A total of 340 scholars from 39 countries have benefited from the educational activities of the Centre.

24. With regard to the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, preparations are under way to commence the first nine-month course on remote sensing and GIS in 2003. As for the Network of Space Science and Technology Education and Research Institutions for Central Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, its Steering Committee agreed to establish multilateral scientific cooperation among the core institutions of the Network.

25. In support of the operation of the regional centres, the Office for Outer Space Affairs convened, in cooperation with the European Space Agency (ESA), the United Nations Expert Meeting on the Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education (Frascati, Italy, 3-7 September 2001). The purpose of the Expert Meeting was to review the status of the establishment and operation of the regional centres and to review and update curricula at the university level and across cultures in remote sensing, satellite meteorology, satellite communications and space science. The findings and recommendations of the Expert Meeting have been submitted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.⁶

3. Technical advisory services

26. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications has increased its efforts to undertake follow-up actions, wherever feasible, based on the recommendations of the workshops that it has organized. The areas in which the Programme currently provides technical advisory services include the following:

(a) Collaborating with ESA on follow-up activities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and Western Asia relating to the series of workshops on basic space science, including the distribution of regional newsletters on a regular basis;

(b) Providing assistance to the Asia-Pacific Satellite Communication Council to support its growth and operation as well as its preparations for the

Council's conference and exhibition, to be held in 2003;

(c) Providing assistance to the Disaster Management Support Group of CEOS and supporting the work of the CEOS ad hoc Working Group on Education as its co-chair;

(d) Collaborating with ESA and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in providing technical assistance to undertake follow-up actions on several training courses held in the 1990s on applications of data from remote sensing satellites, including the following: (i) concluding a project on the use of Earth observation data for monitoring glaciers and snow cover in Latin America; (ii) concluding a project for watershed management in Asia and the Pacific; and (iii) initiating a project in Africa, in 2002, on the use of satellite data in locating and planning the management of humid areas;

(e) Providing technical advice to the Government of Colombia in its follow-up, as pro tempore secretariat, of the recommendations of the Fourth Space Conference of the Americas (Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 14-17 May 2002).

4. Long-term fellowships

27. To promote the development of indigenous capability, five long-term fellowships will be awarded for the in-depth training of individuals from developing countries for the period 2002-2003. ESA has offered one fellowship each in satellite communications systems, space antennas and electromagnetics, and remote sensing instrumentation tenable at its European Space Technology Centre in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, and two fellowships for research in remote sensing technology tenable at its European Space Research Institute in Frascati, Italy.

28. The long-term fellowship programme has been reoriented to strengthen its effectiveness and to enhance the results of other training activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. For the period 2001-2002, the two fellowships offered by ESA allowed university educators who had participated in the series of United Nations/Sweden international training courses to improve their skills and to demonstrate the practical usefulness of remote sensing through appropriate projects in their universities.

D. Establishing and strengthening the partnerships with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and industry

29. The Office for Outer Space Affairs has increased its efforts to encourage space-related non-governmental organizations and industry to contribute to the activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. The Office organizes the industry symposium held during the annual session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and assists action teams in involving appropriate non-governmental entities. To bring to the attention of leaders of the space industry the importance of the work of the Committee, the Office has participated in meetings of the space business community and will organize activities during the World Space Congress (Houston, Texas, United States of America, 10-19 October 2002), which is expected to attract more than 10,000 people, including business leaders in space-related fields.

E. Strengthening a public outreach programme, in particular for young people

30. The Office for Outer Space Affairs continues its efforts to increase opportunities for young people to learn about space science and technology and their benefits for society. In cooperation with Austria and ESA, the Office will organize the third symposium on enhancing the participation of youth in space activities (Graz, Austria, 9-12 September 2002). The Office also supports initiatives taken by young people to promote space activities, such as the one called "Under African Skies", an initiative by a group of young professionals to bring space science to schoolchildren in African countries.

31. In its resolution 54/68, the General Assembly declared 4 to 10 October World Space Week to celebrate each year at the international level the contributions of space science and technology to the betterment of the human condition. As part of its public outreach programme, the Office plans to organize a United Nations event each year in its efforts to raise the visibility of World Space Week and to act as a catalyst for additional events to be held around the

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world. This year, the Office will organize a special event in cooperation with the German Aerospace Center in Bonn. The Office also continues to work closely with such non-governmental organizations as the Spaceweek International Association.

32. To increase public awareness of the benefits of space science and technology, the Office continues to improve the space exhibit at the Vienna International Centre. The exhibit features models of spacecraft and rockets as well as interactive computer programs, among other things, and continues to attract the attention of visitors, in particular schoolchildren. Recent additions to the exhibit include a replica of a biosphere experiment designed for schoolchildren and flown onboard the International Space Station as well as a Moon rock. On the occasion of International Women's Day in March 2002, the Office presented a series of posters on "Women in Space". Similar posters are being planned on various themes.

F. Strengthening publication and information services

33. To improve the International Space Information Service, the Office uses its home page as an effective and efficient means of disseminating information on the latest developments of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies as well as the activities of the Office. It is also linked to other web sites on aerospace and other relevant information, for example, the International Aerospace Information Network. The on-line index of objects launched into outer space enables all users to have quick access to the information furnished in accordance with the Convention on the Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (resolution 3235 (XXIX), annex).

IV. Further enhancement of inter-agency coordination and cooperation

34. The Vienna Declaration called for actions to encourage the increased use of space-related systems and services by the specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system and to strengthen the coordination of mutually beneficial

activities between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and other United Nations entities.

A. Action taken by the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities

35. The space-related activities of the organizations within the United Nations system are coordinated at the annual session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities. Several United Nations entities and specialized agencies have extensive space-related programmes. Details of those programmes can be found in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the coordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system. The latest report (A/AC.105/780) contains an overview of the programme of work for 2002, 2003 and future years. Following the agreement reached at the Inter-Agency Meeting in 2000, the structure of the report has been revised to closely follow the structure of the Vienna Declaration, allowing the reader to identify easily which United Nations entities contribute to implementing specific actions recommended in the Vienna Declaration.

36. At its twenty-second session (Rome, 23-25 January 2002), the Inter-Agency Meeting continued to consider the item entitled "Methods to strengthen further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities". The work of the Inter-Agency Meeting under the item contributes to the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in its consideration of a similar item (see para. 39). Upon invitation by the Subcommittee, the Inter-Agency Meeting considered barriers to greater use of space applications and services within the United Nations system and possible means and mechanisms to eliminate those barriers. The Inter-Agency Meeting noted that, as there were different constituencies in the governing bodies of each organization of the United Nations system, a delegation to one forum of the system was not necessarily fully aware, in a timely manner, of the directions pursued by a delegation of the same country in a different forum. The Meeting therefore felt that closer coordination and timely information-sharing among government agencies represented at different forums on issues relating to space activities would be beneficial.

37. The Inter-Agency Meeting continues to increase the awareness of policy makers of the usefulness of space applications in promoting social and economic development. In that regard, the Inter-Agency Meeting stressed that further efforts should be made by all organizations to ensure that space-related activities would be incorporated as cross-cutting issues in each of their preparatory activities for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. As contributions to the World Summit, the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Economic Commission for Africa jointly organized the Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Disaster Management (Addis Ababa, 1-5 July 2002) to increase awareness of policy makers in Africa of the usefulness of space technology in disaster management. Immediately prior to the World Summit, the Office will also organize a Symposium entitled "Space Technology Provides Solutions for Sustainable Development" (Stellenbosch, South Africa, 21-23 August 2002). Together with entities of the United Nations system, the Office will circulate in time for the World Summit a brochure for the general public that summarizes how space tools are being used by various entities of the United Nations system to promote sustainable development.

38. The Inter-Agency Meeting noted that a letter sent by the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to the Secretary-General to bring to his attention the need to consider the contributions of space science and technology in achieving the objectives of major United Nations conferences had been issued as a document of the General Assembly (A/56/306). The Assembly had subsequently invited organizations of the United Nations system to identify recommendations of major United Nations conferences that could be implemented with the use of space science and technology. In response to that call, the Inter-Agency Meeting agreed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, with the assistance of organizations of the United Nations system, should analyse the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to identify recommendations that could be better implemented with the use of space science and technology, as, in the view of the Inter-Agency Meeting, most of the issues addressed in the United Nations conferences held in recent years would be considered at the World Summit.

B. Action taken by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to strengthen inter-agency cooperation

39. At its thirty-ninth session, during the consideration of the agenda item entitled "Means and mechanisms for strengthening inter-agency cooperation and increasing the use of space applications and services within and among entities of the United Nations system" in accordance with its three-year work plan, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee benefited from inputs provided by the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities in identifying the barriers to the greater use of space applications and services within the United Nations system and examining means and mechanisms to eliminate those barriers. The Subcommittee also took an initiative to support and complement the efforts made by the Inter-Agency Meeting to increase the awareness of policy makers of the usefulness of space applications in promoting social and economic development on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Subcommittee recommended that a statement from the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space be delivered at the World Summit to highlight how space applications could contribute to promoting sustainable development. The text of the statement to be presented at the World Summit on behalf of the Committee is contained in its report.⁷

V. Conclusion

40. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has established a solid and flexible mechanism to implement recommendations of UNISPACE III. Through the consideration of agenda items that have relevance to the recommendations of UNISPACE III, the Committee and its subsidiary bodies provide overall policy guidelines for implementing the recommendations and play a leading role in carrying out the strategy outlined in the Vienna Declaration. The annual sessions of the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee also allow for periodic monitoring and review of the progress made. The role of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies is strengthened by the action teams that conduct their work throughout the year. The action teams help

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increase the sense of responsibility among the Member States that lead the teams and the sense of ownership among all countries and organizations that participate. By encouraging the participation of non-governmental entities, the action teams provide an avenue for civil society to make important contributions to the implementation of the recommendations together with Governments. The action teams provide a unique mechanism to strengthen cooperation not only between industrialized and developing countries but also between policy makers and scientific and technical experts, as well as between the space industry and user communities. The implementation of the plan of action of the Office for Outer Space Affairs supports and complements the work of various action teams.

41. In strengthening and repositioning space activities in the United Nations system, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities work together towards the same goal, to bring the benefits of space technology and its applications to the attention of the heads of organizations of the United Nations system.

42. There has been increasing synergy among the efforts made by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities towards the goals identified by UNISPACE III. Achieving the goals of UNISPACE III would also make important contributions to achieving some of the goals identified in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁸ such as the eradication of poverty and protection of environment through better management of land, forest, ocean and water resources using satellite-derived information, as well as protection of the vulnerable through effective and efficient mitigation of adverse effects of disasters and coordination of emergency responses and humanitarian

assistance using satellite images and data and satellite communications.

43. The review and appraisal by the General Assembly in 2004 of the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III will provide an opportunity to increase the political visibility of and momentum for the efforts made by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies. Their efforts, if supported by Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and as many non-governmental entities as possible, will have led to turning the possibilities envisaged in the Vienna Declaration into reality and to global recognition of the usefulness of space tools to enhance human development and security. If proven to be successful in 2004, the mechanism used and the strategy followed by the Committee in implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III could be considered as a model for the follow-up to other conferences held within the United Nations system.

Notes

¹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.I.3.

² *Ibid.*, chap. I, resolution 1.

³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/57/20)*, annex I.

⁴ *Ibid.*, *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/57/20)*, para. 71.

⁵ *Ibid.*, *Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/57/20)*, paras. 54 and 56.

⁶ A/AC.105/782 and A/AC.105/L.238, 239, 240 and 241.

⁷ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/57/20)*, annex III.

⁸ See General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000.

Annex I

Summary of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Recommendation ^a	Action team ^b established	Relevant agenda item of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies	Other activities
1	Yes	Develop a comprehensive, worldwide environmental monitoring strategy	Activities relating to monitoring and protection of the environment, a priority theme of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications (hereinafter "the Programme")
2	Yes	Improve the management of Earth's natural resources	Activities relating to management of natural resources, a priority theme of the Programme
3		Develop and implement the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS)	The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (STSC), at its 2002 session, noted the activities already being conducted by the IGOS Partnership (IGOS-P) that had direct relevance to the recommendation and agreed that there was no need to establish an action team; the Subcommittee invited IGOS-P to make a presentation on its activities at the 2003 session of the Subcommittee
4	Yes	Enhance weather and climate forecasting	
5		Minimize harmful effects of space activities on the local and global environment	
6	Yes	Improve public health services	Activities relating to telemedicine, a priority theme of the Programme
7	Yes	Implement an integrated, global system to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention efforts	Activities relating to disaster management, a priority theme of the Programme, which launched a training module consisting of regional workshops on the subject
8		Promote literacy and enhance rural education through tele-education	Activities relating to tele-education, one of the priority themes of the Programme
9		Improve knowledge-sharing through the promotion of universal access to space-based communication services	

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Recommendation ^a	Action team ^b established	Relevant agenda item of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies	Other activities
10 Improve universal access to and compatibility of space-based navigation and positioning systems	Yes		The Programme has launched a training module consisting of regional workshops on the use and applications of global navigation satellite systems
11 Promote sustainable development by applying results of space research	Yes		One of the main goals of the Inter-Agency Meeting and the Programme The series of UN/ESA Workshops on Basic Space Science
12 Improve scientific knowledge of near and outer space through cooperative activities			
13 Improve the protection of the near-Earth space and outer space environments through mitigation of space debris		Space debris considered by STSC since before UNISPACE III and in accordance with the work plan covering the period 2002-2005	
14 Improve the international coordination of activities related to near-Earth objects	Yes		
15 Protect the near-Earth space and outer space environments through further research on the use of nuclear power sources		Use of nuclear power sources in outer space considered by STSC since before UNISPACE III, also through the Working Group under the item, and in accordance with the work plan covering the period 2000-2003	
16 Minimize interference with bands in the electromagnetic spectrum			Information was provided by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Astronomical Union (IAU) at 2001 and 2002 sessions of STSC on their activities concerning the narrower subject of frequency interference with radio astronomy
17 Enhance capacity-building by developing human and budgetary resources	Yes	Mobilization of financial resources to develop capacity in space science and technology applications considered by STSC at its 2002 and 2003 sessions	One of the main objectives of the Programme in carrying out its activities under each priority theme
18 Increase awareness among decision makers and the general public of the importance of space activities	Yes		One of the main objectives of the Programme in carrying out activities under each priority theme
19 Establish/strengthen national mechanisms for the coordination of space activities			
20 Improve the sharing of information on and use of spin-offs from space activities		Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status considered by the Committee since before UNISPACE III	

Recommendation ^a	Action team ^b established	Relevant agenda item of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies	Other activities
21	Provide education opportunities for youth to learn more about space science and technology and participate in space activities	Government and private activities to promote education in space science and engineering considered by STSC at its 2001 session; space and society considered by the Committee at its 2002 and 2003 sessions	
22	Create within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space a consultative mechanism to facilitate the participation of youth in cooperative space-related activities		The Space Generation Advisory Council was granted permanent observer status with the Committee by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/51; the Programme has held a series of symposiums on enhancing the participation of youth in space activities, supporting the work of the Space Generation Advisory Council
23	Create awards to recognize outstanding contributions in space activity		
24	Reaffirm the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its subcommittees and its secretariat in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space		
25	Ensure sustainable funding mechanisms for regional centres affiliated to the United Nations and enhance support for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications		Fund-raising activities by the Office for Outer Space Affairs to support activities of the Programme
26	Encourage the increased use of space-related systems and services by the organizations of the United Nations system and by the private sector	Means and mechanisms for strengthening inter-agency cooperation and increasing the use of space applications and services within and among entities of the United Nations system considered by STSC under the work plan covering the period 2001 - 2003; in previous years, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities reported to STSC under this item	
27	Invite States to ratify or accede to, and invite intergovernmental organizations to declare acceptance of, the outer space treaties	Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space considered by the Legal Subcommittee at its annual sessions	

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Recommendation ^a	Action team ^b established	Relevant agenda item of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies	Other activities
28 Further consider the agenda structure and working methods of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees		Agenda items of both of the subcommittees of the Committee; considered under other matters by the Committee	
29 Strengthen the coordination of mutually beneficial activities between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and other United Nations entities		Means and mechanisms for strengthening inter-agency cooperation and increasing the use of space applications and services within and among entities of the United Nations system considered by STSC under the work plan covering the period 2001-2003; in previous years, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities reported to STSC under this item	
30 Call upon the international community to consider the recommendations of the regional preparatory conferences for UNISPACE III			
31 Establish a special voluntary United Nations fund for the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations			Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/68, the terms of reference of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications have been revised to include the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III
32 Identify new and innovative sources of financing to support the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations	Yes	Related to mobilization of financial resources to develop capacity in space science and technology applications, considered by STSC at its 2002 and 2003 sessions	The UN/IAF Workshops held since 2001 include a session to address this subject
33 Promote further the peaceful uses of outer space through cooperation between "space-faring" and "non-space faring" as well as among developing countries, and involvement of civil society, including industry			

^a The recommendations have been numbered in accordance with their order of appearance in the Vienna Declaration.

^b For more information on the action teams, see annex II.

Annex II

Participation of Member States and organizations in action teams

Action team ^a	Chair(s)	Countries that are members of the action team (as of 1 July 2002)		Entities and organizations that are participating in the action team (as of 1 July 2002)	
		Number	Countries	Number	Entities and organizations
1 Environmental Monitoring Strategy	Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Syrian Arab Republic	24	Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, China, France, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom, United States	9	Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) ^b , European Space Agency (ESA), International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS), Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC), Manila Observatory
2 Management of Earth's Natural Resources	India	27	Australia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, France, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom, United States	6	ECE, ESCAP, UNESCO ^c , SGAC, Manila Observatory, Philippine Astronomical Society (PAS)
4 Weather and Climate Forecasting	Portugal	25	Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United States	5	ESCAP, UNESCO ^c , World Meteorological Organization, Manila Observatory, PAS

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Action team*	Countries that are members of the action team (as of 1 July 2002)		Entities of the United Nations system and organizations that are participating in the action team (as of 1 July 2002)	
	Chair(s)	Number	Countries	Number
6 Public Health	Canada	23	Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United States	5 ESCAP, World Health Organization (WHO), SGAC, Manila Observatory, PAS
7 Disaster Management	Canada, China, France	39	Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States	11 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, ESCAP, UNESCO, WHO, ESA, European Association for the International Space Year (EURISY), SGAC, Manila Observatory, PAS
10 Global Navigation Satellite Systems	Italy, United States	31	Australia, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United States	12 ESCAP, International Telecommunication Union, ESA, European Commission, European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, Civil GPS Service Interface Committee, EURISY, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, International Association of Institutes of Navigation, International Bureau of Weights and Measures, International Federation of Surveyors, International GPS Service

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Action team ^a	Chair(s)	Countries that are members of the action team (as of 1 July 2002)		Entities and organizations that are participating in the action team (as of 1 July 2002)	
		Number	Countries	Number	Entities and organizations
11 Sustainable Development	Nigeria	26	Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Lebanon, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States	8	ESCAP, UNESCO [*] , ISPRS, EURISY, National Space Society (NSS), SGAC, Manila Observatory, PAS
14 Near-Earth Objects	United Kingdom	17	Australia, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Finland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Poland, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom, United States	7	ESA, Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), International Astronomical Union (IAU), NSS, SGAC, The Spaceguard Foundation, European Space Science Committee of the European Science Foundation
17 Capacity-Building	Japan	22	Argentina, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, France, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United States	6	ESCAP, UNESCO, ESA, COSPAR, IAU, Manila Observatory
18 Awareness Increase	Austria, United States	21	Australia, Austria, Brazil, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United States	14	ESCAP, UNESCO [*] , ESA, COSPAR, International Law Association, ISPRS, International Space University, EURISY, NSS, SGAC, Spaceweek International Association, Austrian Space Agency, Manila Observatory, PAS
32 Innovative Sources of Financing	France	14	Algeria, Australia, Colombia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic	6	ESCAP, ESA, NSS, SGAC, Manila Observatory, PAS

^a The number of the Action Team corresponds to the number assigned to the respective recommendation of UNISPACE III, as indicated in annex I.

^{*} To be communicated through the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

^{**} Only to receive information.

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Item 88 of the preliminary list*

Sustainable development and international economic development

Interim report on the International Year of Mountains, 2002

Note by the Secretary-General**

Summary

The Secretary-General herewith transmits the report of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/189.

The report describes progress made at the national, regional and international levels midway through 2002, with emphasis on activities that will ensure that the International Year of Mountains, 2002, is a catalyst for long-term, effective action. It also addresses the challenges that lie beyond the Year and provides suggestions for consideration by the General Assembly on how the Assembly might continue to promote and effectively implement sustainable development in mountain regions.

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

** The report was submitted on 9 July 2002 owing to interdepartmental consultations on its format.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, at its fifty-third session, adopted resolution 53/24, in which it proclaimed 2002 as the International Year of Mountains. The resolution encouraged Governments, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Year to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable mountain development. It also called upon Governments, national and international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines of the Economic and Social Council for international years and anniversaries and to lend other forms of support to the Year.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly invited the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to serve as the lead agency for the Year, in collaboration with Governments, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system and NGOs.

3. The present report is submitted in compliance with the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General report to it at its fifty-seventh session on the Year's progress. It was prepared by FAO in its capacity as lead agency for the Year and in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and NGOs.

II. Background

4. Awareness of the importance of mountain communities and ecosystems has increased since the adoption of chapter 13 of Agenda 21, entitled "Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development", at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

5. Today, there is increasing recognition that mountains are fragile ecosystems, which are globally important as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, repositories of rich biological diversity, popular destinations for recreation and tourism and areas of important cultural diversity and heritage. Occupying about one quarter of the world's land surface, mountains provide a direct life-support base

for about 12 per cent of the world's population as well as goods and services to more than half of humankind. Unfortunately, many of the world's most impoverished and food-insecure people live in mountains. Consequently, there is a need to ensure the ecological integrity and economic and social viability of mountain areas, for the sake of both mountain inhabitants, whose livelihood opportunities and overall well-being are at stake, and of the inhabitants in lowland areas.

6. The decision of the General Assembly to observe an international year dedicated to mountains provides a unique opportunity. The real challenge of the International Year of Mountains lies in consolidating and capitalizing on the many efforts carried out to date to protect and sustainably develop mountain regions and, in particular, to focus observance of the Year on long-term action that would improve the quality of life in mountain communities and protect fragile mountain environments. Concerted action is needed to build and strengthen the institutional and human capability to continue with sustainable mountain development efforts far beyond 2002. Thus, the Year is intended to be far more than just a series of events and activities. It is, rather, a springboard for launching and reinforcing long-term mountain development and conservation efforts.

III. The national stage

A. National committees

7. Following the General Assembly resolution declaring the International Year of Mountains, and in accordance with Economic and Social Council guidelines for the observance of international years, the Director-General of FAO encouraged countries to establish multi-stakeholder national committees to plan and implement national observance of the Year. The national response to the International Year of Mountains has been tremendous. As of June 2002, 67 national committees for observing the International Year of Mountains were established or being established. Many include representatives of mountain people, grass-roots organizations, NGOs, civil society institutions, the private sector, United Nations agencies, national government agencies and decentralized authorities. In some countries, the national committee for the International Year of Mountains is the first national mechanism for the

sustainable development of mountains and the first opportunity to implement a holistic approach to mountains. National committees are being encouraged to continue operating beyond 2002 to help develop and implement sustainable development strategies, policies and laws designed to respond to the specific needs, priorities and conditions of the mountain areas of respective countries. To do so, many national committees require significant support in the areas of communications, capacity-building, information, strategic planning, policy development, expert consultation and financial resources.

B. Africa

8. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, there are presently 17 national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the International Year of Mountains in Africa in the following countries: Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

9. In Africa, much progress has been made in the development of research- and information-sharing networks which are enhancing awareness of the importance of mountains and disseminating knowledge on sustainable mountain development to a wide constituency in Africa and beyond. These networks, although created prior to the Year, have largely benefited from the new thrust it has generated. They include:

- Mountain Forum Africa, a pan-Africa network dedicated to sharing information and experience on sustainable mountain area development
- African Highlands Initiative, an applied research programme, which is helping communities in densely populated and intensely cultivated highlands of Eastern and Central Africa sustain land productivity through a community-based approach
- African Mountains Association, which is establishing forums for enhancing and sharing scientific information on African mountains and highland ecosystems. In August 2002, the African Mountains Association, in collaboration with the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment, will

be hosting the sixth International Conference on Sustainable Mountain Development in Africa: Agenda for Action, in the United Republic of Tanzania.

Joint efforts to counter land degradation in highlands within the framework of the post-Rio conventions and the need to conserve highlands for water resources are generating projects and programmes for the conservation and management of African highlands, such as in the Drakensberg, Rwenzori and Fouta Djallon.

C. Asia and the Pacific

10. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, there are presently 13 national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the Year in Asia and the Pacific in the following countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

11. Tremendous progress has been made in generating awareness of the need for sustainable mountain development in Asia. Recent initiatives in the Asia and Pacific region include:

- International Seminar on Mountain Research, Nepal, March 2002
- International Conference of Mountain Children, Uttaranchal, India, May 2002
- Celebrating Mountain Women Conference, Bhutan, October 2002
- Development of a Central Asian Mountain Charter.

12. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) and many other organizations are initiating programmes and projects within the Year in Asia and building a mountain focus into their ongoing programmes. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), headquartered in Nepal, is undertaking many projects. In addition, it hosts the Asia-Pacific Mountain Network, a regional node of Mountain Forum, as well as the global secretariat for Mountain Forum.

D. Europe

13. Based on information provided to the International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, there are presently 16 national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the Year in Europe in the following countries: Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Croatia, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine.

14. European countries are very active in the implementation of chapter 13 and in the observance of the International Year of Mountains. Several major global events originate in Europe, including the High Summit 2002 organized by the Italian National Committee for the International Year of Mountains, the World Mountain Symposium as well as the conference on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Areas, both initiated by the Government of Switzerland. In addition, many regional mountain-related events are taking place during the Year. Several institutions are supporting sustainable mountain development in Europe, including Euromontana, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps and the European Observatory of Mountain Forests.

15. Networking has become increasingly active, with the European Mountain Forum playing an important role. Many other important mountain-related regional networks and processes have emerged. For example, Europe's national committees and focal points for the Year and other European mountain stakeholders have met twice at the European Parliament at the invitation of its "Friends of Mountains" group to share experience and to discuss collaboration. Armenia, Georgia and the Russian Federation, assisted by UNEP, are developing a legal instrument to protect the ecosystems of the Caucasian Mountains and a number of requests and proposals for cooperation and support for policy and programme development indicate the likelihood of continued involvement and action for mountain areas in Central and Eastern Europe beyond the Year.

E. Latin America and the Caribbean

16. The International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit has been notified of the existence of 13 national committees or other mechanisms for

observance of the Year in Latin America in the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

17. Action in Latin America is intense and has already had far-reaching effects on approaches to mountain issues in the region and around the world. Significant contributions to the Year include the Cusco Declaration of 2001 and the Huaraz Declaration, which was issued at the Second International Meeting of Mountain Ecosystems, held in Huaraz, Peru, from 12 to 14 June 2002. Much of the action is organized by strong networks, including the Andean Mountains Association, the Technical Cooperation Network on Upper Watershed Management in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion and the International Potato Center. The Latin American node of the Mountain Forum has been particularly active in communication- and information-sharing. The Mountain Forum has also provided substantive support to the establishment of national committees for the International Year of Mountains in Latin America. In September 2002, Ecuador will host the Second World Meeting of Mountain Populations, a follow-up to the World Mountain Forum held in Chambéry, France, in June 2000.

F. Near East and North Africa

18. There are presently six national committees or other mechanisms for observance of the International Year of Mountains in the Near East and North Africa, established in the following countries: the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen.

19. Mountains are an important part of the social, economic and cultural life of countries in the Near East and North Africa region and action is continuing to grow. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey are embarking on the Regional Watershed Management Training project to build capacity to manage watersheds effectively. Other examples of progress are a mountain law in Morocco, mountain programmes in Morocco and Tunisia and a nationwide project on watershed management and forestry in Yemen.

G. North America

20. Canada and the United States of America have initiated many activities to observe the Year. The Banff Centre for Mountain Culture in Canada and The Mountain Institute (TMI) are leading several initiatives. The Banff Centre is organizing the Banff Mountain Summit 2002 — Extreme Landscape: Challenge and Celebration, at the Banff National Park from 27 to 29 October 2002. TMI played a key role in organizing the global launch of the International Year of Mountains at United Nations Headquarters on 11 December 2001 in association with the International Year of Mountains Focus Group and FAO. The Banff Centre, TMI and the Mexican Indigenous Association for Sustainable Development established a regional Mountain Forum node to serve Canada, the United States of America and Mexico. It is currently maintained by the Banff Centre.

IV. The global stage

A. International Partnership and Platform

21. The International Year of Mountains is being intensely observed around the world at many national and international events through a large number of initiatives and by a great diversity of institutions and individuals. These include conferences, meetings of mountain people, film festivals, concerts, exhibits, book launchings, mountain climbs and hikes and many other kinds of activities. In addition, several major global events are serving as venues for sharing information on a large number of issues and in many sectors. These diversified initiatives will lead to more effective partnerships and plans for long-term collaborative action to achieve the objectives of chapter 13. An International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions will be presented as a type two outcome at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002. The purpose of the Partnership, which was initiated by the Swiss Government, FAO and UNEP, is to enable more effective implementation of chapter 13. It will build on the Inter-Agency Group on Mountains, which has been the main institutional mechanism to advise on the implementation of chapter

13 as well as on the planning and implementation of the Year. The Group is comprised of United Nations agencies and other key international institutions that are involved in the implementation of chapter 13. The Partnership is conceived as a mechanism for improving, strengthening and promoting greater cooperation between major groups, donors, implementing agencies, NGOs, private sector, mountain communities, scientists, field practitioners and other stakeholders. It will be guided by clearly agreed goals, its operations will be based on commitments made by partners and implementation will be supported through better linkages between institutions and improved monitoring systems.

22. The Partnership is expected to be reinforced at the culminating event of the International Year of Mountains, the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit, to be held in Bishkek from 28 October to 1 November 2002. Summit participants are expected to issue a declaration called the Bishkek Mountain Platform that builds on the outcomes of the major events that have occurred leading up to and during the International Year of Mountains and affirms the Partnership's principles, recommendations and commitments. The Platform will draw on contributions from countries and regions, researchers, women, children, mountain people's organizations, NGOs and United Nations agencies who participated in the following global events and other key events leading up to the International Year of Mountains, and will formulate recommendations for concrete action towards sustainable mountain development.

B. Major global events

- **World Mountain Symposium 2001: Community Development between Subsidy, Subsidiarity and Sustainability**

The four-day symposium, held in Interlaken, Switzerland, from 30 September to 4 October 2001, supported preparations for the Year, with an emphasis on determining ways and means to enhance autonomous development in mountains of the industrialized, developing and transition countries of the world. The conference was sponsored by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Berne

- **International Conference of Mountain Children**

Children from 13 to 18 years of age met from 7 to 21 May 2002 in Uttaranchal, India, at a conference organized by the Research Advocacy and Communication in Himalayan Areas to discuss the needs of mountain children, provide recommendations for the Bishkek Mountain Platform and launch the Mountain Children's Forum. This Internet-based forum is a platform for children to represent themselves and contributes to the Global Movement for Children, an initiative highlighted at the United Nations special session on children in 2002

- **High Summit 2002: International Conference around the Continents' Highest Mountains**

Mountain people, scientists and representatives of NGOs, United Nations agencies and the media participated in simultaneous transcontinental, multimedia regional conferences near some of the world's highest peaks in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America from 6 to 10 May 2002. Sponsored by the Italian National Committee for the International Year of Mountains, the event used Internet and videoconference technology to support an international debate and to develop recommendations for action on five cornerstones of mountain development: water, culture, economy, risk and policy

- **Second International Meeting of Mountain Ecosystems, "Peru, country of mountains towards 2020: water, life and production"**

Indigenous people from Peru and Ecuador, representatives of mountain communities in the Himalayas and many others met in Huaraz, Peru, from 12 to 14 June 2002 at a conference organized by the National Committee of Peru for the International Year of Mountains to produce the Huaraz Declaration on Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems

- **International Conference on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions**

Held in Adelboden, Switzerland, from 16 to 20 June 2002 this conference, sponsored by the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture, brought together stakeholders from around the world to explore ways of enhancing cooperation in

achieving the objectives of two chapters of Agenda 21, chapter 13 on sustainable mountain development and chapter 14 on sustainable agriculture and rural development, and to contribute input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Conference participants issued the Adelboden Declaration

- **Johannesburg 2002: The World Summit on Sustainable Development**

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held from 26 August to 4 September 2002, delegates will review progress made on chapter 13 over the last decade and the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions will be presented

- **Second World Meeting of Mountain Populations**

Representatives of 115 countries will discuss the challenges facing mountain communities worldwide and issue a declaration at a conference to be held in Quito, Ecuador, from 20 to 24 September 2002, organized by the Association of Mountain Populations of the World and El Centro de Investigación de los Movimientos Sociales del Ecuador

- **Celebrating Mountain Women**

A declaration containing recommendations for improved responses to the needs of mountain women and the launch of a new long-term programme for mountain women at ICIMOD are two of the expected outcomes of this conference, to be held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 1 to 4 October 2002. The conference is organized by ICIMOD and the Mountain Forum

- **Bishkek Global Mountain Summit**

Participants in the culminating event of the Year are expected to issue the Bishkek Mountain Platform, a framework for action, and consolidate the Partnership presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Global Mountain Summit is being organized by the Government of Kyrgyzstan, with assistance from UNEP, and is planned for 28 October to 1 November 2002 in Bishkek.

C. Global communications

23. Many organizations are implementing global communications initiatives to raise awareness of mountain issues and solutions to mountain problems. They include FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, Panos, TMI, the Banff Centre for Mountain Culture, the Mountain Forum, IUCN, ICIMOD, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research centres and many others. These efforts are bringing mountains to global public attention for the first time and feeding an emerging wave of public awareness of mountains and a global commitment to projects and programmes that will help to bring lasting change to mountain areas.

24. FAO, through its International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit, is helping to fuel the movement to protect mountain ecosystems and improve the well-being of mountain people by implementing a global communications plan for the Year developed in collaboration with members of the Inter-Agency Group on Mountains. The purpose of the plan is to facilitate a successful International Year of Mountains by translating communications strategies into actions, setting priorities, and integrating and coordinating the communication efforts of other International Year of Mountains observers. The primary audiences of the plan are mountain people, national committees for the observance of the Year, Governments, donors, stakeholders, the general public, the staff of United Nations agencies and the hundreds of organizations worldwide — both grass-roots and mainstream — that have a stake in one or more of the Year's key issues but are not yet involved in implementing chapter 13. The objectives of the plan are to:

(a) Demonstrate by example the participatory approaches that must be applied to achieve sustainable mountain development by including the opinions and knowledge of indigenous mountain people in communications vehicles, events and activities in ways that are meaningful, respectful and equal in profile to those of scientists, development experts, politicians, celebrities and world leaders;

(b) Ensure that audiences, particularly mountain communities, and those who have demonstrated a prior interest in an International Year of Mountains theme, have the information they need when they need it to participate fully and effectively in the Year;

(c) Build awareness among the world's young people — tomorrow's decision makers — of the Year's key messages and ways they can contribute to the sustainable development of mountain areas;

(d) Motivate and assist mountain communities, policy makers, NGOs and others to conceptualize, initiate, participate in and successfully implement action that leads to sustainable development in mountain communities;

(e) Build hope, optimism and momentum by convincing audiences that sustainable development and participatory, holistic and integrated approaches work;

(f) Build commitment to and financial support for research, national strategies and programmes, policies and laws that will protect and conserve mountain ecosystems and cultures;

(g) Position the International Year of Mountains as a springboard for long-term action that will strengthen mountain communities and protect mountain ecosystems.

25. Thanks to the generous contributions of Austria, Italy and Switzerland to the International Year of Mountains trust fund, FAO is implementing a significant proportion of the plan and much has been achieved. The foundation of the FAO communications programme for the Year is the International Year of Mountains web site at www.mountains2002.org, which serves as an organizing and coordinating tool, a news service on International Year of Mountains activities and a distribution tool for communications materials, including background information for journalists, educators, the public and others interested in mountain issues. Currently, the web site is receiving about 500,000 hits per month. It is the primary vehicle for distributing International Year of Mountains toolkits to national committees and others who are implementing their own communications programmes.

26. The International Year of Mountains Coordination Unit is implementing an intensive global media-relations programme and an outreach programme to help NGOs, civil society and grass-roots organizations around the world communicate about mountain issues to their members and audiences. Outreach targets include networks for agriculture, wildlife and nature conservation, energy, research, development, health, poverty, labour, women, children, tourism, recreation, mining, water, forests, education,

finance and spirituality. The Unit is also supporting the coordination, planning and implementation of major global events. These include the successful global launch of the International Year of Mountains at United Nations Headquarters on 11 December 2001, the High Summit 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit.

27. The Unit's communications efforts and those of its many partners are increasing awareness and support for sustainable mountain development. However, much more could be done with additional resources. A comprehensive global communications and education programme that continues for several years beyond 2002 is essential to achieving the objectives of chapter 13 and implementing the recommendations of the Year.

D. Networking and information exchange

28. Networking and information exchange about mountains has advanced greatly since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, most notably through the establishment of the Mountain Forum in 1995. Mountain Forum is an electronic network of organizations and individuals designed to promote and advocate global action towards equitable and ecologically sustainable mountain development. This is achieved through sharing information, mutual support and advocacy. Mountain Forum consists of NGOs, universities, Governments, international agencies, private-sector institutions and individuals from around the world and has successfully built on existing networks. It has a global membership of about 3,500 members and institutions. Many more individuals and institutions are associated with one of its regional nodes in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, Africa, Europe and North America. Mountain Forum is filling a particularly important role during the Year by enabling links between individuals, NGOs, Governments and other entities, particularly at the regional level, and by facilitating consultations that are helping to develop the Bishkek Mountain Platform. In addition, the organization is helping to adapt overall strategies to the specific conditions of different mountain areas and to ensure that information about local experiences is made available and shared.

29. Other regional-level networking mechanisms have also been playing an important role during the

Year. In Latin America, for example, the Andean Mountains Association and the Latin American Technical Cooperation Network on Watershed Management, supported by FAO, focus the skills and experience of scholars, educators, researchers and practitioners on collaborative action. The African Mountains Association, in close collaboration with Mountain Forum and other partners, is playing a similar role on the African continent, as is the Asia/Pacific Mountain Network in the Asia and Pacific region.

E. International action

30. A large number of international organizations are launching mountain-related initiatives or integrating mountains into their programmes of work for the Year and beyond. They include the Aga Khan Development Network, the Association of Mountain Populations of the World, the Centre for Development and Environment, the International Potato Center, the Global Environment Facility, the German Technical Cooperation, the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry, the International Livestock Research Institute, the World Conservation Union, the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations, The Mountain Institute, the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, the United Nations University, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the World Bank.

31. A number of global initiatives have been launched as well and many ongoing projects and programmes have received additional impetus by the Year. They include the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment, the Tropical Montane Cloud Forest Initiative, the Mountain Research Initiative and the Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments. The journal, *Mountain Research and Development*, edited by the Centre for Development and Environment, has continued to be the principal publication reporting comprehensively on mountain-related issues. It is impossible to do justice to all the undertakings in this report. Rather, the extent of international action can best be acknowledged in a more comprehensive and balanced review when the Year is over.

V. Achievements

32. The International Year of Mountains has already achieved significant results. It has:

(a) Led to the founding, by Permanent Representatives of the United Nations, of the International Year of Mountains Focus Group, which supports and animates observance and follow-up to the Year. The Focus Group includes representatives of Austria, Bhutan, Bolivia, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Peru, Slovenia and Switzerland. It is a driving force behind the global movement to protect the world's mountains and to help create the conditions in which mountain people can achieve their own goals and aspirations;

(b) Increased the accessibility, quantity and quality of information on mountains and mountain people;

(c) Increased public awareness of the importance of mountains to the Earth's fundamental life-sustaining systems, of the fragility of mountain ecosystems, of the consequences of their degradation and of effective approaches to sustainable mountain development;

(d) Stimulated the establishment of 67 national committees and positioned them as mechanisms for developing national strategic plans and policies to achieve sustainable mountain development;

(e) Enhanced understanding of the need for interdisciplinary research and information sharing about mountains and stimulated the development of a comprehensive, global research agenda on mountains that will support decision-making and policy-making;

(f) Increased awareness of the need to safeguard and build on the traditional knowledge of mountain people and to respect indigenous practices, expertise and authorities;

(g) Increased demand by countries for programmes and projects to achieve sustainable mountain development;

(h) Increased donor interest in and support for long-term investment in mountain ecosystems and communities;

(i) Broadened the diversity of organizations and individuals dedicated to sustainable mountain

development and stimulated the development of new mountain initiatives and the integration of mountains into normative programmes;

(j) Strengthened implementation of chapter 13 by identifying, through intensive international, regional, national and community dialogue, gaps in knowledge, ways of working and institutions;

(k) Strengthened and expanded the alliance of organizations that are committed to implementing chapter 13 and consolidated the alliance through the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions;

(l) Focused global commitment to and resources for sustainable mountain development on a widely supported framework for action, expressed in the proposed Bishkek Mountain Platform, to ensure more efficient and effective approaches to achieving the goals of chapter 13.

VI. Challenges

33. At present, midway through the International Year of Mountains, the challenges to stimulating the long-term action needed to implement chapter 13 are in the areas of national involvement and partnership support.

(a) **National involvement.** While the response to the call for national committees to observe the International Year of Mountains is exceedingly encouraging, many mountainous countries have not formally participated in the International Year of Mountains. Their involvement in the Year and follow-up is essential to the implementation of chapter 13 given the transboundary nature of mountains and the reality that only countries have the power to implement national strategies for sustainable mountain development, to enact enabling policies and laws and to develop compensation mechanisms for environmental services and goods provided by mountain areas. The involvement of lowland countries is also crucial because highland-lowland relationships, flows of investment and other factors mean that mountain countries cannot undertake sustainable mountain development in isolation. Many countries do not have the institutional environments, expertise and financial resources to implement and invest in sustainable mountain development. Education, training,

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capacity-building, expert consultation, institutional strengthening and investment are required;

(b) **Partnership support.** The evolution of a strengthened Partnership and the establishment of the Bishkek Mountain Platform, a framework for action, has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of efforts to implement chapter 13. However, these mechanisms require improved leadership, mountain-specific information bases, communication, monitoring, accountability and coordination to achieve results. The potential of the International Year of Mountains was limited by the resources made available for this undertaking. This points to a larger and continuing constraint on effectively implementing chapter 13 and to maintaining and building upon the investment in the Year. Mountains present tremendous potential for addressing the world's social, environmental and economic problems. However, increased and more effectively applied investment is required.

VII. Recommendations

34. Significant progress has been achieved by the International Year of Mountains, but much remains to be done. The Year appears already to have acted as a catalyst for long-term, effective action to implement chapter 13, as intended. The present momentum should be sustained to consolidate and build on results achieved so far. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following courses of action that could be taken by Governments.

(a) **Support the continued establishment of national committees, focal points and other mechanisms for sustainable mountain development;**

(b) **Support the evolution of national committees and other mechanisms for the Year and assist them with the transition from focusing on observing the Year to developing goals and strategies for the sustainable development of mountains;**

(c) **Support the involvement of International Year of Mountains national committees in observing the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, to take advantage of opportunities for synergies;**

(d) **Support national efforts to develop strategic plans for the sustainable development of**

mountains, enabling policies and laws, programmes and projects;

(e) **Support transboundary approaches to sustainable development of mountain ranges and information sharing;**

(f) **Support the development and implementation of global, regional and national communications programmes to build on the awareness and momentum for change established by the International Year of Mountains;**

(g) **Support capacity-building and education programmes to enhance awareness of best practices in sustainable mountain development and the nature of relationships between highland and lowland areas;**

(h) **Support the efforts of the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions and the implementation of the Bishkek Mountain Platform at the international, regional and national levels and encourage national organizations to join;**

(i) **Encourage donor and private-sector investment in sustainable mountain development;**

(j) **Encourage the United Nations system to strengthen the coordination of chapter 13 to achieve more effective implementation;**

(k) **Promote the establishment of mountain disaggregated databases to support research, decision-making and planning;**

(l) **Make international organizations involved in sustainable mountain development aware of country needs and achievements.**

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Environment and sustainable development

**Implementation of the United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification in those Countries
Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification,
particularly in Africa**

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

By its decision 1/COP.5 the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa decided to establish the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and defined its terms of reference as a subsidiary body of the Conference to assist it in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention. Accordingly, the Convention secretariat has undertaken various steps to facilitate the reporting process as well as to make the necessary arrangements with the country that will host the first session of the Committee.

As at June 2002, 57 affected countries have finalized the elaboration of their national action programmes to combat desertification (NAPs). In most cases, these NAPs have been adopted by the respective Governments. At the subregional and regional levels, seven subregional action programmes and four regional action programmes have been finalized.

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

** The submission of this report was delayed in order to incorporate the results of consultations within the Organization.

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The secretariat of the Convention together with the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity have established a Joint Liaison Group in order to strengthen coordination between the three instruments and to explore options for further cooperation, including the possibility of joint work plans to enhance synergies among them.

In April 2001, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification convened a Panel of Eminent Personalities to consider the poverty — environment nexus in the context of the timely and effective implementation of the Convention and with the aim of contributing further to the debate leading to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

The Panel held two meetings, prepared a report entitled “The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification: A Useful Tool for Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation” and launched an appeal, the Agadez Call.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 56/196, encouraged the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to work cooperatively and effectively to facilitate the financing of the implementation of the Convention. The General Assembly, at its fifty-sixth session, congratulated the Council of the Facility for its decision to recommend making land degradation (desertification and deforestation) a new focal area of the Facility. The Assembly of the Facility, due to meet in Beijing in October 2002, is expected to endorse the Council’s recommendation.

As of 15 June 2002, instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession have been deposited by 179 States and one regional economic integration organization.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 56/196, on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of that resolution. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly noted the establishment of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and invited parties and other actors to participate in the first session of the Committee.

3. The General Assembly also encouraged the conferences of the parties and the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification and other international instruments related to environment and sustainable development to continue their work on enhancing mutual complementarities and to strengthen cooperation with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of those conventions at the international, regional and national levels and to report thereon to their respective conferences of the parties.

4. The General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session approved the continuation of the current institutional linkage and related administrative arrangements between the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification for a further five-year period, to be reviewed by the General Assembly and the Conference of the Parties not later than 31 December 2006.

II. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/196

A. Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

5. By its decision 1/COP.5, the Conference of the Parties decided to establish the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and defined its terms of reference as a subsidiary body of the Conference to assist it in regularly reviewing the

implementation of the Convention. Accordingly, the Convention secretariat has undertaken various steps to facilitate the reporting process in preparation for the first session of the Committee.

6. Following the generous offer of the Government of Italy (see section F below), the first session of the Committee will be held in Palermo from 18 to 29 November 2002 for the purpose of reviewing updates to reports already available and/or new reports from all regions. In this regard, 160 reports were submitted to the secretariat by affected country parties (47 from Africa, 32 from Asia, 28 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 17 from Europe and others), relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system (11), intergovernmental organizations (8) and developed country parties (17).

7. In addition, the Conference decided, as outlined in decision 1/COP.5, that the review process should benefit from regional inputs through consultative meetings. In order to accomplish this requirement, four regional meetings corresponding to the regional implementation annexes were scheduled as follows:

- Asian Regional Meeting for the Review Process, Damascus, 8-12 July 2002
- African Regional Meeting for the Review Process, Windhoek, 15-19 July 2002
- Regional Meeting for Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and other affected country parties on the Review Process, Geneva, 22-26 July 2002
- Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Meeting for the Review Process, Bridgetown, 29 July-2 August 2002.

8. The secretariat has compiled, synthesized and provided a preliminary analysis of the reports submitted by parties and observers and the reports on regional inputs, along thematic priorities identified by the parties, for submission to the Committee.

9. The key thematic topics for the review, are as follows:

(a) Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations;

(b) Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements;

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(c) Resource mobilization and coordination, both domestic and international, including the conclusion of partnership agreements;

(d) Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies;

(e) Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought;

(f) Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment;

(g) Access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how by affected country parties, particularly affected developing country parties.

10. The second session of the Committee will take place during the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties in October 2003.

B. Panel of Eminent Personalities to reflect on the nexus between poverty and environment in the context of the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

11. In April 2001, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification convened a Panel of Eminent Personalities to consider the poverty-environment nexus in the context of the timely and effective implementation of the Convention and with the aim of contributing further to the debate leading to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

12. The Panel, composed of 14 personalities from both developing and developed countries, started its deliberations in October 2001, in the sidelines of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, and adopted its conclusions at its last meeting, held in Agadez, the Niger, from 25 to 28 February 2002. The Panel prepared a report entitled "The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification: A Useful Tool for Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation" and launched an appeal, the Agadez Call. This call underlines the unique role of the Convention in addressing poverty eradication and sustainable

development given its special focus on areas of extreme poverty and social instability. The Panel further identified the Convention as a tool for development, environmental protection and the prevention of forced migratory movements.

13. The Panel's report and the Agadez Call were presented to the third Preparatory Meeting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development with the aim of drawing the attention of high-level decision makers towards the distinctive comparative advantage of the Convention as a useful tool for promoting sustainable development in the poorest and marginalized rural areas, thus responding directly to the economic, social and environmental challenges related to poverty alleviation.

C. Action programmes

14. The General Assembly urged affected developing countries that have not yet adopted their national, subregional and regional action programmes to accelerate the process of elaboration of those programmes with a view to finalizing them as soon as possible.

15. As at June 2002, 57 affected countries have finalized the elaboration of their national action programmes to combat desertification (NAPs). In most cases, these NAPs have been adopted by the respective Governments. At the subregional and regional levels, seven subregional action programmes and four regional action programmes have been finalized.

16. Through the preparation and finalization of action programmes, the implementation of the Convention has been intensified in affected countries of all regions. The main emphasis at the moment is in supporting partnership arrangements for fostering the implementation of these programmes, and for establishing linkages between the NAPs and other national sustainable strategies.

17. Country parties to the Convention that had finalized their national action programme and their development partners met in Praia from 5 to 8 March 2002 for a forum on the implementation of the Convention in the framework of the preparatory process to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Participants in this meeting underlined the importance of the linkages between desertification and poverty. They also highlighted the difficulties

encountered, especially by countries that have already adopted their NAPs, in the mobilization of necessary financial resources and the role of development partners in that regard. Participants noted that the level of commitment to NAP funding by the donor community was still not commensurate with the needs expressed and the expectations of affected developing countries, underlining that the only major obstacle for the effective launching of the priority activities identified in the national action programmes was of a financial nature.

18. The forum also addressed other important issues, such as transfer of technology under the Convention, capacity-building, the creation of an enabling framework for the implementation of development policies, the establishment of a framework for integrating policies and strategies and subregional and regional cooperation.

19. Moreover, a declaration entitled "Ministerial Message from Praia", which will be delivered to the World Summit on Sustainable Development by the President of the Republic of Cape Verde, Pedro Pires, was adopted at the forum.

20. In the framework of the cooperation between parties from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, some heads of State and Government and ministers from those regions met in Caracas on 19 and 20 February 2002 and adopted the Caracas Declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa. The Caracas Declaration, meant to foster the implementation of the Convention in the context of South-South cooperation, was introduced to the third Preparatory Meeting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. President Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela, Chairman of that forum, has been mandated by his peers to convey the Caracas Declaration to the World Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa.

D. Synergies with other relevant conventions and organizations

21. The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification prepared and subsequently presented to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties document ICCD/COP(5)/6 on the review of

activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies. This document describes relationships and cooperation between the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar) and other key institutional partners, such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Development Programme.

22. Taking into consideration that the governing bodies of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change have, in several recommendations, conclusions and decisions, encouraged the secretariats of the three Conventions to cooperate and manage their respective processes as coherently as possible, the three Convention secretariats have established a Joint Liaison Group in order to enhance coordination between the three instruments and to explore options for further cooperation, including the possibility of joint work plans.

23. The first meeting of the Joint Liaison Group took place in Washington, D.C., on 6 December 2001 in the sidelines of the Council of the Global Environment Facility. Participants exchanged information from recent meetings of the three Conventions, shared information on plans for the forthcoming year and explored opportunities to enhance cohesion among the three Conventions and their respective subsidiary bodies. As a starting point, it was decided that a joint workshop on forests should be organized to explore, identify and promote synergies among the Conventions. It was also agreed to create a common calendar of activities.

24. The second meeting of the Joint Liaison Group was held on 30 January 2002 in New York to discuss issues related to the Joint Calendar and the Joint Workshop on Forests. A third meeting of the Group was organized during the month of April in The Hague, during which the participants agreed to hold the Workshop on Forests during the fall of 2002. This workshop will focus on synergies between the

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Conventions using forests as the natural resource basis for promoting linkages between them.

25. At the national level, the secretariat has supported the organization of National Workshops on Synergies between the Conventions. This country-driven exercise has brought together various stakeholders involved in the respective Conventions and has emphasized the demand for capacity-building. The main objective of this approach is to integrate the implementation process of the Convention into national development strategies by forging links among current relevant strategies for sustainable development. These workshops have already been organized in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cuba, El Salvador, Mongolia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela. The secretariat has received several requests for support from country parties interested in holding such national workshops on synergies during the year 2002.

26. The General Assembly, in its resolution 56/196, also encouraged the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility to work cooperatively and effectively to facilitate the financing of the full implementation of the Convention by the Facility to achieve the objectives of the Convention in the area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation. During previous sessions of the Assembly and the Conference of the Parties, one of the identified obstacles hampering the implementation of the Convention was the lack of financial resources. To address this issue, the international community has identified the Global Environment Facility as one of the providers of core resources to co-finance the implementation of the Convention. The General Assembly, at its fifty-sixth session, congratulated the Council of the Global Environment Facility for its decision to recommend making land degradation (desertification and deforestation) a new focal area of the Facility. The Assembly of the Facility, due to meet in Beijing next October, is expected to endorse the Council recommendation.

E. Action by States

27. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 55/204, the General Assembly called upon all countries that were not yet parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to it as soon as possible.

28. As of 15 June 2002, instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession had been deposited by the following 179 States and one regional economic integration organization: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, the Congo, Comoros, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the European Community, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Niue, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

F. Arrangements for the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

29. The fifth session of the Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2/COP.5, by which it decided that the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention should be held at Bonn, Germany, the site of the Convention secretariat, from 18 to 29 November 2002, in the event that no party made an offer to host that session and to meet the related additional financial cost. Accordingly, it invited the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, to accommodate, by 20 April 2002, any offer from a party to host the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.

30. During the month of February, the Government of Italy informed the secretariat of its interest to host the session of the Committee at a venue to be decided upon in the southern part of the country. In a note verbale of 26 February 2002, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs further announced that it had earmarked part of its voluntary contribution to the secretariat for the year 2002 for the organization of the meeting of the Committee if Italy was selected as the host country for the meeting.

31. Accordingly, the secretariat informed the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties of this development and requested its authorization to pursue consultations with the Government of Italy on this matter. Consequently, the Bureau gave a mandate to the Executive Secretary to continue talks with the Italian Government so as to obtain a final decision on the exact venue of the meeting. Following these consultations, the Government of Italy informed the secretariat on 7 May 2002 of its offer to host the Committee session in Sicily from 18 to 29 November 2002.

III. Conclusions

32. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the outcomes of the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility regarding the designation of land degradation (desertification and deforestation) as an additional focal area of the Facility. Likewise, the General Assembly may wish**

to take note of the conclusions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development relevant to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and invite the Council and Assembly of the Global Environment Facility as well as the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to operationalize them.

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Environment and sustainable development

Activities undertaken in preparation for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/192, in which the Assembly, inter alia, recalled its resolution 55/196, in which it had proclaimed 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-seventh session an interim report on the activities undertaken in preparation for the Year. During the Year, all Member States, the United Nations system and major groups are encouraged to raise awareness of the essential importance of freshwater resources for satisfying basic human needs, for health and food production and the preservation of ecosystems, and for economic and social development in general. They are urged to promote action at the local, national, regional and international levels, and to give high priority to the serious freshwater problems facing many regions, especially in the developing countries. The present report describes current and planned activities, initiatives and networking at the local, national and international levels in preparation for the Year. It also provides examples of partnership initiatives among governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as other activities that could be undertaken at the national and international levels. The report proposes a public information strategy and a communications plan for awareness-raising, and provides some recommendations for action to be taken in preparation for the Year.

* A/57/150.

** The present report was prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which were asked to jointly coordinate United Nations activities for the Year by the former ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources in its capacity as the coordinating entity for the Year.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 55/196, the General Assembly proclaimed 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater; encouraged Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Year to increase awareness of the importance of freshwater; and called upon Member States, national and international organizations, major groups and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines for international years and anniversaries.

2. In its resolution 56/192, the General Assembly welcomed the activities undertaken by States, the Secretariat, organizations of the United Nations system that are engaged in inter-agency work related to freshwater and major groups in preparation for the observance of the Year. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-seventh session an interim report on the activities undertaken in preparation for the Year. The present report has been prepared in response to that request.

3. In its resolution 55/196, the Assembly invited the former ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources to serve as the coordinating entity for the Year. At its twenty-second session, the former Subcommittee accepted with appreciation the offer of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to jointly coordinate United Nations system activities for the Year. The former Subcommittee also welcomed UNESCO's offer to provide the coordinating secretariat for implementing the programme of activities for the Year.

4. Since 31 December 2001, the subsidiary bodies of the former ACC ceased to exist by decision of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Since then, the functions of the former Subcommittee have continued through an informal inter-agency mechanism rather than under a standing subcommittee. The present report has been prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with UNESCO and with contributions from other members of the former Subcommittee and interested non-governmental organizations and other entities.

II. Background

5. Awareness of the importance of the use and management of freshwater resources for achieving sustainable development has increased dramatically in recent years, as a result of a number of ongoing national and international initiatives and activities, leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002.

6. During the preparatory process of the Summit, broad-based support has been indicated for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. In the draft plan of implementation to be considered by the Summit, it has been agreed to promote effective coordination among the various international and intergovernmental bodies and processes working on water-related issues, both within the United Nations system and between the United Nations and international financial institutions, drawing on the contributions of other international institutions and civil society to inform intergovernmental decision-making; it has also been agreed that closer coordination should be promoted to elaborate and support proposals and undertake activities related to the Year and beyond (see A/CONF.199/L.1).

7. Among the Secretary-General's priorities for the Summit, five specific areas have been identified in which concrete results are felt to be both achievable and essential: water and sanitation; energy; health; agriculture; and biodiversity. With regard to water and sanitation, it is expected that the draft plan of implementation will strongly reassert the relevant goals pledged in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2). The Declaration pledged to halve, by the year 2015, the number of people unable to reach or afford safe drinking water. It also resolved to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels that promote both equitable access and adequate supplies.

8. The International Year of Freshwater, 2003 provides an opportunity to follow up on the outcomes of the Summit and to consolidate and build upon the many efforts carried out to date to protect, use and manage freshwater resources in a sustainable manner. It allows for renewed and intensified commitment to continue such efforts at all levels. Yet the real challenge is to focus attention on action-oriented

activities and policies that ensure the long-term protection of available water quantity and quality and sustainability of water resources utilization, including sanitation. Collective action is required to build and strengthen the institutional and human capacity to continue sustainable freshwater resources development and protection efforts far beyond 2003.

III. International activities and initiatives

9. Within the United Nations system, matters relating to freshwater resources, including sanitation, are dealt with by more than 23 different bodies. The International Year of Freshwater, 2003 is an excellent opportunity to strengthen and expand existing coordinating and networking efforts among United Nations bodies and other relevant stakeholders at all levels. The Year offers a platform for promoting ongoing water-related activities and policies, bringing together the United Nations agencies concerned with water issues in a common endeavour to assist countries in their efforts to improve the integrated management of water resources.

World Water Assessment Programme

10. One of the main ongoing programmes being implemented by all concerned agencies in the United Nations system is the World Water Assessment Programme. The Programme evolved as a result of decision 6/1 of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which was adopted in 1997. In the decision, the Commission called on the United Nations system to undertake periodic assessments of the sustainable development, management, protection and use of freshwater resources and to provide a global report of the state of freshwater resources and potential problems. In 1998, the former ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources launched the *World Water Development Report*, and in 2000 initiated the World Water Assessment Programme as an inter-agency initiative under the oversight of the former Subcommittee, coordinated by the Programme secretariat and hosted by UNESCO. The Programme provides the background assessment for the *Report*.

11. The Programme can enhance the process of making comprehensive freshwater assessments within individual countries and among groups of countries,

such as riparian States that share international watercourses. It can also assist in monitoring progress towards the implementation of targets within countries, and can provide information to assist decision makers in taking specific actions to address situations of water stress and shortages. The Programme encourages the formation of partnerships to monitor progress towards the alleviation of water stress and to recommend actions to remedy unacceptable situations. It also provides a broad mechanism for bringing together relevant inputs from NGOs, academic institutions and the private sector. Information on participating in the Programme is available at its web site at <http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/index.shtml>.

12. The *World Water Development Report* is the central product of the Programme and is intended to be a comprehensive and scientific triennial report on the state of global freshwater resources. The promotion of the *Report* will be a major focus of the Year's public information activities. Additional and related scientific and political events, exhibits and conferences on freshwater issues will be linked and included in all promotional activities regarding the launch of the *Report*. The first edition of the *Report* will be available at the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Kyoto in 2003.

13. Another product of the Programme will be the production of a regional water development report for Africa; scheduled to be produced in late 2003, it will be the first of a series of regional reports from around the world to be produced in future years. The Programme secretariat will also be involved with other common activities, such as its web site and the development of a travelling exhibit for the Year.

14. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) actively contribute to global water supply and sanitation monitoring and information dissemination under the WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme. Coverage figures produced by the Monitoring Programme are the official reference data for the United Nations system, including the goals of the Millennium Declaration. In 2003, an updated global water supply and sanitation database (country and regional figures) will be produced based on new evidence and analysis. Drinking water quality, and not just access, is becoming an increasingly important part of the Programme's work. A water quality pilot study, being conducted jointly by WHO and UNICEF during

2002-2003 in nine countries, will test both the microbial and chemical quality of the water at the source as well as in the household.

Regional initiatives

15. The International Year of Freshwater, 2003 offers an opportunity for promoting water-related activities and policies, in particular within the work programmes of the regional commissions, with their close links to interregional, regional and national political authorities. The organization of regional and national workshops for training purposes and awareness-raising among politicians, legislative bodies and other governmental institutions is a major focus of the water-related agenda of regional commissions in 2003.

16. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is contributing to the Year through its publication *Water Conservation: A Guide to Promoting Public Awareness* (ST/ESCAP/SER.F/81, No. 81 of its Water Resources Series). The publication aims at providing guidance to the countries interested in initiating and efficiently carrying out campaigns and programmes at the national, provincial and local levels to raise public awareness of the importance of freshwater conservation for sustainable development. Countries in the Asia and Pacific region have found the *Guide* useful for planning and implementing various activities to commemorate the Year. It has been translated into the Bahasa Indonesia language for a publication and issuance on CD-ROM, and several other countries have requested translation into their respective languages. A summary of the publication is available at <www.unescap.org/enrd/wmrs/publications/wrs/81.htm>.

17. Moreover, ESCAP is planning to carry out a number of national and subregional training activities to strengthen the capacity of the concerned countries of the region in water resources management, using the recently completed guidelines on strategic planning and management of water resources. Experts from several developing countries in the region participated in preparing and adopting the guidelines during 2001, and they will be used to support activities related to the Year. Five subregional workshops are to be held in 2002, and national seminars will be held in selected countries during 2003 for detailed application of the guidelines.

18. An Asian ministerial round table dialogue on water sector challenges, policies and institutional

development was organized in May 2002 by ESCAP, in collaboration with the International Water Management Institute, the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Thailand. Ministers and senior officials from countries in Asia, together with the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry of South Africa, identified common water issues and shared experiences, and prepared and adopted a joint statement covering common concerns, shared principles and priorities for action. The joint statement will be submitted to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to the World Water Forum to be held in Japan in 2003.

19. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) is also linking a number of its various water-related activities to the Year. For example, water issues will have a prominent place on the agenda of the Kiev ministerial conference on the theme "Environment for Europe", to be held from 21 to 23 May 2003, including the adoption of a protocol to the ECE water and industrial accidents conventions on civil liability for damage caused by industrial accidents on transboundary waters, and an environment strategy for the newly independent States that includes integrated water resources management and international river basin issues. In addition, ECE is planning a number of regional seminars to be held during the Year. On the occasion of World Water Day, 22 March 2003, a seminar will be held in Finland on sustainable flood prevention and safety of water construction works; another will be held in the Russian Federation on the sharing of waters in international river basins; and a third is planned for the Netherlands on water monitoring and assessment for planning and decision-making. At the end of the Year, countries will meet in Spain and adopt, inter alia, a long-term water strategy for the whole ECE region and a manual on public participation in water management. Those activities are mainly carried out in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Europe and the WHO Regional Office for Europe, supported by a number of NGOs competent on international watercourse issues.

Water for cities

20. There is an emerging consensus that an increasing part of water security challenges will have to be met in the coming decades in cities and megacities, where most people will live, the most water will be consumed and most of the pollution will be generated. During the

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International Year of Freshwater, 2003, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is organizing some of its key initiatives around the theme "water and cities", which will be prominently displayed at the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Japan in March 2003. A special meeting on the theme "Water and cities", organized by UN-Habitat, will be held as part of the Forum, at which a flagship report, *The State of Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities*, will be officially launched. The report will provide a detailed overview of the situation of water and sanitation in cities in different regions of the world, and will focus on key policy issues with priority to meet the water- and sanitation-related goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. It will include a compilation of best practices in urban water and sanitation projects, will be complementary to the *World Water Development Report*, and will be published and launched officially as a contribution to the Year.

Assistance to country programmes

21. Information materials to raise awareness at the national level about water resources management during the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 will be disseminated through United Nations information centres and through the network of United Nations resident coordinators. Materials will also be made available through country offices of individual United Nations programmes and specialized agencies.

22. During the Year, for example, UNICEF intends to focus its global water, environment and sanitation programme to benefit children and vulnerable people. It is stressing the need to increase the awareness of government partners, national and international organizations, NGOs and the private sector concerning the importance of freshwater resources for the survival and development of children. Its most important contribution to the Year is through advocacy and action at the country level for improving the access to and quality of freshwater for children's survival and development. Through its ongoing water, environment and sanitation programmes in over 80 countries, the focus is on strengthening the capacities of communities and households to improve and sustain their water security (water supply and water quality). Sanitation and hygiene promotion programmes resulting from improved facilities and making school environments safe are an increasingly important part of the country programmes.

23. Moreover, UNICEF country and regional offices are building their capacities for emergency preparedness and response to meet the water and sanitation needs of vulnerable populations in disasters and conflicts. For example, UNICEF facilitated a conference in Afghanistan in April 2002 that addressed problems of water management for domestic water supply, agriculture and hydropower.

Third World Water Forum, Japan

24. The Third World Water Forum, organized by the World Water Council and hosted by the Government of Japan, will be one of the major conferences dedicated to freshwater issues to be held in 2003. The Forum is to be held in Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka, Japan, from 16 to 23 March 2003. The meeting will bring together the world's leading scientists and water experts, as well as representatives of Governments, local authorities and non-governmental organizations, in order to exchange knowledge and share information. The coincidence of the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 with the Forum provides an opportunity for reciprocal promotion of and cooperation on freshwater issues.

25. The first edition of the *World Water Development Report*, being prepared by the United Nations system, will be launched at the Forum in Kyoto on World Water Day, 22 March 2003. Moreover, UNESCO will release the two volumes of the *Encyclopaedia on Life Support Systems* on the body of knowledge related to freshwater during the Forum in Japan in March 2003.

26. As part of its inputs to the Year and the Forum, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is planning to launch a new initiative on the role and operations of national hydrological services, including the convening of a special meeting on the exchange of hydrological data at the Forum. WMO will also coordinate a series of meetings on flood disasters and flood management at the Forum.

27. As its contribution to the Forum, UNICEF has initiated a process of creating partnerships with children and young people as critical stakeholders for water and sanitation development. It is co-organizing the Children's World Water Forum, on the theme "Give children a voice", at Kyoto, as well as a panel discussion on the theme "Children and young people as stakeholders in the water and sanitation sector". It also plans an art and cultural programme on water, including expositions of international drawing contests,

video/photograph documentaries by children, theatre and poetry.

28. In preparation for those events, during 2002 UNICEF is sponsoring the following activities: preparation of materials, including training materials, to work with children; child-friendly versions of key documents, video documentaries and exhibition materials for the Children's World Water Forum; organization of a technical session at the World Summit on Sustainable Development; and regional consultations and country activities in 10 to 15 countries.

Relationship to the marine environment

29. The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities is a non-binding global agreement, reflecting the resolve of States to address the serious impacts of land-based sources of pollution and physical degradation on the coastal and marine environments. It is a comprehensive programme designed to assist States in taking concrete actions individually or jointly within their respective policies, priorities and resources. The goal of the Programme of Action is to address the significant impacts on human health, poverty alleviation and food security caused by the continued degradation of the coastal and marine environment through land-based activities.

30. During the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 UNEP's regional seas programme and the Global Programme of Action will feature the "H₂O: From Hilltop to Oceans" initiative, particularly during the Third World Water Forum in Japan and on World Water Day, 22 March 2003. The initiative will also be celebrated by UNEP, in collaboration with many partners, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, particularly in the Water Dome (see para. 38 below) exhibitions and side events.

IV. Public information strategy

31. An effective communications plan is essential to focus world attention on action-oriented activities and policies that ensure the long-term protection of available freshwater. The political process surrounding preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development involves a comprehensive agenda, for which freshwater is a priority. The International Year

of Freshwater, 2003, through a variety of awareness-raising activities and public relations outreach, offers a great opportunity for the continuous promotion of freshwater issues and an immediate follow-up to the Summit focusing on concrete activities, respectively. Strategic communications and coordination are crucial to the coherence and success of that effort. Therefore, it has been proposed to include the Year on the agenda of the Communications Group Task Force, which includes collaboration of the public information departments of several United Nations agencies. The communications plan is being developed with the active participation of the Departments of Economic and Social Affairs and Public Information.

32. Based on the communications plan, a travelling exhibit, a web site, educational materials and a global public relations campaign are being developed and will be executed from June 2002 to December 2003. Information and press kits, brochures, education materials for school curricula, videos, radio and TV documentaries and special events are to be included in the communications plan. Special editions of normal United Nations publications and other information materials are part of the public information campaign.

33. The communications plan goal is to accomplish the following objectives:

(a) Raise awareness among the general public about the Year and allow them to recognize linkages between their well-being and the sustainable development and management of the global freshwater resource;

(b) Encourage Governments to develop policies and laws to protect water environments;

(c) Stimulate Governments, non-governmental organizations and grass-roots organizations to advocate for greater investments in the sustainable development of water resources;

(d) Increase bilateral and multilateral donations for the conservation of high priority ecosystems and sustainable development of water supplies.

Educational materials

34. It is planned to develop educational materials aimed at allowing educators to incorporate water issues into different lessons, from world history to math. The content of that material will be based on information from the World Water Assessment Programme and the

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World Water Development Report, the exhibit for Johannesburg and the Water Year 2003 web site. There will be a wide distribution of those materials through United Nations information centres and offices throughout the world and via the Internet to Governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other interested parties.

35. The Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems, being produced under the auspices of UNESCO, focuses on sustainable development in all its myriad aspects — ecological issues, global stability, peace, equity and security. The Encyclopaedia body of knowledge is in about 20 major subject categories and spanned by about 200 subject themes. Each theme is on average equivalent to one print volume of 500 standard pages. The Encyclopaedia will release its two volumes related to freshwater — Water Science and Resources, and Water Engineering Resources — during the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Japan in March 2003.

36. A proposal to produce a series of children's books for the Year has been developed by the Gender and Water Alliance and UNICEF. The books, targeted at children between the ages of 6 and 11, would aim to educate children, parents and teachers about key issues in water and sanitation, and to encourage changes in attitudes and behaviour regarding water use and management. Four book ideas have already been developed, including stories about glaciers and climate change in Pakistan; the beginning and end of the Aral Sea; regaining traditional water harvesting techniques in India; and surviving floods in Mozambique. Once finalized, the books will be launched at a special meeting on water and children at the Forum. Afterwards, the books will be disseminated worldwide in schools, book exhibitions, open fairs etc.

37. In 2002, UNICEF began to design and produce printed materials to highlight progress and solutions for improving the health of children: a brochure on UNICEF water, environment and sanitation programmes; an updated poster illustrating the links between water and sanitation and children's health; sets of posters and pamphlets on various water, environment and sanitation topics, including appropriate water and sanitation technologies; and children's books on water and sanitation.

Water Dome

38. The Water Dome is a major event that will be held in Johannesburg in parallel with the World Summit on Sustainable Development from 26 August to 4 September 2002. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in cooperation with UNESCO and other agencies, is organizing the first official announcement of the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 during a side-event at the Water Dome. The travelling exhibit for the Year will also be launched at the Water Dome.

Logo

39. The logo for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 was designed by the Department of Public Information and presented to the Working Committee of the Publications Board at its 367th meeting, on 15 November 2001. The following logo design for the Year was approved and is being used for the web site, travelling exhibit and other public awareness activities for the Year:



Web site

40. An official web site for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003 is being launched under the domain name <www.wateryear2003.org>. The web site will be housed and maintained at UNESCO, under the auspices of the World Water Assessment Programme secretariat.

41. The web site will be used as an awareness-raising tool and a clearing house to announce activities taking place at the national, regional and international levels. The web site provides a forum in which to discuss different issues among different groups or stakeholders. A number of different themes will be featured, for each

of which a given United Nations agency may take a leading role.

Travelling exhibit

42. Design work has begun on a travelling exhibit, to be launched at the Water Dome during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, that will celebrate and promote the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. The exhibit consists of a combination of multimedia components and graphic elements presented on three curved projection screens and four curved free-standing panels. The circular exhibit measures approximately 5 metres in diameter. The panels will contain graphic and text information and computer-touch screens. The touch screens will activate stories from the water-related programmes of United Nations agencies and other partners.

43. The multimedia programme will project short video presentations showing the central role water plays in sustaining life on our planet. Visitors will also have an opportunity to view additional information on the interior walls of the free-standing panels. The total effect will leave the viewer with a strong emotional impression about water and the knowledge that the United Nations and its partners are actively engaged in preserving and protecting this precious resource.

44. Following the Summit, the exhibit will be used to launch the Year in New York (United Nations Headquarters), Kyoto (Third World Water Forum) and Paris (UNESCO headquarters), and will be made available to science museums around the world. Funding for the exhibit has been generously provided by the Government of the Netherlands.

V. Partnership initiatives

Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

45. The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council is a multi-stakeholder initiative dedicated to enhancing collaboration in the water supply and sanitation sector, and is working in close cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Council's thematic networks focus on hygiene promotion, environmental sanitation, institutional and management reform and community-based approaches, including a code of ethics and gender mainstreaming. The Council has recently launched a campaign entitled

“WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for all”, aimed at mobilizing political support and action around the world to end the suffering of the more than 2.4 billion people who are without access to adequate sanitation and the 1.1 billion without a safe and affordable water supply. A “WASH the World” campaign is envisioned for key conferences and events, and some 30 countries are being earmarked for support to implement the proposed WASH initiative.

46. The Council will be undertaking a number of advocacy and communication activities related to the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, focusing on the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. In particular, it will be expanding its outreach to increase public awareness of water, sanitation and hygiene as keys to poverty alleviation and sustainable development. With members in over 140 countries, the Council will continue to play an important role in the promotion of water and sanitation, particularly at the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Japan in March 2003. Throughout the Year, the Council and its partners will be holding dialogues, virtual forums, exhibitions and round tables around WASH-related themes, featuring key personalities, representatives of governments, NGOs and members of civil society, the private sector, men, women and children. The year-long activities will culminate in Dakar, with the holding of the sixth global forum of the Council in December 2003.

Gender and Water Alliance

47. The Gender and Water Alliance, an associated programme of the Global Water Partnership, is a network of 115 organizations and individuals around the world. The Alliance offers a mix of information and knowledge-sharing activities, such as electronic conferencing, a web site, advocacy leaflets and video, annual reports, and capacity-building and pilot programmes. For the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, trained Alliance ambassadors all over the world will use a range of products and services to focus on the essential role of women and children in sustainable management of water and sanitation. The products (in four languages) will include key messages leaflets; a global advocacy video; annual “facts and figures” reports on gender and water; a booklet on successful gender case studies; guidelines for local governments to mainstream gender; a series of posters for use in mainstreaming gender in water resources management;

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and post cards with key messages. The Alliance will showcase those materials at the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Japan in March 2003; at the sixth global forum of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, to be held in Dakar at the end of 2002; and other events.

Other important partners

48. A large number of non-governmental organizations, as well as research institutes and other entities dealing with water issues, have indicated interest in preparing and organizing activities related to the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. Such activities would include international conferences; workshops and seminars on various water-related themes; public awareness campaigns; fund-raising activities and interactive forums; the publication of special editions of newsletters and scientific articles; and exhibitions. Moreover, contacts have been made with other important actors in the field of freshwater resources, including the Global Water Partnership, the World Water Council and many others. It is expected that a strong network of interested parties will be established for the purpose of commemorating the Year and its related activities.

VI. Related publications

49. The *World Water Development Report*, as mentioned above, is the central information product of the United Nations system to be produced during the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. It is intended to be a comprehensive and scientific report on the state of global freshwater resources, and will be widely disseminated. The promotion of the *Report* will be a major focus of the Year's public information activities. Additional and related scientific and political events, exhibits and conferences on freshwater issues will be linked and included in all promotional activities regarding the launch of the *Report* at the Third World Water Forum, to be held in Kyoto in March 2003.

50. The *Natural Resources Forum*, a quarterly journal published by the United Nations with Blackwell Publishing in Oxford, will dedicate its annual special issue for 2003 (May) to the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. Articles for the special issue have been requested from well-known specialists on major freshwater subjects, such as water supply and sanitation for all; water recycling and demand

management; water pricing and public/private partnerships; community water management and local water user associations; forest cover and watershed protection; sustainable management of groundwater aquifers; legal and institutional issues and the role of civil society; gender and water issues; special problems, such as arsenic contamination of drinking water; and other water-related subjects.

51. The *International Rivers and Lakes Newsletter*, published jointly by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, will also devote its June 2003 issue to the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. The *Newsletter* explores the legal, economic and political issues related to international watercourses, including treaties and agreements among countries. Other important United Nations journals and publications that provide crucial information on freshwater issues can also be used for promotion of the Year. UNEP's *Global Environment Outlook Report*, to be issued at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, will highlight the state of regional and global water resources, as well as the responses to the threats to them. A special issue of the *WMO Bulletin* will be issued in conjunction with the Year during 2003.

VII. Funding considerations

52. One Member State has contributed seed funding for activities undertaken in preparation for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. It is expected that other governmental and non-governmental organizations will also provide support to public awareness activities related to the Year. Appeals for funds will be addressed to Governments and private foundations.

53. It is expected that the United Nations system will contribute to fund-raising through a variety of means and projects, including the production and sale of United Nations stamps with reference to freshwater themes. Proceeds from fund-raising could be used primarily to raise awareness of and improve educational programmes about water resource conservation and management in developing countries upon request during the International Year of Freshwater, 2003.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

54. Freshwater issues are a concern for all. Because of their increasing political importance, freshwater issues have become a major priority for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The International Year of Freshwater, 2003 provides an excellent opportunity to maintain the momentum and raise public awareness. However, financial contributions and commitments have been limited to date. Fund-raising appeals for the Year will therefore be directed again to all stakeholders, such as Governments, non-governmental organizations and private foundations.

55. **Member States may wish to consider setting up national committees or designating focal points in their respective countries to facilitate and promote activities related to the Year at the local and national levels.**

56. **Interested stakeholders, such as international and regional organizations, non-governmental groups and others, are encouraged to link their water-related activities to the Year, and may wish to consider new partnerships.**

57. **Member States, national and international organizations, major groups and the private sector are urged to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines for international years and anniversaries.**

58. **Following the example of the informal International Year of Mountains, 2002, Focus Group, composed of interested permanent representatives to the United Nations in New York, interested permanent representatives to the United Nations may wish to convene an informal steering group for the International Year of Freshwater, 2003.**

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**Environment and sustainable development: further implementation
of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of
Small Island Developing States**

**Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference
on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing
States; and promoting an integrated management
approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of
sustainable development**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/198 of 21 December 2001, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-seventh session a report on, inter alia, measures taken for the further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; and in response to General Assembly resolution 55/203 of 20 December 2000, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development.

The report gives an account of ongoing activities and new measures taken by agencies of the United Nations system, national Governments and regional organizations for the further implementation of the Programme of Action, and assesses the progress made in promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea in the context of sustainable development. The report concludes with suggestions on how to improve the further implementation of the Programme of Action, keeping in mind the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

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I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 56/198 of 21 December 2001, entitled "Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", in which it, inter alia: (a) invited the relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and organizations, within their respective mandates, to reflect measures for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States¹ in their programmes; (b) urged all relevant organizations to finalize, as a matter of urgency, the work on the development of a vulnerability index, taking into account the particular circumstances and needs of small island developing States; (c) called upon the Secretary-General to consider cost-effective ways and means of increasing and improving the United Nations system-wide coordination and dissemination of information on activities in support of small island developing States and the Programme of Action.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-seventh session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

3. At its fifty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 55/203 of 20 December 2000, entitled "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development", in which it, inter alia: (a) called upon the United Nations system and the international community to assist Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, from illegal dumping or accidental

release of hazardous waste; (b) called upon all relevant States to take the necessary steps to bring into force, and to support the implementation of, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities, in order to protect the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from land-based pollution and degradation; and (c) called upon all States to become contracting parties to relevant international agreements to promote the protection of the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from pollution and degradation from ships. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-seventh session, under the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", on the implementation of the resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

4. In the preparation of the present report, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, including relevant regional commissions, were approached for submissions of updated accounts of activities undertaken in the context of the Programme of Action and the promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area. A number of those organizations responded, providing brief reports of activities since 2001; their submissions served as the sole source of information on their activities for that period.

5. The present report also includes information on activities undertaken at the regional level under the Programme of Action by non-United Nations intergovernmental regional bodies and by a number of Governments at the national level.

II. Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

6. During the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, special consideration was given to small island developing States in the Chairman's paper. The Singapore Declaration of the Alliance of Small Island States Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit also reaffirmed the objectives and

¹ *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

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commitments of the Barbados Programme of Action and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which called for renewed efforts to achieve its full implementation. In this regard, many agencies of the United Nations system and Governments and other institutions have continued to assist small island developing States in their developmental efforts. An account of activities undertaken is given below.

A. International level

1. Capacity-building

7. During the reporting period, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat continued to host the Small Island Developing States Network. Phase II of this project is currently under way, its main objective being to enhance the Network's regional presence and capacity-building. In this regard, the Government of France is funding a focal point for the Indian Ocean region. Two other focal points, for the Caribbean and the Pacific regions, respectively, will be financed through the Global Environment Facility (GEF). In addition, the Department, through its Small Island Developing States Unit, continues to be an active partner in the capacity development initiatives of the Alliance of Small Island States. In this context, the Department has actively supported the Alliance's Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Singapore in January 2002.

2. Climate change and sea level rise

8. In this area, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in collaboration with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), organized workshops on the regional impact of climate change, in order to provide Caribbean small island developing States with accurate information on climate change and variability and to provide guidance on adaptation. A policy document was developed and the report entitled "Climate change in the Caribbean and the challenge of adaptation" will be published in 2002.

3. Natural and environmental disasters

9. Natural disasters, such as tropical cyclones, are recurring phenomena in small island developing States regions and have potentially disastrous impacts, as one single natural disaster alone can undermine years of economic development. Means of crucial long-term preventive measures include, in particular, effective warning and preparedness systems. The World Meteorological Organization continued to assist the efforts of small island developing States to apply and implement those disaster-reduction and response measures through its tropical cyclone programmes. The programmes focus mainly on capacity-building through regular training, seminars and workshops with respect to improved warning and response strategies. In the Caribbean, most recent improvements have been made to replace communication links vulnerable to tropical cyclones with a satellite-based communication system.

10. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has engaged in a global review of disaster-reduction initiatives and trends. Both the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and the Caribbean Disaster Response Agency elaborated reports on institutional capacities, risk assessment, status of early warning dissemination and public awareness to deal with disaster management and vulnerability reduction.

4. Management of wastes

11. In the field of waste management, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization continues to deliver assistance to small island developing States in the areas of industrial policy support, preventive measures through cleaner production and related technologies, and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, in order to reduce the amount of waste from land-based activities that affect the most productive areas of the marine environment, including estuaries and near-shore coastal waters.

5. Coastal and marine resources

12. Under this priority area, UNEP, through its Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities Coordination Office, is working with several small island developing States on the implementation of the Programme. Multi-stakeholder regional meetings were organized jointly by the Regional Seas secretariats and

UNEP regional offices, to further implement the United Nations Environment Programme/World Health Organization/United Nations Human Settlements Programme/Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council Strategic Action Plan on Municipal Wastewater. As part of the Global Plan of Action Clearing-House Mechanism, regional nodes are being developed both in the Caribbean and in the South Pacific regions. Through the International Coral Reef Action Network, UNEP is also working with a number of small island developing States to improve local coral reef protection and management, with community involvement wherever possible. A project addressing land-based activities in the Western Indian Ocean, in which a number of small island developing States are slated to participate is currently in the final stage of preparation and the project "Development and protection of the coastal and marine environment in sub-Saharan Africa" is ongoing with the participation of, inter alia, Mauritius and Seychelles.

6. Freshwater resources

13. In this area, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with the cooperation of the Government of the Netherlands, has fielded a water specialist in support of the water programme of SOPAC.

14. UNEP is promoting the adoption and use of rainwater harvesting, empowering women to manage water resources, and the use of renewable energy through a two-year pilot project on empowering women in rainwater harvesting in the Pacific atoll which is being implemented by SOPAC. Furthermore, UNEP/GEF is strengthening the response of small island developing States to global environmental challenges primarily through its International Waters portfolio.

7. Land resources

15. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) initiated a Participatory Smallholder Agriculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development Programme on the islands of Sao Tome and Principe in 2001 which was co-financed by the Government of France. The programme is aimed at some 41 per cent of the population of Sao Tome, including smallholder families and fishermen, assisting them in improving market access and diversification through, inter alia, rural sector services, including decentralized financial services, agriculture extension

and coastal fisheries management. In Grenada, the International Fund provides assistance through the Rural Enterprise Project (co-financed by the Caribbean Development Bank) to at least 3,000 households operating agricultural smallholdings or microenterprises. Further assistance will be provided in the form of project investments, training in design and production techniques, safety, health and handling, and gaining improved market access. The project, which has a gender-equity approach, should lead to greater employment opportunities and higher productivity in the agricultural sector, positively affecting household food security and improving nutrition through, among other things, improved processing technologies and livestock development measures. Further ongoing programmes aim at the alleviation of rural poverty, supporting smallholders, and rural development in a number of small island developing States, such as Belize, Cape Verde, Comoros, Dominica, Guyana, Maldives, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe and Saint Lucia.

8. Energy resources

16. During the reporting period, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to carry out technical cooperation projects in various small island developing States in the field of new and renewable sources of energy. A compilation of success stories related to, inter alia, energy matters is currently under way and will be published on the Small Island Developing States Network web page upon completion.

9. Tourism resources

17. Within the framework of the International Year of Ecotourism, 2002, the World Tourism Organization organized three conferences on ecotourism in 2001. A conference specially designated to the Sustainable Development and Management of Ecotourism in Small Island Developing States and other islands held in Seychelles presented four thematic areas, policies and planning, regulation, marketing and promotion and monitoring of ecotourism activities, to participants from public, private and non-governmental organization sectors, as well as local communities. The World Tourism Organization Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Development of Ecotourism, hosted by Maldives, served to disseminate best practices throughout public, private, non-governmental organizations and academic sectors and

local communities. In April 2002, a regional Conference on Sustainable Development of Ecotourism in the South Pacific Islands was held in Fiji.

18. The development of sustainable tourism policies and guidelines is of crucial importance to small island developing States, as tourism is one of the major income sources of such countries. In this context, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) assisted selected small island developing States at various conferences in their preparations for specific policy issues, such as tourism. The high-level meeting on tourism in least developed countries held in Gran Canaria in March 2001, jointly organized by UNCTAD and the World Tourism Organization, with funding from the Government of Spain, was of particular interest to small island developing States. The outcome, the "Canary Islands Declaration on Tourism in the Least Developed Countries" and an associated plan of action were presented in the segment on international trade, commodities and tourism of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

10. Biodiversity resources

19. In this area, UNEP coordinated the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/UNEP regional project Caribbean Environment, with involvement of the private sector, in support of the International Coral Reef Initiative. The aim of the project was to promote sustainable tourism practices through integrated coastal area management, best management practices in water and solid waste treatment and siting and design of tourist facilities.

20. Following the most recent meeting of the subsidiary body of the Convention on Biodiversity, a pilot project was launched to assess the impact of invasive alien species in small islands and an initiative on the development of rapid assessment methodologies is being carried out in cooperation with small island developing States.

11. National institutions and administrative capacity

21. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization continues to execute a wide range of programmes designed to improve the governance, management and performance of industry in small

island developing States, in order to reduce the environmental impacts globally.

22. During the reporting period, UNEP convened two regional symposiums on the judiciary's role in promoting sustainable development in both the Caribbean and the South Pacific region. The main objectives of these symposiums were to: (a) examine developments in the field of environmental law and their implications for promoting the goals of environment and development; (b) review the role that courts of law have played in strengthening environmental law and in promoting compliance and enforcement; and (c) develop and implement follow-up activities to enhance networking and access to information and material on environmental law.

12. Transport and communication

23. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has continued its efforts to improve transport services and facilities in small island developing States with special emphasis on safety measures, as well as environmental protection based on sustainable, energy-efficient and low-cost transportation solutions. ICAO work encompasses, in particular, regular information dissemination regarding the development and application of relevant international policy guidelines and norms and standards through training and expert workshops. Technical cooperation projects are currently being implemented in Bahamas, Barbados, Cape Verde, Cuba, Dominica, Haiti, Jamaica, Maldives, Sao Tome and Principe and Trinidad and Tobago. All support by ICAO is aimed at improving the sustainable economic and social development of small island developing States, in particular through the enhancement of the air transport sector, based on sustainable principles. In addition, several workshops and seminars were held. These include: a workshop on airports and route facility management for the Americas and the Caribbean, held in Montreal on 15 and 16 April 2002; a seminar on aviation security for the Asia/Pacific region, held in Hong Kong from 27 to 31 May 2002; and a statistics workshop for the Asia/Pacific region, held in Bangkok from 19 to 23 August 2002.

13. Vulnerability index

24. Organizations are still concentrating their efforts on collecting relevant data on different criteria or aspects of vulnerability. The work of UNEP, for

example, has focused on providing support to the development of an Environmental vulnerability index that is robust, operational and provides a relatively quick and inexpensive way of characterizing the vulnerability of natural systems, while taking into consideration the special characteristics of small island developing States. In 2001, UNEP and the South Pacific Applied Geosciences Commission held an International Expert Group Meeting on the environmental vulnerability index to facilitate the collection of data from a global suite of countries in order to test the index.

25. UNCTAD continued to pay particular attention to the vulnerability of least developed small island developing States in an exercise aimed at assisting the Committee for Development Policy and the Economic and Social Council in their consideration of the situation of the least developed countries vis-à-vis the thresholds of graduation from least developed country status.

26. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), through its Risk and Disaster Section, is presently developing a vulnerability assessment tool targeted at local authorities and national Governments. The tool is currently being tested in several countries of South-East Asia and its application will be introduced in the Caribbean region in 2003. The testing and developing of such a tool will include the eventual production of vulnerability indicators for national action and international monitoring. It is also envisaged that such inputs will contribute to the UN-Habitat's aim of developing a good urban governance index that could be compatible with other indexes, including a vulnerability index that takes into account the particular needs of small island developing States.

27. The South Pacific Applied Geosciences Commission continued its efforts to increase awareness and knowledge of environmental vulnerability of small island developing States through its work on the further refinement and development of an environmental vulnerability index covering all Pacific countries. Environmental vulnerability profiles are being compiled for all its member countries and there is an increasing interest by countries beyond small island developing States to get involved. Progress to date has been achieved with regard to improved international awareness of the environmental vulnerability index through regular presentations at key regional and

international forums, as well as several newly published documents, including progress reports that have been widely distributed. Two new environmental vulnerability index databases have been established: a country-focused global database and an indicator-focused database. However, of 32 target countries, minimal data have been collected for only half, owing to limited availability of country data.

14. Trade

28. The European Commission has reported that the Cotonou negotiations for the setting of a new trading arrangement based on the establishment of "economic partnership agreements" will start by September 2002 and enter into force by 1 January 2008. They will include a 12-year transitional period for the liberalization of trade in terms of reciprocity and will lead to a regime that is fully compatible with the World Trade Organization.

29. During the reporting period, UNCTAD assisted small island developing States in formulating policies and preparations for negotiations dealing with economic liberalization and globalization issues at several recent international conferences. The support was aimed at either to increase small island developing States competitiveness of existing policies, or to seize new trade benefits and opportunities. UNCTAD had been helping small island developing States in their preparations for the World Trade Organization negotiations to be held in Doha in 2001 through technical expertise by formulating requests for issue-specific trade concessions, in particular in the agriculture sector, and increasing awareness of small island developing States vulnerabilities.

15. Implementation, monitoring and review

30. With regard to the monitoring and review of the development of small island developing States, the General Assembly adopted resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001 on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in which it established the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. The functions of the Office are contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up mechanism for coordinating, monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Programme of

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Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/56/645, para. 17).

B. Regional level

1. African region

31. The Indian Ocean Commission reported a number of activities and projects relating to several chapters of the Programme of Action: in the area of climate change, the Commission contributed to the project on climate change and sea level monitoring, assisting Indian Ocean Commission countries in completing their greenhouse gas emission inventories and vulnerability assessments. Regarding natural and environmental disasters, the Commission recently completed a regional programme on meteorological cooperation, funded by the European Union, which focused on the tropical cyclone issue, through installing various equipment and facilitating information-sharing. Further action in this field includes a World Bank-funded project on the fight against oil spill and the implementation of a regional programme setting up the frame for a concerted regional response to natural disasters. Two documents have been prepared, on an integrated approach for the minimization of non-biodegradable waste and on an inventory of hazardous wastes and development of strategy for national and regional waste reduction, respectively. Both documents aim at waste reduction and handling of wastes. In addition, the Commission is undertaking a number of projects in the area of coastal and marine resources, such as the Regional Environmental Programme, supported by the European Union which focuses on integrated coastal zone management; and regional programmes aimed at the sustainable management of fisheries. The Commission has also completed a regional programme for tourism that aimed at presenting the whole region as a tourist destination and which focuses on marketing and training aspects. In the area of biodiversity, a regional project on aromatic and medicinal plants is under way, the objectives of which are to produce an inventory of these plants within member countries and to set up a regional database.

2. Caribbean region

32. CARICOM has reported that specific action has been taken in a number of areas to promote the Barbados Programme of Action. To address the issue of

climate change, for example, 12 CARICOM member countries have continued to be involved in the implementation of the regional project entitled "Caribbean planning for adaptation to global climate change". In the field of energy, the CARICOM secretariat will host a Project Management Unit, which will be responsible for the implementation of phase two of the Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Project, consisting of designing a region-wide approach to help remove obstacles to self-reliance in energy. In the area of disaster management, a six-year Caribbean Mitigation Project, financed by USAID, was recently completed. CARICOM has also established, on a pilot basis, a mechanism for capacity-building and more effective participation of the region in the implementation and negotiation of new or revised multilateral agreements or instruments.

33. The European Commission continued to support national and regional programmes in many Caribbean small island developing States covering various areas of the Programme of Action.

34. The UNEP Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CAR/RCU) is executing a regional component for a UNDP/GEF project on the rehabilitation of contaminated bays in Kingston Harbour, Jamaica, and Havana Bay, Cuba. The project includes both nutrient removal components for new sewage treatment facilities and various region-wide training courses on sewage treatment technologies.

35. The subregional headquarters for the Caribbean of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is currently developing databases which provide information on sustainable development and the implementation of programmes to assess the impact of natural disasters. ECLAC also undertakes assessments of the macroeconomic, social and environmental impacts of natural disasters upon request. In this regard, the methodology has been refined to make it relevant to the circumstances of small island developing States.

36. The UN-Habitat Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has supported selected countries in this subregion regarding environmental protection and rehabilitation, as well as reduction of environmental vulnerability, as per countries' request and pending availability of funds. The project has thus far covered Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and

Montserrat. A regional consultation on environmental vulnerability is scheduled to be held in Cuba during 2002, to discuss preparedness and performance of national and local institutions to deal with this issue, as well as current legal and regulatory frameworks. This consultation is a partnership between UN-Habitat, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (Geneva) and the Ministries of Housing and Urban Development of Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. National level

37. Sweden is supporting Cuba, on a bilateral basis, in dealing with radioactive waste management. The project is aimed at upgrading the competence of Cuban experts and institutions according to the International Atomic Energy Agency standards in field emergency preparedness, environmental protection, natural radioactivity and protection of workers.

38. Norway has provided financial as well as technical support to small island developing States through its bilateral programming and with a special emphasis on capacity-building and human resources development.

39. The Government of Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has approved a large programme to support the Caribbean regional strategy to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. In the South Pacific, it has started a new project that will enhance local non-governmental organization capacities to carry out projects in various fields relating to the Barbados Programme of Action. In addition, Canada is broadly promoting regional organizations and programmes dealing with climate change policies and adaptation measures for all small island developing States regions. Through its recently established Canada Climate Change Development Fund initiative, it is planning to provide support to the further implementation of the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme Strategy Framework. Another project will help strengthen and create public and private sector institutional capacities in the Caribbean to respond to climate change. In the field of disaster response and reduction, a Disaster Management Fund project for the Caribbean has been approved by CIDA. Canada is also engaged on issues of globalization and trade that are of special concern to small island developing States, and is providing direct

support to small island developing States of the Caribbean to build their capacity for trade policy, trade negotiations and the implementation of agreed trade-related obligations. As of 2001, CIDA approved the third phase of a programme for the strengthening of economic management in the Eastern Caribbean region. Furthermore, Canada continues to help small island developing States to overcome constraints of communication and lack of Internet connections through financial support to the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas that is currently developing information and communication technology initiatives in the Caribbean small island developing States.

40. Regarding climate change and sea level rise, Barbados reported that its inventory for greenhouse gases as stipulated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has already been completed and that a second draft of the National Circumstances report is currently under preparation. In addition, Barbados has been active in the development of a region-wide Inventory of Coastal Resources and Use and the collection of data for formulating the regional coastal resource information systems. With regard to natural and environmental disasters, Barbados reported that the coordination capacity of the Central Emergency Relief Organization is being strengthened through the development of a national disaster management plan which is currently under review. The agency is also training the national and regional hotel and tourism sector, and facilitating the formulation of a disaster management plan for the tourism sector. In the field of waste management, Barbados reported improvements in the disposal and management of wastes as a result of the ongoing Integrated Solid Waste Management Programme coordinated by the Sewage and Solid Waste Project Unit. Concerning Freshwater Resources, Barbados participated in regional water resource initiatives such as the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute's regional project on the Integrated Management of Watersheds and Coastal Areas. In the field of tourism resources, Barbados is currently finalizing a policy document, entitled "Sustainable development of tourism in Barbados — a policy framework", outlining the country's approach to sustainable tourism development, containing recommendations on financial and economic aspects, cultural issues and the natural environment. A national programme of work is in place in Barbados for attaining the goals set out in the

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Convention on Biological Diversity, focusing on increasing public awareness of the importance of local biodiversity, its conservation and management, and developing and implementing a programme of action to facilitate effective management of the biodiversity resources of Barbados. Barbados is also developing a national biodiversity strategy and action plan, with financial help from GEF.

III. Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development

41. An account is given below of the activities undertaken on an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area.

42. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) continues to support the Caribbean States and Territories in developing and upgrading national maritime administrations, primary and secondary maritime legislation and administrative, legal, scientific and technical capacities to ensure sustainable development and the implementation and enforcement of IMO and other treaties and instruments dealing with maritime safety, the protection of the marine environment and the facilitation of international maritime traffic. In 2002, IMO started a regional programme to further develop capacities in the Caribbean with respect to the effective implementation of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and the Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response in Cooperation, which will be completed in 2003. In 2001, IMO participated actively in a meeting convened by ECLAC, entitled "Towards the further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States: adoption of an updated joint work programme". As a result of that meeting, the Programme of Action for the Caribbean has been updated to take fully into account the technical assistance programmes that IMO is currently executing in the region's maritime transport and port sectors. These regional programmes include advisory services for the development of national maritime legislation, co-financed by UNDP and the Government of France; capacity-building for ship surveying and inspection, financed by the Governments

of Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the International Transport Workers' Federation; development and updating of national and regional contingency plans to respond to, combat and control marine pollution caused by ships, co-financed by the Governments of Finland and France; the enhancement of maritime safety and further assistance on maritime training and further development of flag and port State control capacities, co-financed by the International Transport Workers' Federation; the further development of maritime safety administrations; the prevention and control of marine pollution through, inter alia, a regional one-week workshop in Jamaica, supported by the United States of America Environmental Protection Agency; maritime/port security; port safety and security, co-financed by the European Commission; a Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre, financed by the Governments of France, the Netherlands Antilles and the United States; and a programme to strengthen effective maritime administration in the Caribbean, co-financed by UNDP.

43. The European Commission, in close collaboration with the Belize Coastal Zone Management, has undertaken a project in Belize on land-use practices and their impact on near shore environment. The purpose of the second phase of the project was to increase local capacity to incorporate watershed-reef connectivity considerations into policy, planning and management dialogue and decision-making. Data access and processing systems have been developed from satellite imagery, enabling low-cost water-quality monitoring of Belize's coastal waters. Formal training in remote sensing and familiarization with monitoring systems has been provided to local institutions. The project, which was completed in March 2002, included a land-management policy proposal to control erosion. The European Commission also funded a project on sustainability of the Negril Marine Park in Jamaica. The current second phase of the Commission's support to the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society aims at providing assistance in maintaining and increasing foreign exchange earnings through tourism, while protecting the fragile coastal environment of Negril, especially the coral reef ecosystem. Among the expected outcomes of the project are: (a) the establishment by the Government of Jamaica of a user fee system; (b) Government subventions; and (c) collection of commissions for licensing fees for the use of natural resources.

44. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean reported that the nineteenth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee endorsed the Subregional Office in taking a lead role in the execution of the technical work required for the further development and eventual implementation of the proposal of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea.

45. The CARICOM secretariat is currently involved in discussions with CIDA to develop and execute a programme for ocean governance, management and development.

46. Directly addressing degradation as a result from ships in the Caribbean Sea, GEF is supporting the "Wider Caribbean Initiative on Ship-Generated Waste", which is implemented by the World Bank and dedicated to the problems of pollution from ships wastes and oil spills. In addition, a project concept entitled "Environmental protection of the Gulf of Honduras and maritime transport control", under development by the Inter-American Development Bank, is supported by GEF. This project concept proposes to cover activities to protect ecosystems from navigational hazards, overfishing, and land-based sources of pollution, responding to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and other agreements. Other GEF-financed projects addressing pollution from land-based sources include the "Formulation of a Strategic Action Programme for the Integrated Management of Water Resources and the Sustainable Development of the San Juan River Basin and its Coastal Zone", promoting national management between Nicaragua and Costa Rica and the protection of biodiversity of the coastal environment through integrated basin management; a project entitled "Reduction of pesticide runoff to the Caribbean" in a number of Central American countries and Colombia; and a major project, entitled "Integrated catchments area and coastal zone management in small island developing States in the Caribbean", which is being prepared to address in an integrated manner coastal management, near shore fisheries and freshwater resources protection.

47. In the Caribbean, UNEP has carried out several projects on integrated coastal areas management and developed guidelines for integrated planning and management of coastal and marine areas in the wider Caribbean region. Furthermore, UNEP, in collaboration with the Engineering Centre for the Environmental

Management of Bays and Coastal Areas (*Centro de Ingeniería y Manejo Ambiental de Bahías y Costas*) in Cuba, is preparing the "Marine and Coastal Assessment Report of the Caribbean" which is aimed at assisting the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to develop a comprehensive programme for the integrated management of the Caribbean Sea. In addition, UNEP implemented a project on capacity-building in integrated environmental assessments and environmental information management by initiating workshops for high-level technical experts responsible for coordinating the environment/development reporting process, and by developing a training manual on capacity-building for integrated environmental assessments and reporting. In the area of waste management, two regional workshops are being prepared with a view to encouraging and facilitating early ratification of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and related conventions, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, respectively. UNEP also reported that it is coordinating a GEF project on integrating management of watersheds and coastal areas in Caribbean small island developing States, which addresses a number of areas of concern, such as, inter alia, coastal area management and biodiversity, tourism development, protection of water supplies, land-based sources of pollution and climate change by strengthening institutional capacity at the national and regional levels, providing assistance to countries in understanding the linkages between the requirement for, and meeting national priorities within the regional context. Other UNEP programmes address oil spill response and contingency planning in many Caribbean small island developing States through, inter alia, the establishment of a regional training and information centre (the regional activity centre) in Curaçao, as offered by the Government of the Netherlands Antilles, which was formally established in 2001. Further regional UNEP programmes are aimed at demonstrating sustainable alternatives to DDT for malaria vector control in Mexico and Central America, reducing the environmental impact from tropical shrimp trawling through by-catch reduction technologies and management changes, a participatory approach to managing the environment.

48. The Government of Barbados and relevant regional organizations are working to establish a

technical working group to identify and elaborate on all aspects comprising an integrated management approach. Regarding coastal and marine resources, the Coastal Zone Management Unit of Barbados has achieved a number of positive results in protecting and preserving coastal resources, through activities such as research and monitoring of coral reef health and beach erosion resulting from storm events, improved education on issues affecting the coastal and marine environment, improving the efficiency of the coastal planning process by upgrading the database on coastal development, updating the unit's geographic information systems development, and coastal engineering, including the establishment of permanent moorings along the south and west coasts.

49. Jamaica reported that, during its nineteenth session, in 2002, the ECLAC Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee discussed, *inter alia*, efforts to bring together existing information on environmental activities, for example, management of coastal areas, within the Caribbean region. The country is currently in the process of bringing domestic legislation in line with the provisions of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities. The Jamaican National Environment and Planning Agency is currently developing several policies, attendant mechanisms and legislation aimed at the protection and preservation of the marine environment. These include a national policy for the conservation of sea grass, a beach policy, a watershed policy, environmental management systems, an ocean and coastal zone management policy, a policy on beach erosion, and an underwater cable and pipelines policy. In addition, Jamaica has in place plans relating to disasters at sea, including an oil spill plan (for land and sea), a national hazardous materials contingency plan and a drafted search and rescue plan. Complementing the Government's actions, the Shipping Association of Jamaica, a private sector organization, is planning to establish a waste reception facility at the port in Kingston.

50. Sweden is providing financial aid through a trust fund for the Caribbean Environment Programme, which is aimed at implementing the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention), a regional marine convention for the wider Caribbean region covering 30 countries. The Convention focuses on integrated coastal zone

management, strategic planning for heavily polluted bays and technical assistance.

51. The United States reported that it is a party to, *inter alia*, the Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Cartagena Convention and its Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region. The United States signed the Protocols to the Cartagena Convention Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife and Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities, but both still await approval by the Senate. Being a founding member of the Caribbean Environment Programme, the United States actively supports its activities related to the latter two Protocols through annual contributions to the UNEP Trust Fund. In the area of oil pollution preparedness, the United States is providing pollution response assistance to other parties, and the United States Coast Guard-led federal Caribbean Regional Response Team in Puerto Rico provides oil spill response and response training capability to the wider Caribbean region. In support of sustainable development in the region, the United States provides *ad hoc* funding, expertise and foreign assistance through, *inter alia*, USAID projects on sustainable tourism and wastewater amelioration projects in select countries, and through its National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which supports projects in fisheries and marine protected areas. In recognition of the work to be done in sustainable development and in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the United States-led "White Water to Blue Water" partnership is focusing on cross-sectoral management of watershed and marine resources in the region through capacity-building at the national and regional levels to implement the many conventions and protocols negotiated since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. A regional stakeholders' conference will be sponsored in early mid-2003 to kick-start the initiative, identify gaps in approaches to sustainable development of Caribbean States, and to promote partnerships among the relevant stakeholders.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

52. Although many international and regional organizations, as well as national Governments and non-governmental groups, were approached in preparation for the present report, only limited information was submitted. In order to provide an adequate and thorough overview of activities carried out at all levels, in particular at the local and national levels, further support for small island developing States is needed to ensure comprehensive reporting and feedback. In addition, there is scope for improvement of information provision and sharing among all stakeholders dealing with small island developing States issues that needs to be addressed, and the wider use and application of information technology tools, such as the Small Island Developing States Network, as to enhance it, might be considered. It is envisaged that the next phase of the Network will assist the process of information-sharing, especially on programmes that may be of interest to the Governments of small island developing States. In addition, further outreach is required to enable small island developing States and their regional and subregional organizations to provide information of the highest relevance to the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national and regional levels.

53. The information obtained indicates a continued support from some national Governments and United Nations agencies, within their relevant mandates, for issues relating to the Barbados Programme of Action. Ongoing and new programmes and projects have overwhelmingly been directed at institutional and technical capacity-building and the development of human resources. In particular, the issues of climate change adaptation measures, tourism and coastal management have been a major focus of activities.

54. In regard to the work on the vulnerability indexes, it should be noted that the Economic and Social Council will consider the report of the Committee on Development Policy at its substantive session in July 2002, and will provide further guidance on the subject as appropriate. The General Assembly may wish to consider what further actions are required to fulfil previous

General Assembly resolutions pertaining to the completion of work on vulnerability indexes.

55. In relation to the issues pertaining to promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea in the context of sustainable development, it should be noted that countries of the region, assisted by their regional organizations, have greatly increased their activities. Key treaties are being ratified or acceded to, and the General Assembly may wish to consider what further information is required in that regard. The General Assembly may also consider issues of promoting coordination and cooperation among and between the various initiatives reported on.

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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Economic and Social Council**Substantive session of 2002**

New York, 1-26 July 2002

Item 5 of the provisional agenda**

Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations
Report of the Secretary-General***
Summary

The present report addresses the theme “Strengthening of the coordination of the United Nations humanitarian assistance to the victims of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, with particular attention to reaching the vulnerable segments of the population and the transition from relief to development”.

The report begins with an analysis of the causes and effects of humanitarian emergencies, highlighting the regional repercussions of humanitarian crises and the coordination mechanisms and tools adopted by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to address them. It then examines the issue of “reaching the vulnerable populations” within the broad umbrella of the protection of civilians in armed conflict and details some of the challenges to securing safe and reliable humanitarian space for bringing assistance to those affected by humanitarian emergencies. It also underlines the particular efforts required to strengthen assistance to specially affected groups such as internally displaced persons, children, women and the elderly.

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In exploring the issue of the transition from relief to development, the report emphasizes the importance of early, integrated planning and the need to ensure that transitional programmes contribute to reducing the risks and impact of future natural hazards. In response to a request made by Member States, the report also details the finding of an independent review of the consolidated appeals process.

The recommendations contained in the report revolve around the need to enhance regional capacities to respond to humanitarian emergencies, promote a “culture of protection” and adequately plan for the transition from relief to development. The recommendations on the consolidated appeals process focus on the need to strengthen humanitarian strategies and resource mobilization efforts, with increased support from donors and non-governmental organizations.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance, and to Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 of 28 July 1995, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on humanitarian assistance, and to subsequent resolutions.

2. The report is also submitted in response to the requests contained in General Assembly resolution 56/107 of 14 December 2001 on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

II. Developments and emerging themes in humanitarian assistance operations, 2001-2002

3. The difficult events of the past year underline the need for a more concerted and effective response to humanitarian emergencies around the world, and for new and innovative thinking on ways in which these emergencies may be avoided or overcome. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 have heightened our awareness that we live in an age of increasing interconnectedness, where events in one part of the world can transform the lives of people on the other side of the globe.

4. The challenges of the 1990s have continued into the first years of the twenty-first century. The last decade witnessed an increase in the number of people affected by natural disasters, by 2001, natural disasters had affected some 215 million people. Climate change will continue to increase the number of extreme events that create natural disasters; and environmental emergencies. Meanwhile, the capacity of developing countries' economies to absorb such shocks has been eroded and the increasing occurrence of extreme natural events will increasingly contribute to faltering or failing development. Tragically, armed conflict is also continuing in many countries around the world, bringing with it forced displacement and the targeting of innocent civilians. The alarming spread of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency

syndrome (HIV/AIDS) has increased the vulnerability of communities affected by humanitarian emergencies, creating greater levels of dependency and severely reducing their ability to cope when crisis strikes. Armed conflict further creates and exacerbates the conditions, and the human rights abuses, in which the HIV/AIDS crisis flourishes. For both natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, the humanitarian community will have to strengthen its response and mobilize greater resources to provide assistance and protection to people in need.

5. The situation in Afghanistan requires that humanitarian assistance be maintained within a context of rebuilding local, regional and national structures and providing a more solid base for peace and stability within the country. Afghanistan is the latest example of where there needs to be an effective transition from relief to recovery and development; an area where the lack of funding mechanisms has created a gap in the international capacity for effective response. The Immediate and Transitional Appeal Programme for Afghanistan provides a new approach in which the development and humanitarian agencies coordinated their responses around a common set of principles. Such efforts may provide for smoother transitional periods in other conflict settings.

A. The nature of crises

6. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 left little doubt that the world cannot isolate itself from events in the war-affected regions of the globe. The fact that the perpetrators of the attacks emerged from an environment characterized by protracted internal conflict only serves to underscore the need to strengthen international cooperation in conflict resolution and prevention. The global interconnectedness of complex humanitarian emergencies was highlighted by the 11 September attacks, but the regional repercussions of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies have been recognized for some time. In Africa, Asia and South-eastern Europe, civil wars have resulted in massive movements of populations both within and across borders, placing great socio-economic burdens on receiving communities.

7. During the early 1990s, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners provided humanitarian assistance to people affected by conflicts that

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frequently began within a country but rapidly developed into regional conflicts. During the past decade, wars have become increasingly regional in nature. The conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes crisis of 1994 and the ensuing war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are examples of this trend. These crises demonstrate the inadequacy of dealing with such conflicts on a country-by-country basis. In response, the United Nations has sought to establish a unified presence to deal with the political, humanitarian and human rights aspects of the emergency, and recognized the value of developing a regional approach.

8. The impact of natural disasters rarely respects national boundaries. The effects of drought often go beyond the borders of one State and will affect large areas or regions. For example, the Horn of Africa suffered from widespread drought from 1998. Six countries were affected. The United Nations responded to their problems on a regional and country basis. The response included the Secretary-General's appointment of a Special Envoy on the Drought in the Greater Horn of Africa, who completed her work in 2001. While the area continues to face high risks of drought, the Special Envoy's recommendations highlighted the need for greatly strengthened regional structures and the need to link national early warning, response and preparedness capacities within the region. As the drought situation in the Horn improved, the humanitarian community mobilized to respond to another drought with regional proportions in southern Africa, again highlighting the need for strengthened regional responses. The severe drought in Central and South-west Asia is currently the most widespread geographically and provides a further case where regional responses are most appropriate.

9. The response to natural disasters can be further complicated when such events take place within the context of armed conflict. The eruption of Mount Nyiragongo volcano in Goma, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during January and February 2002 and the recent earthquakes in Afghanistan are examples of natural disasters occurring in environments where the coping mechanisms of the affected populations had already been severely eroded by conflict.

10. The ripple effects illustrated by complex humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters underline the considerable need for strong early warning and preparedness measures, as well as

mechanisms to inform and share relevant data. Effective early warning and contingency planning can lessen the impact of crises and disasters and assist rapid recovery. Responsible humanitarian action lies not only in responding to the humanitarian consequences of these crises and disasters, but in being comprehensively prepared to address them.

B. Regional responses and building local capacity

11. To better address the regional effects of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, the international community recognizes that it will need to adopt a holistic approach. The complex nature of humanitarian emergencies requires a range of solutions the success of which is dependent on strong cooperation and support from Governments and regional organizations. For its part, the humanitarian community needs to strengthen the various tools available, in order to support regional and governmental capacities in responding to all the dimensions of complex crises. United Nations bodies are actively strengthening their regional presence in many areas around the world that are vulnerable to crises, with a view to ensuring that all aspects, including the humanitarian, human rights, political and developmental dimensions, of a given emergency are coherently addressed.

12. In Sierra Leone, the prospects for lasting peace have significantly improved, owing to the general success of the disarmament and demobilization process, the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone peacekeepers throughout the country and the final preparations for the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Special Court. The increasing level of security in most of the country means that humanitarian organizations will need to continue accelerating their efforts to aid the tens of thousands of internally displaced and refugees who have begun returning to their communities.

13. However, as the recent history of the region has shown, the stability of Sierra Leone and that of its neighbours, particularly Guinea and Liberia, will remain inextricably linked. Currently, the region remains volatile as illustrated by the re-emergence of conflict in Liberia. Intermittent fighting in the north of the country has spread further southwards resulting in the displacement of 35,000 people to Monrovia, while



over 10,000 refugees have reportedly entered Sierra Leone and some 5,000 have fled to Guinea. Efforts have been made to ensure that the sanctions imposed on Liberia do not have a negative humanitarian impact. These can be undermined if donors withdraw or seriously reduce their humanitarian assistance; or are seen to reduce humanitarian assistance. Meeting humanitarian needs should be unlinked from the larger political debate that surrounds Liberia and Guinea.

14. The Horn of Africa is a region that has experienced the combined effects of both natural disasters and complex emergencies for many years. A period of stability and respite from natural disasters has helped to improve the humanitarian situation. In the temporary security zone and the adjacent areas of Eritrea and Ethiopia, the humanitarian situation has remained stable, enabling agencies to undertake a wide variety of emergency interventions and reconstruction activities. During the reporting period, more than 180,000 internally displaced persons and 43,000 refugees were assisted in returning to their homes in Eritrea and to areas within the temporary security zone. Landmines have made certain areas inaccessible and constitute one of the main reasons for some 57,000 internally displaced persons not being able to return. In Ethiopia, the humanitarian situation has also generally improved following the 2000 drought disaster and its lingering effects in 2001. Since the cessation of hostilities with Eritrea, more than 250,000 internally displaced persons have been assisted in returning to their home areas in the north of the country.

15. The Horn of Africa remains a region that faces high risks of natural disasters that will have a serious impact on the lives of people throughout the region. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is in the process of expanding its regional support office for East and Central Africa in order to help strengthen regional response mechanisms and enhance support for existing humanitarian issues in the Horn of Africa. Part of the work of the regional support office will be to focus on humanitarian advocacy to raise awareness of humanitarian principles among key stakeholders, mobilize resources and promote a response to early warning signals.

16. There is strong evidence that the world will face an increasing number of climatically related disasters in the near future. Another El Niño cycle may soon start and disaster-affected countries, the United Nations and its partners must be well prepared for it. Although

limiting the negative effects of disasters depends on the prevention and mitigation efforts made at the national level, more needs to be done to ensure that disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness and response planning are factored into regional planning systems. The experience of South-east Asian countries, such as Cambodia and Viet Nam, demonstrates the value of instituting effective response and preparedness measures. In 1999 and 2000, over three million people were affected by floods. Mitigation measures initiated during the response resulted in a far lower level of impact during the floods in 2001. The Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in the Field of Natural Disasters, held in Nepal, was used to disseminate the concept of disaster risk management, a key concept in preparedness and mitigation planning.

17. The United Nations continues to strengthen regional response and local capacity-building for natural disasters. Latin America and the Caribbean have been particularly active in this area, where there is considerable expertise and a sound practice base on which to build. The range of agencies and countries involved, which include the Organization of American States, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, the Pan-American Health Organization, and the Centre for Disaster Prevention in Central America, as well as countries with a history of humanitarian assistance, such as Cuba, Chile and Mexico, demonstrates the commitment to regional preparedness activities.

18. In Africa, natural disasters continue to impact on extremely fragile societies and economies. For the third consecutive year, southern Africa was affected by natural disasters. This year a combination of drought and floods affected Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe are suffering from severe food shortages as a result, with Malawi the hardest hit. The effects of these regional natural disasters highlight the need for more advanced national level contingency planning and the need for greater regional information sharing and cooperation.

C. Contingency planning

19. A more effective response to natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies also requires improved contingency planning and preparedness among the members of the Inter-Agency Standing

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Committee. While individual agency preparedness and contingency planning is relatively strong, integration needs to be strengthened to ensure better inter-agency planning. The importance of inter-agency planning lies in the fact that it ensures a common understanding of the problems and constraints besetting affected populations. It establishes a common set of objectives and thereby promotes an effective use of limited resources. The humanitarian community recognizes that improved response will depend on helping to build a strong local and national response capacity in a coordinated manner.

20. The Inter-Agency Reference Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning has strengthened guidelines, which have been incorporated into the planning processes for a number of countries. The planning processes that are now being undertaken by United Nations agencies will allow better planning of regional stocks, the identification of key facilities that can release resources to respond to disasters and identify areas where national and local capacity should be strengthened. These steps must then be incorporated into the other main planning processes such as the consolidated appeals process/Common Humanitarian Action Plan and, where relevant, the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework. A good example of the linkage between contingency planning and the consolidated appeals process is the Consolidated Appeal for West Africa where different scenarios were outlined and the parameters of their effect on the humanitarian situation identified. This helped the United Nations to identify a comprehensive strategy for addressing such potential crises. A repository of contingency plans and a dedicated lessons-learned process will also be established to ensure that contingency plans remain flexible.

D. Other preparedness and response tools

21. An effective response to natural disasters is based on the availability and readiness of emergency teams that are prepared to contribute to a coherent response to crises. The United Nations disaster assessment and coordination teams seek to fulfil this function by providing a range of services, primarily related to on-site coordination in the field. Recognizing the need to contribute to the national disaster response efforts of developing and disaster-prone nations, the United

Nations disaster assessment and coordination system has continued its efforts to recruit additional members from these areas. In 2001, induction training was held for the first time in the Caribbean, adding 8 countries to the system. However, although membership in Latin America and the Pacific is satisfactory, only 7 of the system's 164 current members are from African and Asian countries. Efforts are now under way to recruit additional members from the Asian region and, in July 2002, an induction course will be held in India with some 30 participants from countries in the region.

22. Another important tool for natural disaster response is the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group, which coordinates and mobilizes specialized search and rescue teams, who contribute to disaster response by providing on-site facilities and other technical equipment needed to save lives. Following consultations with interested Member States, it has been decided to develop guidelines to expedite the work of international search and rescue operations for further consideration by the General Assembly.

23. Other efforts are under way to facilitate responses in times of natural, environmental or technological disasters. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is continuing its work with the United Nations Environment Programme to ensure an integrated and coordinated response to environmental emergencies, based on strengthened national environmental emergency response mechanisms. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is taking the lead in the development of an international disaster response law. In its broad form, the law seeks to cover areas of disaster prevention, preparedness, relief and post-disaster rehabilitation. It will provide a legal framework, based on existing hard and soft law, covering situations of natural and technological disaster and incorporating a right to security from natural and technological disasters.

24. Logistics support for humanitarian emergencies has been strengthened by the formal establishment of the Inter-agency Standing Committee-approved United Nations Joint Logistics Centre, operated by the World Food Programme. The Centre proved successful in Afghanistan where it provided a coordination function for all agency-managed logistical assets, while also maximizing the use of limited transport infrastructure, preventing competitive bidding among humanitarian

agencies for commercial transport and distinguishing humanitarian logistics from military activities. Where an effective response requires the use of military and civil defence assets at short notice, the Military and Civil Defence Unit continues to act as the United Nations focal point for dealing with civilian and military actors involved in disaster response. The 2000 Fribourg Forum also launched a process of dialogue between the United Nations, Member States and regional and international organizations, to promote coherence and complementarity in crisis management and humanitarian action, including access to and the effective use of national assets. In addition, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee is working towards a more efficient management of humanitarian supplies by developing a common platform and database for the different humanitarian agency tracking systems.

25. The experience of the past few years has demonstrated the importance of humanitarian organizations providing accurate and timely information on existing needs and who undertakes what activities in response. The establishment of humanitarian information centres has proved extremely useful in managing information at the field level on behalf of the humanitarian assistance community. The centres have become a technical resource, providing advice and services on key issues for individual humanitarian players, and encouraged and facilitated coordinated information-gathering and increased information-sharing among the members of the humanitarian community. The centres facilitate the implementation and respect of policies for common data standards and information activities that have been mutually agreed by the partners themselves.

26. At Headquarters, ReliefWeb is an important source of updated and analytical information, shared by a wide range of humanitarian actors. While electronic mail and the World Wide Web are the preferred vehicles for delivering information to those with the relevant technology, radio remains the most widely used medium to reach and inform the millions affected by natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies in developing countries. For this reason, the Integrated Regional Information Network intends to expand its outreach radio project in Somalia and Burundi to other parts of Africa and Central Asia, to provide impartial news and information to the victims of humanitarian crises.

III. Strengthening the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, with particular attention to reaching the vulnerable populations and the transition from relief to development

A. Challenges to and opportunities for reaching the vulnerable segments of the populations

27. Reaching the vulnerable sections of the population is essential for providing adequate protection and assistance in humanitarian emergencies and for strengthening their capacity to cope with future crises. But doing so faces a number of challenges. People may be isolated and cut-off from easy access because of the effects of natural disasters, armed conflict or widespread violence. Hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians are under daily attack. The responsibility for ending their suffering lies primarily with the Member States involved but also, to varying degrees, with the broader international community. In situations of armed conflict, access may have to be negotiated with armed elements not connected to any structures of State authority. The operating environment may be further worsened by the presence of warlords or militia who are pursuing economic interests and actively creating an unstable environment to further their own aims. The safety and security of humanitarian staff continues to be a chief concern in reaching the vulnerable segments of the population in armed conflicts. While there is little that can be done to reduce the level of threat in insecure environments, the United Nations and the humanitarian community have made greater efforts to reduce the level of risk to which staff are exposed, through the provision of appropriate mechanisms and resources. While more is required, the Secretary-General is gratified to note that the General Assembly shares this concern and has taken a number of decisions to strengthen the system's security framework and culture of security awareness.

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1. Protection of civilians

28. The human toll of the many crises outlined above, and of the many more that are not mentioned in the present report is overwhelming. A roughly estimated 20 to 25 million people have been displaced within their own countries because of violence and human rights abuses and an additional 12.1 million refugees worldwide are also in need of protection and assistance. In the Middle East, for example, the level of violence, in an already bitter conflict, has increased dramatically since the beginning of the year. The number of attacks on civilians has reached an appalling level, few of whom had any options for moving out of harm's way. This conflict also highlights the difficulties for the humanitarian community to reach and assist those in need. Access to vulnerable populations is an essential element of the protection of civilians and must be protected.

29. In Afghanistan, Angola, Somalia, the Sudan, the Middle East and elsewhere, long and vicious conflicts have meant that entire generations have witnessed violence and brutality as a "normal way of life". This climate must end. A "culture of protection" must take its place. This culture demands an increased focus on human security, in which peoples' needs provide the driving force for humanitarian action, and where the legal and physical security of the individual is at its core, based on a respect for fundamental human rights. The need to create a far-reaching culture of protection that guides all of our actions and responses on behalf of victims of armed conflict has been widely recognized. Much more needs to be done to ensure that it becomes a reality. The primary responsibility for the protection of civilians rests with Governments. This is clearly set out in the provisions of international law and is stressed as one of the key guiding principles of humanitarian assistance adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/182 and reiterated in other General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. The efforts undertaken by humanitarian actors, or the arrangements negotiated by them, are secondary to the State's responsibility. However, there may be circumstances where States are unwilling or unable to meet their responsibilities. In such instances, there can be no excuse for being indifferent to humanitarian need and it is the responsibility of all to assist humanitarian action to reach and protect the vulnerable sections of the populations.

A broad culture

30. The protection of civilians is a broad umbrella concept that embraces a range of interconnected issues. Thus, establishing and strengthening a culture of protection requires action across a broad number of fields. These include access, justice and reconciliation, the special needs and vulnerabilities of refugees, the internally displaced, women and children, the safety of United Nations personnel, the illicit exploitation of natural resources, the proliferation of and trafficking in small arms and the possible humanitarian impact of sanctions and landmines. Using the latter as an example, landmines pose an ever-present physical threat to civilians caught in areas of conflict and, through their effects, add to the burden of vulnerability of any society. They also constitute a considerable threat to humanitarian activities, in terms of reaching vulnerable populations, as they hinder, or even prevent, the provision of basic services. Humanitarian programmes that are designed to enhance the protection of civilians must not only work towards reducing the threat to their security but build up the capacity of the authorities and the local communities themselves to overcome these problems and cope with their effects. This requires a better understanding on the part of all stakeholders of the issues at play, the legal frameworks in place to address them and the practical steps required to put this framework into effect. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee, under the chairmanship of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, has engaged, and will continue to engage, in a series of consultations within the system and with Member States and other interested parties, both at headquarters and in the field, to ensure that enhancing the culture of protection is based on coordinated efforts.

The legal framework

31. There is an established legal framework that provides the basis for many of the responsibilities and obligations of Member States towards populations in need. This same framework guides the activities of humanitarian agencies working in support of Governments dealing with humanitarian crises. Events of the last few years, including the growing toll of civilian deaths and the frequency and severity of assaults on humanitarian personnel, have demonstrated a continuing and possibly increasing disregard for the provisions of international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law. This has severely hampered the

ability to provide humanitarian assistance and protection. To address this, humanitarian and human rights agencies have enhanced their efforts to advocate for and promote the ratification and implementation of international human rights and humanitarian law instruments. Ratification needs to be accompanied by a better understanding of and a commitment to comply with the terms of those instruments. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee is developing strategies and initiatives to enhance the integration of human rights into humanitarian action. Field practices developed by humanitarian workers to prevent or mitigate human rights abuse¹ and practical guidelines on how to integrate human rights into humanitarian action will soon be broadly disseminated to United Nations country teams and humanitarian partners.

32. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol are not yet truly universal, as many States have yet to accede to these instruments. To date, 143 countries have ratified the 1951 Convention but this figure is low compared to the number of states which have signed other human rights instruments. Throughout 2001 and 2002, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees conducted a series of global consultations on international protection to revitalize the framework for refugee protection and support Member States in addressing current humanitarian challenges.

Separating civilians from combatants

33. In situations of armed conflict, the blurring of distinctions between civilians and combatants defies attempts at any effective protection measures. The best protection for civilians is clearly the prevention of conflict. However, where conflict does break out, too often civilians are not treated as a distinct group, but are increasingly thought of as part of the war and frequently specifically targeted. One of the key challenges for the protection of civilians is to ensure that combatants are separated from civilians, a problem that the international community has had difficulty addressing. Massive displacement is a direct, and often intended, result of the fighting. The past year has seen hundreds of thousands of people streaming across borders or fleeing within their own States to seek protection. However, combatants or armed elements are frequently intermingled with the displaced, adding to the difficulty of reaching those in need.

34. The presence of armed elements in camps for refugees or the displaced has frequently prevented humanitarian workers from accessing the vulnerable segments of the populations and resulted in the diversion of humanitarian aid away from the most needy. By virtue of being armed, such elements hold sway over the civilian population, exerting an authority based on fear, and pose a threat to those seeking to assist that same population. In his two reports to the Security Council on the protection of civilians,² the Secretary-General called for increased efforts to separate combatants and armed elements from civilians in camps and recommended a number of measures to achieve this. They include developing clear criteria and procedures for identifying and separating armed elements in situations of massive population displacement; deploying international military observers to monitor the situations in camps for internally displaced persons and refugees when the presence of arms, combatants and armed elements is suspected; mobilizing international support for national security forces, when necessary, to support the measures being taken to protect civilians; and advocating and mobilizing support for the relocation of camps that are too close to the border with the refugees' country of origin. When the conflict is over, complementary measures are required in order to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate former combatants, so that they too can return to a normal civilian way of life, in a manner that does not destabilize the community or pose a potential security threat. Such measures may include income-generating alternatives and incentives for voluntary return of weapons.

Ensuring protection

35. Given the breadth of issues that impact on the protection of civilians, a number of initiatives have been taken to transform into action the Secretary-General's recommendations and Security Council resolutions on the protection of civilians. These include the development of an aide-memoire; closer cooperation and coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (on behalf of the humanitarian community) on the protection of civilians, including the adoption by the Department and the Office of standing operating procedures on these issues; and a reorganization of the Secretary-General's recommendations into a "roadmap" that will help assign responsibilities, in collaboration with the

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Security Council. The aide-memoire is a very practical tool that has resulted from strong collaboration between humanitarian and human rights agencies and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and will continue to be updated. It will serve as a checklist to ensure that the issues of the protection of civilians in armed conflict are systematically taken into consideration and mainstreamed into daily activities. It identifies 13 core objectives in protecting civilians in armed conflict and highlights key issues for consideration in meeting those objectives. It will also serve, in part, as a useful framework for the consideration of the interrelated, complementary issues of the protection of civilians in armed conflict; women, peace and security; children in armed conflict; and conflict prevention.

36. Importantly, the Secretary-General's call for a "culture of protection" means that the challenges of protecting civilian populations can only be met by reaching across traditional lines and creating synergies among many actors. In this regard, we can build upon the pioneering work of some regional organizations, particularly the Organization of African Unity, and its efforts to place more emphasis on the protection of civilians through various treaties and mechanisms. Successfully creating a culture of protection requires the concerted and sustained efforts of a broad constituency. The process of round-table consultations on how to implement measures to protect civilians, which have already gathered the views and ideas of Member States, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions and led to more informed discussions and a solid determination to take the matter forward, will be continued and developed throughout the coming year.

2. Humanitarian space

37. As noted above, the primary responsibility for expanding and strengthening the ability to reach, assist and protect vulnerable populations rests with Governments. According to the Geneva conventions, armed groups also have a direct responsibility to protect civilians in situations of armed conflict. Where Governments themselves do not have the means effectively to assist and protect vulnerable populations, they should seek the support of the United Nations and its humanitarian partners in providing the necessary protection and assistance. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a novel agreement

between the Government and a rebel group, brokered by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with the support of the United Nations humanitarian community, United Nations peacekeepers, non-governmental organizations and donors, resulted in the launch of the first humanitarian "Peace Boat" between Kinshasa and the rebel-held town of Mogalo in August 2001. Successful negotiations with another major rebel group resulted in similar voyages to central Democratic Republic of the Congo in March 2002 and Kisangani in May 2002. Reopening traditional trade and transport routes has the important side effects of reinvigorating economic life and reconnecting communities divided by war. The same humanitarian strategy of negotiating for certain issues to be dealt with outside the mindset of conflict, has seen national school examinations, national immunization days, the movement of Congolese experts around the country and across front lines, and the delivery of humanitarian aid successfully implemented.

38. To be successful, humanitarian negotiators must be consistent, transparent, accountable and credible in their pursuit of humanitarian objectives and obtaining reliable humanitarian space. The negotiations, and any formal or informal agreements that result, must be underpinned by international standards for the protection of civilian populations and key humanitarian principles, such as impartiality and neutrality. And Member States must be willing to support the humanitarian actors undertaking such negotiations and the agreements that they reach, including where these are made with non-State actors. It must be stressed that the fact that humanitarian actors undertake such negotiations with armed groups in no way affects the legal status of those groups. These agreements have sometimes taken the form of "codes of conduct", "principles and protocols for humanitarian operations", memorandums of understanding, and so on. Examples include the "ground rules" agreements established by Operation Lifeline Sudan, the Joint Policy of Operation and the Principles and Protocols of Humanitarian Operation in Liberia, the Code of Conduct for Humanitarian Agencies in Sierra Leone, and the negotiations on access to those in need of humanitarian assistance that are under way in Angola, following the announcement of a ceasefire on 13 March 2002 and the subsequent signing of the memorandum of understanding between the Angolan Armed Forces and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) on 4 April.

39. In order to ensure a better coordinated, principled and coherent approach to the involvement of humanitarian agencies with armed groups, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee is developing a guidance manual on terms of engagement with armed groups in situations of conflict, with benchmarks and options for the engagement or disengagement of aid agencies, best practices, and possible alternatives to direct engagement, such as advocacy for the respect of international standards. Access negotiations will invariably only be truly successful if they are coordinated. Such negotiations are not simply a one-off event. Sustained humanitarian response requires that humanitarian space be obtained, managed and maintained throughout a conflict by keeping the parties continuously engaged. The involvement of too many humanitarian actors pushing different agendas based on their varying mandates can not only lead to confusion but, more seriously, to obstacles to reaching the vulnerable population and insecurity for humanitarian workers themselves. The Standing Committee is seeking to develop more coordinated and creative approaches to access negotiations, for example, by pooling agency interests consistent with their mandates and agreeing on mutually complementary sectoral negotiations. Humanitarian coordinators are tasked through their terms of reference with ensuring that efforts to gain reliable humanitarian space are properly coordinated and based on strategic planning and adequate preparation.

3. Criminalization of the economy

40. Criminalization of the economy provides a further threat to humanitarian action and, specifically, to how humanitarian workers can operate in the particular environment that exists when certain criminal activities flourish in the power vacuum created by armed conflict and weak political or administrative authorities. The issue was raised in the 2001 report to the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council (A/56/95-E/2001/85), and remains a preoccupation. The strongmen who head informal or alternative power structures established to pursue economic gain frequently seek to reduce or eliminate any threats posed by the local traditional authority exercised by community leaders. This is largely achieved by actively maintaining a situation of violence and instability, including by inciting ethnic hatred and the exclusion of particular groups from local debates. The actions of humanitarian workers seeking

to work with and empower local communities can easily be perceived as a threat to these alternative power structures and to the strongmen's pursuit of riches, thus making themselves potential direct targets of violence.

41. Since 11 September 2001, the international community has become more acutely aware that ignoring the plight of populations trapped in the midst of the violence inherent to failed or rogue state structures, not only has regional consequences, as in the Mano River Union, where the illegal trade of diamonds fuelled conflict in Liberia and Sierra Leone and attacks on borders with Guinea, but can also have negative consequences for the global community. The link between poverty and humanitarian emergencies is made more complex by the breakdown of institutions of law and order, including institutions of the family and institutions on the local level that safeguard the protection of fundamental and universal human rights. Add to this dire poverty the additional burden of collapsed or ineffective States, and the result is often a reinvigoration of "parallel" informal economies. Frequently in complex humanitarian emergencies, paramilitary structures are able to take root in, and in turn support, such underground economies, which are generally commodity-based and characterized by barter. Additional problems, such as the trafficking of illegal commodities across porous borders and the trafficking in women and children, can then emerge.

42. This clearly creates a hostile environment for humanitarian workers who are attempting to address the needs of vulnerable groups in such situations of economic and politically based violence. Their room for manoeuvre will very much depend on the priorities of the rogue elements and the extent to which they are motivated by economic interest or political ambition. Where economic interests prevail, criminal groups will have little regard for the humanitarian needs of local inhabitants, as their focus is more on maximizing profits at all costs. Maintaining a state of instability and violence might actually ensure a dependent workforce to aid in the exploitation of resources. However, where such warlords become interested in the long-term sustainability of their economic activities or harbour some political ambitions, they may attempt to obtain varying levels of acceptability among the local population. This might, to some extent, define their willingness to address the needs of the population

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in the areas in which they operate and thus their openness to humanitarian activities.

43. In these circumstances, negotiating to reach the vulnerable population in a safe and meaningful way should be based on a thorough analysis of the operating environment, including a more comprehensive appreciation of the impact and effectiveness of humanitarian action. It also requires the support of Member States, donors and the private sector, to apply pressure on armed groups where they can, and back the activities and efforts of humanitarian actors in a resolute fashion. In the broader context, improved awareness of these dynamics by the international community as a whole should be reflected in better targeted aid and the measures that support Governments before their authority is eroded and criminal war economies are able to take root.

B. Reaching specially affected groups

44. Addressing the needs of the vulnerable sectors of the population requires particular attention and support for specially affected groups, such as internally displaced persons, women, children and the elderly and disabled. As with all persons affected by humanitarian emergencies, these groups are entitled to protection and assistance and should benefit from the responses outlined above. This section outlines how these responses might need to be further refined in order to take into account the particular needs of separately defined groups.

1. Internally displaced persons

45. Rough estimates indicate that more than 50 million people are internally displaced worldwide, slightly more than half because of natural disasters, and the remainder because of armed conflict or situations of violence or massive human rights violations. Although many internally displaced persons find themselves in situations analogous to those faced by refugees, they rarely benefit from similar levels of protection and assistance. This is not to diminish the fact that all groups of displaced persons face incredible hardship, uncertainty and despair through being uprooted from their homes. In many circumstances, they begin their flight side by side, but the crossing of an international border makes a difference to the kind of protection and assistance to which they become entitled and the mechanisms through which this can be

provided. Over the past ten years, more attention has been paid to the particular plight of internally displaced persons and legal principles, in particular the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,³ and institutional frameworks have been developed to better respond to their needs.

46. However, despite this increased awareness, very real problems still remain in the field. Reaching internally displaced persons can pose a huge challenge for a variety of reasons. In the case of natural disasters, these are often technical or logistical and call for many of the mechanisms discussed above. Additional concerns arise for those displaced during complex humanitarian emergencies. Internally displaced persons often become trapped in areas of severe fighting, unable to reach, or sometimes prevented from crossing, international borders to safety. Often their efforts to flee lead them to isolated areas, cut off from humanitarian assistance. Their status becomes uncertain, exposing them to risk and suspicion. They can easily become the targets for further violence. To bring more focused attention to the particular problems of the internally displaced and ensure a more coordinated response, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has established a non-operational, inter-agency Unit on Internal Displacement. The Unit, which became fully functional in January 2002, aims to ensure a predictable and concerted approach among all concerned actors to the problems of internal displacement, using the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as the overall framework for its work. The Unit will be supported by the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement in an advisory capacity.

47. Since its establishment, the Unit has focused its activities on two key areas. First, it has provided support and guidance on specific country situations, ensuring an increased focus on displacement on the part of all humanitarian actors, serving as a catalyst in guiding the response to crises of internal displacement and supporting the mainstreaming of internal displacement issues into the work of Inter-Agency Standing Committee partners. In evolving situations, such as those in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, the Unit carried out missions to assess the internal displacement situation, identify the gaps in response and make specific recommendations for improvement. In West Africa, Colombia and Uganda, the Unit offered expertise and guidance to assist the Government and

United Nations country teams in designing response strategies to their particular internal displacement problems. The Unit will also provide support in the coming year to a number of protracted and/or forgotten crises of internal displacement, such as in Angola, Burundi, Indonesia, Nigeria and Somalia, with the intention of improving operational response at the field level by promoting clear lines of responsibility. Second, the Unit is promoting system-wide improvements in the response to internal displacement. Through training and the recent establishment of a "protection coalition" of inter-agency partners, the Unit will develop an inter-agency protection capacity to identify critical protection needs, both at the country operation level and in the overall protection framework, and improve the quality and efficiency of field protection interventions.

48. In close collaboration with the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons and other concerned actors, the Unit will increasingly engage in raising awareness of the problems of internally displaced and advocating for their solution. The mandate of the Representative of the Secretary-General, established by the Commission on Human Rights in 1992, has led the Representative to visit and produce reports with recommendations on over 20 situations of internal displacement, including in Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burundi, Colombia, East Timor, Georgia, Indonesia and the Sudan, in recent years. His mandate also includes engaging in dialogue with Governments and other pertinent actors, developing and promoting a legal framework, particularly the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and studying institutional arrangements and other areas with a view to promoting better protection and assistance for the internally displaced.

49. At the national level, an increasing number of Governments are incorporating the Guiding Principles into legislation and policy. For example, in Angola, the Guiding Principles form the basis of the Norms on the Resettlement of the Internally Displaced. In Burundi, they underpin a framework for consultation on the protection of internally displaced persons that brings together Government officials, United Nations agencies and national and international non-governmental organizations. In Colombia, a Presidential Directive of November 2001 recalls two decisions of the Constitutional Court citing the Guiding Principles and elaborates Government responsibility for protecting

and assisting the internally displaced. The Government of Georgia has established a special parliamentary commission to bring its electoral laws into line with the Guiding Principles and the Government of Uganda is drawing on them for its new national policy for the internally displaced and implementation plan for the protection and return of the internally displaced in the north. Regional organizations, in particular the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the Economic Community of West African States, and local non-governmental organizations, lawyers associations and other civil society groups have also been involved in the promotion and use of the Guiding Principles and the accompanying Handbook in an increasing number of countries.

2. Women

50. Women suffer from the same violence or disasters that affect the rest of the civilian population but, in addition, face particular risks because of gender discrimination. Much more needs to be done to reach women affected by crises, in a manner that addresses their particular needs and actively supports their own capacity to contribute to the response. These risks often take the form of sexual violence and abuse and are exacerbated because of the widespread inequality faced by women in many sectors of society. The recent allegations of sexual exploitation in West Africa have exposed some of the extreme violations and discrimination suffered by women in emergencies. But these issues are global and require focused efforts to prevent and protect women from gender-based violence, trafficking and other forms of abuse. Access to reproductive and other forms of health care, counselling after violence, psychosocial support and the full range of remedies equally needs to be stepped up. The frequent exclusion of women and gender dimensions from efforts to prepare for, respond to and recover from humanitarian crises, be they natural disasters or complex humanitarian emergencies, needs to be more robustly addressed. The views of women must be sought and heard on issues ranging from camp management, safety and security, distribution mechanisms, delivery of services and avenues of recourse when problems arise. The promotion and protection of the rights of women to participate freely in political, economic and social decision-making and

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leadership structures need to be vastly strengthened and increased.

51. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee has continued to mainstream gender into the humanitarian response to emergencies, by identifying and improving tools and mechanisms for integrating gender analysis into strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. In conflict situations, this gender analysis should cover the political, humanitarian and human rights dimensions of the conflict. Programmes have to be monitored and evaluated against agreed indicators and relevant human rights standards to determine to what extent the humanitarian community has been able to address critical gender issues and the specific needs of the most vulnerable population groups. The impact of child and gender advisers being incorporated into peacekeeping missions should be assessed to determine where further progress is needed.

52. Women are often treated solely as vulnerable and are overlooked as powerful factors for positive change. For example, recent research has shown that they are the foremost actors in community-based disaster reduction activities. Thus, adaptive community-based initiatives, which are inclusive in nature and based on a carefully considered gender perspective, can improve the capacity of the entire community to respond to and overcome the effects of crises. Their role in peace processes and rebuilding after the conflict is slowly being better understood, but should be more seriously and proactively encouraged. In Afghanistan, there is better appreciation of the role that women played in reaching and assisting people, even when cloaked in silence. Afghan women have made their voices increasingly heard, both on national and international platforms. They were very involved in the peace process, although their numbers still remain few in government. Humanitarian agencies need to recognize and support the involvement of women in the design, management and implementation of programmes that seek to rebuild the institutions and structures of Afghanistan. The initiative of the Mano River Women's Peace Network in West Africa has contributed to political discussions at the highest level between Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone regarding steps towards regional peace. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, women demanded to be adequately represented in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and their participation in that country's peace process and their ability to address gender issues within the

substantive agenda of the negotiations is now being supported.

53. Women must participate in decision-making, not only because their involvement will produce better decisions and more effective responses, but also because they have a full range of human rights, including their right to freedom from discrimination, that can hardly be respected without their involvement in decision-making processes. Support for this participation has to go beyond lip service and be translated into real and concrete projects, based on genuine engagement, on a priority basis.

3. Children

54. The special session of the General Assembly on children presents an important opportunity to draw international attention to the specific rights and challenges of those girls and boys who are the most marginalized, many of whom are affected by armed conflict. The importance of securing humanitarian access to all children living in conflict zones is critical if the humanitarian community is to support Governments in providing the basic assistance and protection that these children require. Access to abducted children, especially girls, is particularly crucial. The entry into force, on 12 February 2002, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (General Assembly resolution 54/263, annex 1) provides important protection by raising from 15 to 18 years, the age at which direct participation in armed conflict will be permitted, and establishing a ban on compulsory recruitment below the age of 18. The Protocol will also have significant implications for the scope of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for child soldiers. The extensive advocacy efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations not only contributed to the adoption of the Protocol but has also resulted in a number of commitments by parties to conflict not to use child soldiers. Member States are thus urged to follow suit and ratify the Optional Protocol as soon as possible so that this becomes a widely adopted international standard.

55. The extremely disturbing allegations of sexual abuse committed by humanitarian workers in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, referred to above (para. 50),

have reminded us that protecting children and women requires constant vigilance. The Secretary-General has insisted that there must be no impunity for perpetrators and adequate steps must be taken to prevent this in the future. The Secretary-General has called for an investigation into the crimes that occurred in West Africa and to the failures in our systems that allowed them to happen. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee established an especially dedicated Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises. Within the overall objective of strengthening and enhancing the protection and care of children and women in situations of humanitarian crisis and conflict, the Task Force will make recommendations specifically aimed at eliminating sexual abuse and exploitation by humanitarian personnel and the misuse of humanitarian assistance. The recommendations will encompass codes of conduct, recruitment processes, training and disciplinary regimes for humanitarian workers and a careful review and refining of protection and delivery mechanisms to ensure that the necessary safeguards and avenues of recourse are in place.

4. The elderly and the disabled

56. The numbers of older people affected by crises is increasing. Figures of refugees and internally displaced persons can often hide the full extent of the problem. Often the elderly and the disabled are too frail to move away from affected areas and sometimes they have to be left behind while the rest of the community flees. Sometimes older persons may become targets of political violence because of their particular stature in the community. In many societies and in most emergencies, old age, disability, poverty and vulnerability are closely intertwined. That being said, older people should not be seen simply as burdens on a community: their experience and knowledge constitute assets for a community. Older persons may serve as respected formal or informal leaders of communities, particularly in the areas of peace-building and reconciliation and societal recovery. According to World Health Organization estimates, up to 10 per cent of the world's population has a disability and the majority of them, about 80 per cent, live in developing, disaster-prone countries. Concerted efforts must be made to access the elderly and disabled during a crisis and either bring them to safety or provide the necessary protection and assistance on the spot. The United Nations Principles for Older Persons (General

Assembly resolution 46/91, annex) provide the basis for ensuring that the unique needs of older refugees are acknowledged and reflected in protection and programming initiatives and that older refugees are recognized as active and contributing members of their communities.

C. Supporting the vulnerable population in the transition from relief to development

57. Efforts to reach and aid the most vulnerable persons affected by crises can only be sustained if there is a clear strategy for moving as quickly as possible away from the simple provision of emergency relief and towards a more comprehensive humanitarian and development assistance programme. Experience has shown the importance of linking relief to development at the earliest possible stage. The transition from relief to development is more than an economic process. It involves institutional change that engages the full participation of society and establishes the basis for stability through recognition of the human rights of civilians.

58. The ways in which humanitarian actors negotiate for access to needy populations, target assistance, and organize delivery often have an important impact on local communities and politics. It is important to ensure that the way aid is provided does not weaken or destroy any existing coping mechanisms. In fact, assistance efforts should provide the seeds of future recovery and rehabilitation, by strengthening local capacities and encouraging communities to begin, even in the midst of crisis, to make their own way towards sustainable development. A key lesson is that there can be no transition to development without the involvement and participation of the community and local structures and institutions. Frequently, humanitarian assistance still focuses on the issue of meeting needs and can all too easily ignore the importance of involving the beneficiaries in managing and shaping their lives. The transition from relief to development is a critical period in the formation of capable and effective institutions which are a prerequisite to a return to stability. Yet such periods are often marred by resentment when humanitarian actors do not effectively engage nascent and developing structures. Closing the funding gap between relief and development can also be made more difficult by the

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conditionality of assistance. There are a number of circumstances in which donors attach conditions to the provision of development assistance. However, humanitarian assistance must be provided without such conditionality.

59. In the most recent response to the Afghanistan crisis, humanitarian, human rights, and development partners worked together to strategize and produce the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme for the Afghan People. The Programme was founded on assessments made by both humanitarian and development actors, including the Bretton Woods institutions. It complemented a five-year plan for rehabilitation and development by highlighting the issues that most urgently needed to be addressed in the first year, in order to form a sound basis for future recovery and rehabilitation. In addition, relief, recovery and reconstruction activities will be fully integrated under one pillar of the recently established United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. This will help to ensure that all United Nations efforts are harnessed to fully support the implementation of the political process. In the Republic of the Congo, the United Nations country team produced its second annual all-in-one "United Nations Plan", fusing together elements of the United Nations humanitarian appeal, the common assessment and the development framework into a unitary approach.

60. The transition from relief to development following natural disasters should specifically seek to reduce the vulnerability to future hazards. As an El Niño cycle begins, many parts of the world will have to contend with the more frequent and in all probability, more extensive occurrences of droughts and floods. Unfortunately, as the risks and frequency of natural hazards increase, the capacity of many societies to withstand and cope with the impact of such events is diminishing. Overall vulnerabilities to natural disasters are increasing. Some of the reasons for this are linked to the process of development. For example, rapid levels of urbanization leading to the growth of megacities have frequently been associated with a fragile infrastructure, where many people are concentrated in high-risk housing with fragile services. Inevitably, with urbanization, people have lost their traditional coping mechanisms and support systems, so that when disaster strikes there are higher levels of destruction and less ability to recover livelihoods.

61. The process of development can also erode the capacity to establish, manage and implement appropriate regulatory frameworks that afford a degree of protection to the vulnerable segments of the population and are a critical element in preparedness and mitigation measures. The weakness of land-use management and land-zoning regulations, coupled with the inability to apply adequate building and construction standards, places more people at risk, as the poor settle in more hazardous areas and the level of damage created by natural hazards increases. Annually, over 200 million people are affected by natural disasters and this figure is likely to increase. The loss of personal assets, livelihoods and infrastructure involved puts a considerable brake on development.

62. The successful transition from relief to development is therefore inextricably linked with decreasing risks and the impact of natural hazards. Just as sustainable development processes are now incorporating environmental planning, it is now imperative to fully integrate disaster risk assessments and reduction strategies in national and regional planning. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction can contribute to this goal, by providing a dedicated international mechanism which is essential for building avenues of collaboration among humanitarian and development strategies. Disaster risk management also needs to be better integrated into the United Nations humanitarian and development planning processes, such as the consolidated appeals process and the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework process.

63. The engagement of private sector is also critical. The private sector represents key resources that could be used to support and further the United Nations system's activities, but which have been largely untapped to date. A number of recent partnerships between the United Nations agencies and individual companies, business associations, foundations and civil society organizations point to the complementarity of approaches and this should be further explored and encouraged. The private sector also has an important role in the immediate transition from relief to development and post-conflict pre-investment and job creation. Targeted investment in critical humanitarian rehabilitation sectors can set the proper foundations for longer-term reconstruction and development. The accompanying transfer of knowledge and technology is a significant contribution to local capacity-building

and, in certain circumstances, to disaster preparedness and prevention.

IV. The consolidated appeals process as a coordination, strategic planning and advocacy tool

64. In response to the request made by Member States during the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council during its substantive session of 2001, the Emergency Relief Coordinator commissioned an independent review of the consolidated appeals process to focus on the key strengths and weaknesses of the process as a resource mobilization mechanism and a coordination and strategic planning tool. The main findings of that study are presented below, including explanations for some of the major discrepancies in funding between different countries and sectors, and suggestions on how the process may be strengthened and enhanced and its use potentially expanded, such as in transition situations.

65. This review is the latest in a series of efforts to strengthen and improve the consolidated appeals mechanism. The consolidated appeals process was created in December 1991 under General Assembly resolution 46/182 to ensure that an initial consolidated appeal, covering all concerned organizations of the system and prepared in consultation with the affected State, would be quickly coordinated and issued in response to emergencies. It was first intended as an extraordinary process and only six consolidated appeals were issued in 1992, the first in response to the conflicts exacerbated by the drought in the Horn of Africa. During the 1990s, the number of consolidated appeals increased to cover the most urgent humanitarian crises of the time. However, the early appeals fell far short of what had been foreseen in General Assembly resolution 46/182. Without a coherent strategic approach, they were unable to fulfil the critical coordination function of the process. Early consolidated appeals were generally perceived as compilations of individual agency appeals. Since 1997, considerable efforts have been made to strengthen the strategic planning aspect of the process. The inclusion of the Common Humanitarian Action Plan has increased its value to the coordination process by including an element of strategic planning. The consolidated appeals process has been further strengthened by the inclusion of improved analytical

tools and more consistent training materials. In general, the technical standards of the process are higher, as is the level of engagement of the United Nations agencies with it. Between 15 and 20 consolidated appeals are now issued each year.

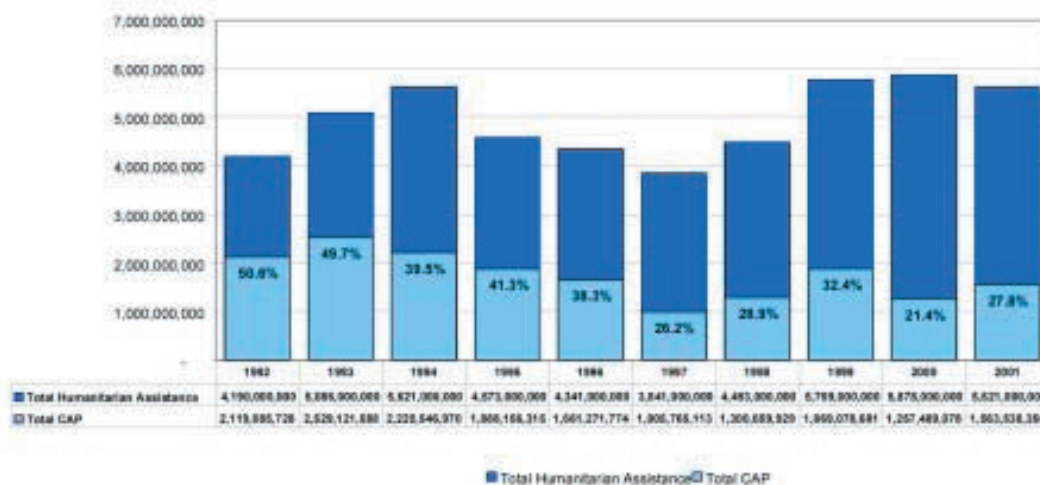
66. Unexpectedly, however, such improvements, many of which were made at the request of donors, have not resulted in increased flows of humanitarian assistance through the consolidated appeals process. While the process remains the single most significant mechanism for humanitarian resource mobilization, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of humanitarian assistance channelled through it. This proportion has fallen from an average of 40 per cent to an average of 30 per cent over the past decade. In real terms, the process lost 10 per cent of "market share", equivalent to US\$ 560 million in 2001. Much of this seems to have been redirected towards non-governmental organizations. The graph below illustrates what percentage of total humanitarian assistance is represented by programmes funded through the consolidated appeals process.

67. Overall levels of humanitarian funding have remained static "in real terms" which has resulted in a decline in the resources available in proportion to the increasing levels of need. Even where there are major and significant humanitarian crises, aid flows have not increased to respond to these large-scale emergencies but resources have been diverted from other appeals. In such circumstances, unless there are real increases in the levels of humanitarian assistance, "forgotten emergencies" are inevitable. What constitutes a "major" emergency can be dictated by political or strategic interest, and most significantly, by the media. The past eight years have demonstrated a clear trend of resources tending to congregate around the highest profile humanitarian crises for that year. Each year, one or two appeals, specifically, the Great Lakes region and the former Yugoslavia, have dominated the donor response. This reveals a serious lack of donor coordination to ensure more balanced support for humanitarian crises globally.

68. Within appeals, certain sectors have traditionally been well supported, while others are routinely underfunded. Food assistance dominates the response. Over the past two years, approximately 60 per cent of all global contributions to the consolidated appeals process consisted of support to the food sector. The

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Figure 1
Consolidated appeals process as percentage of total humanitarian assistance



impact of food aid on nutrition will be significantly limited, unless it is provided along with curative health care, hygiene and adequate water and sanitation programmes. Health problems are a major component of the suffering faced by people affected by war and can loom larger than lack of food, shelter or protection. While there are imbalances between the provision of food aid and essential non-food items and services, these may not be as great as reflected by the consolidated appeals process. Donors appear to prefer to use the process for food aid and use other non-United Nations partners for support in other sectors, particularly agriculture, health and water and sanitation. One important conclusion to be drawn from this is the need for a more comprehensive picture of the totality of humanitarian needs and assistance flows. The absence of a global humanitarian financial tracking system is an obstacle to effective coordination.

Transition

69. Consolidated appeals for countries that are in the process of transition from relief to development have been the least funded. The main reason for this is the “compartmentalization” of different sources of funding. Most donors still retain sharp institutional divisions between “relief” and “development” funding, and are very seldom prepared to make both forms of resources available simultaneously in a country affected by a complex humanitarian emergency. While the trend in

planning is to recognize that humanitarian and some development activities may have to be initiated concurrently, this institutional separation can leave “transition” countries particularly vulnerable in their first critical stages of emerging from conflict. Here again, without any significant increase in humanitarian funding, transitional activities will need to draw on money from traditional development budgets. Donors are urged to find better ways of accessing these resources, perhaps funnelling them through the consolidated appeals process. This would avoid creating a new funding mechanism and thus avoid reproducing precisely the artificial compartmentalization between relief, rehabilitation and development that is currently hampering transition activities. It is currently impossible to identify clearly either gaps in funding between sectors or determine where duplication exists.

Coordination and strategic planning

70. The consolidated appeals process is a key coordination tool for humanitarian assistance. It remains the only coordination mechanism that continually brings together Inter-Agency Standing Committee members, host Governments, non-governmental organizations and, increasingly, donors for shared analysis, and to discuss and set common strategies, objectives and principles for humanitarian assistance in a country or region. This is particularly

significant for regional consolidated appeals, as their preparation may provide one of the few or only forums for inter-agency discussion at the regional level.

71. The value of the consolidated appeals process as a coordination mechanism is limited by the fact that it does not represent the totality of humanitarian spending or trends in humanitarian funding. Humanitarian coordination would be considerably strengthened by improved financial analysis, supported by an overall financial tracking system that better accounts for the totality of humanitarian expenditure. This would also ensure higher levels of transparency and accountability for humanitarian assistance. Current definitions of humanitarian assistance are inadequate and do not properly reflect the true picture. As such, there is a requirement to review the current system of recording and tracking humanitarian assistance. This will require the full support of Member States, both donors and recipients of humanitarian aid, United Nations agencies and other humanitarian partners, and their commitment to full reporting of humanitarian assistance activities and flows.

72. The effectiveness of the consolidated appeals process as a coordination tool is dependent on the extent to which it can provide a common and agreed framework in a country or region. Increased non-governmental organization participation is required in both the appeal component and planning process. Donor coordination and engagement in the process is a further necessary element in improving its effectiveness. The consolidated appeal document only indirectly influences the funding decisions of many donors. Although donors want to see United Nations agencies continue to plan and coordinate together, the consolidated appeals process is unlikely to make them fund a project, agency or sector that they would not fund anyway. Donor decisions are more likely to be influenced by familiarity with a sector or agency than by prioritization established through the coordination process. Improved donor coordination is thus an absolute prerequisite of a more equitable humanitarian assistance system. Without it, efforts at improving the consolidated appeals process will unfortunately be very limited in their impact on beneficiaries.

Monitoring and evaluation

73. Undoubtedly, the consolidated appeals process would be a more effective instrument and advocacy tool if it could be used to identify the implications and impact of underfunding in particular sectors. However, this is a broader problem for all those engaged in humanitarian activity that is then reflected in the process. For the time being, progress in this area will be constrained by the lack of baseline data or effective monitoring tools, the development of which should be given more emphasis and support.

74. Evaluation and review have been key elements in ensuring continued improvements in the consolidated appeals process and a number of studies have been undertaken to review its modalities, processes, achievements and shortfalls. In May 2001, an Inter-Agency Standing Committee review resulted in a detailed framework for continuing agency commitment, including a Plan of Action that lists 19 specific actions for implementation in three general areas: strengthening senior level involvement in the consolidated appeals process, strengthening advocacy through the process, and strengthening it as a tool for strategic planning and coordination.

75. The past few years have also seen increased emphasis on the mid-year review process, and the introduction of the option of making revisions to the consolidated appeals process via ReliefWeb. Both processes hope to make the appeal documents into "living" documents that evolve in tandem with the humanitarian situation on the ground, improve strategic monitoring, and allow field staff and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at Headquarters to note and draw attention to the impact of underfunding on the humanitarian situation. Finally, an improved financial tracking system was launched in 2001, which allows for more flexible and custom-based analysis of the funding status and donor contributions to appeals.

76. In short, the review has demonstrated that there is an urgent need for humanitarian funding to be increased. The consolidated appeals process is steadily losing more of the market share of humanitarian funding which also impacts on its effectiveness as a strategic planning and coordination tool. Furthermore, since the process does not reflect the pattern of total humanitarian expenditure, it cannot adequately identify where there are gaps in humanitarian funding and

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which needs are going unmet. Member States are thus urged to support a more comprehensive system for financial information and analysis. If the process is to be used to address the issue of transition, it will be necessary either to increase overall levels of humanitarian funding or improve mechanisms for accessing development funding to avoid the gap that so often occurs in transition.

Advocacy

77. The review and other past evaluations have also indicated that the preparation, launch and follow-up of the consolidated appeals process are not accompanied by a coherent advocacy and public information strategy. The process represents both a subject and an important opportunity for advocacy that should be used to focus attention on "forgotten emergencies" and particular issues and constraints, as well as to increase overall levels of humanitarian funding. A more coherent and forceful advocacy effort is also required to achieve greater buy-in to the consolidated appeals process by non-governmental organizations, donors, recipient governments and other relevant parties.

V. Observations and recommendations of the Secretary-General

78. It is not entirely clear what effects the tragic events of 11 September 2001 will have on long-term humanitarian policy. However, it is evident that the environments that characterize complex humanitarian emergencies, where the protection of civilians is under threat and poverty is rampant, should not be allowed to fester. One of the more complex challenges faced by the humanitarian community is that of obtaining reliable access to support and protect the vulnerable populations. Without this, the provision of life-saving relief or recovery assistance is extremely difficult. New obstacles to the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance are arising. The emergence of criminal armed gangs in complex humanitarian emergencies often increases and promotes insecurity, as such elements seek to benefit from and promote conflicts.

79. Effective humanitarian assistance also requires the engagement of local communities, institutions and structures. Too often, these are ignored when their capacity has been reduced by the crisis. An effective transition from relief to development demands their

proper engagement and participation in the processes and management of humanitarian assistance and building their capacity to respond to their own crises. It is therefore important for the members of the international community to work together to provide the support needed in the humanitarian and developmental sphere in order to help address the root causes of violence and despair, which can give rise to the kind of horrific terrorist attacks so recently witnessed. Aid must work to reduce poverty and promote self-reliance and stability.

80. Despite the best intentions, the provision of humanitarian assistance can sometimes undermine the transition from relief to development. Legitimate concerns over impartiality of humanitarian assistance may limit the engagement and involvement of existing institutions and structures, as was the case in Afghanistan. When circumstances change, humanitarian actors must recognize this and adapt assistance programmes to engage at the earliest possible opportunity and ensure that humanitarian assistance is undertaken with people rather than for them.

81. The planning and programming of development assistance should take place as early as possible, alongside the planning of humanitarian assistance programmes. Although the time of delivery may vary, opportunities should be sought for providing targeted rehabilitation and development aid to support the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, even during conflict, especially where this can make an important contribution to peace-building efforts. An example of this is the situation in Somalia, where the international community is encouraged to provide developmental type aid to support some of the emerging pockets of stability in the country. This will help to contribute to a sense of normalcy and promote self-reliance for the affected communities. It will also have a positive effect for other areas in the country. The consolidated appeals process is an ideal mechanism for this type of support, as it brings together relief and recovery activities under a single strategy, while local capacity-building is factored into relief programmes.

82. The vulnerability of societies to natural disasters is clearly linked to poverty and weak planning. Dramatic urban growth, with the development of increasingly fragile infrastructure, is one factor that places the poor at higher risk from natural disasters. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the processes of

economic growth contribute to increasing vulnerability to natural hazards. As is the case in most crises, the greatest level of immediate response to disaster comes from within the local community or from the State. With the likelihood that there will be more frequent disaster events, it is incumbent on the international community to assist and support local, national and regional preparedness and response capacities.

83. The consolidated appeals process has become an important instrument for resource mobilization, humanitarian coordination and strategic planning. The considerable improvements in the process have not resulted in subsequent increased humanitarian assistance. Indeed, overall levels of humanitarian funding channelled through it have declined and a greater proportion is being directed through non-governmental organizations on a bilateral basis. Improved donor coordination could result in more effective and balanced funding of the consolidated appeals process and enhance effective coordination. Non-governmental organizations should also be brought more strongly into the process. The recognition that the consolidated appeals process reflects only part of all humanitarian funding highlights the need for an improved global tracking system for humanitarian assistance. This would strengthen coordination, help to avoid duplication and significantly enhance the accountability of humanitarian action.

84. The General Assembly and Economic and Social Council may wish to:

General Recommendations

(a) Urge and support United Nations country teams to promote contingency planning for all possible risks related to complex humanitarian crises or natural disasters in consultation with and in support of Governments;

(b) Invite the Secretary-General to continue to consult and support regional organizations to strengthen their capacities to respond to complex humanitarian crises and natural disasters and report to the Economic and Social Council on practical steps taken in this regard;

(c) Encourage relief organizations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other institutions to identify innovative ways to build local capacities in disaster management;

(d) Support the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to strengthen its regional presence to provide more effective support to disaster-prone countries within a given region and to better coordinate and develop existing response mechanisms;

(e) Encourage humanitarian agencies to support the initiative to further strengthen humanitarian information centres, by providing timely and accurate information on assessed needs and their activities to respond to them;

Reaching the vulnerable populations

(f) Call upon armed groups to respect the provisions of international humanitarian and human rights law, in particular, to allow safe and sustained access to the vulnerable segments of the population by humanitarian workers;

(g) Invite Member States to cooperate with the Secretary-General to facilitate the protection of civilians in armed conflict by promoting a culture of protection;

(h) Invite Member States to participate actively in regional workshops on the protection of civilians to impart knowledge and improve practice based on shared experiences;

(i) Support and encourage efforts to develop clear criteria and procedures for the identification and separation of armed elements in situations of massive population displacement;

(j) Welcome the initial assessment by the Secretary-General of the impact on humanitarian activities of the criminalization of the economy in conflict-shattered communities and request further reporting as appropriate;

(k) Note the establishment of the Unit on Internal Displacement in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and urge Member States to provide it with the necessary financial support to enable it to carry out its activities;

(l) Encourage the further application of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement by Member States;

(m) Urge the United Nations to continue its efforts to establish codes of conduct and standards

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of behaviour for humanitarian workers, review protection and distribution mechanisms, and recommend actions that protect against sexual abuse and exploitation and the misuse of humanitarian assistance and report to the Economic and Social Council in that regard;

(n) Support efforts to develop guidelines to expedite the work of international urban search and rescue operations;

Transition from relief to development

(o) Encourage humanitarian strategies to identify and support engagement with local structures and institutions, as a means of assisting the transition from relief to development;

(p) Encourage the humanitarian and development community to facilitate the direct participation by local communities and populations in the identification and implementation of humanitarian and transitional programmes, with a view to supporting overall peace-building and reconciliation efforts;

(q) Invite Member States to support the incorporation and operationalization of disaster risk management analysis into poverty reduction, developmental and environmental strategies;

(r) Encourage the United Nations to strengthen its existing planning tools, such as the common country assessment, United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the consolidated appeals process, in order to better reflect disaster risk management;

(s) Support efforts to ensure that consolidated appeals contain adequate plans to unite relief and transitional programmes, including in the area of resource mobilization;

Consolidated appeals process

(t) Welcome the efforts made by the United Nations system to strengthen the consolidated appeals process as a coordination and strategic planning tool;

(u) Call upon non-governmental organizations to participate actively and systematically to contributing to the humanitarian strategy contained in consolidated appeals and support the efforts of

the Emergency Relief Coordinator to engage in a dialogue with non-governmental organizations in order to ensure their involvement in the development of consolidated appeals;

(v) Call upon donors to support low-profile emergency appeals and ensure that funds foreseen for this purpose are not diverted in the response to large-scale emergencies, by increasing the overall levels of humanitarian assistance;

(w) Encourage donors to support humanitarian coordination and strategic planning by addressing agreed priority needs identified through the consolidated appeals process;

(x) Encourage the development of a global humanitarian financial tracking system which will allow improved coordination and accountability and encourage the Emergency Relief Coordinator to make proposals for the better definition of humanitarian assistance and the collection and dissemination of data on humanitarian needs and contributions;

(y) Encourage donors to meet annually and consider the global trend in humanitarian response to ensure that imbalances can be addressed when consolidated appeals are launched.

Notes

¹ Collated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Human Rights and Humanitarian Action in the publication entitled "Growing the Sheltering Tree: Protecting Rights Through Humanitarian Action".

² S/1999/957 and S/2001/331.

³ E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

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II

Fifty-sixth session

Item 40 of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

**Road map towards the implementation of the
United Nations Millennium Declaration**

Report of the Secretary-General

* A/56/150.

01-52607 (E) 130901



Executive summary

The road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration contains an integrated and comprehensive overview of the current situation. It outlines potential strategies for action that are designed to meet the goals and commitments made by the 147 heads of State and Government, and 189 Member States in total, who adopted the Millennium Declaration.

The report addresses fully each and every one of the goals and commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration, suggests paths to follow and shares information on “best practices”. It draws on the work of Governments, the entire United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, intergovernmental organizations, international organizations, regional organizations and civil society.

In section II, “**Peace, security and disarmament**”, the report outlines measures that will help promote human security, including:

- Strengthening the rule of law and taking action against transnational crime: the international community, including the United Nations, will continue to assist States in ratifying treaties, harmonizing their domestic laws with international obligations, widening the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and promoting the rapid entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
- Taking action when the rule of law fails: the international community often finds itself with responsibilities ranging from preventing violent conflict to deploying peacekeeping operations and peace-building missions, often while working with regional organization partners. These challenges require action to:
 - (a) Replace the culture of reaction by one of prevention, as reflected in measures designed to limit armed conflict that include preventive arms control and marking and tracking “blood diamonds”;
 - (b) Complete the significant management reforms under way in United Nations peacekeeping, which include filling new posts and developing a 30-to-90-day deployment capability;
 - (c) Support peace-building efforts on the ground and enhance the coordination of all the actors involved in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, while providing the electoral assistance and promoting the reconciliation that a sustainable peace requires;
- Reforming sanctions. Although sanctions can be important instruments of Security Council action, progress must continue to be made in making sanctions “targeted”, ensuring that they become more effective and that their impact on civilians is further reduced;
- Finally, making progress in disarmament in all areas, including weapons of mass destruction, landmines and small arms: next steps involve implementing existing conventions, working to develop regional mechanisms to identify, trace and halt illicit traffic in weapons, and supporting civil society advocacy efforts.

Section III, “**Development and poverty eradication: the millennium development goals**”, focuses on sustainable development through poverty

eradication, emphasizing the importance of halving the number of people who currently live on one dollar a day or less. Any effort to achieve sustainable development demands a concerted effort to reduce poverty, including finding solutions to hunger, malnutrition and disease. To achieve progress, the developing countries will need the political and financial commitment of their richer country partners. The international community should continue to operate on many fronts to reach these goals:

- Since the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other diseases has a devastating impact on every effort to lift people out of poverty, the Global AIDS and Health Fund is thus both a campaign to improve health and part of an essential strategy to achieve sustainable development;
- Given that all the issues around poverty are interconnected and demand cross-cutting solutions, such measures as the “School meals” and “Take home rations” programmes can have multiple benefits that extend beyond nutritional assistance. Education provides the skills that can lift families out of extreme poverty and preserve community health. In particular, when society facilitates girls’ empowerment through education, the eventual impact on their and their families’ daily lives is unequalled;
- People-centred initiatives are crucial but must be supplemented with sound national policies, such as responsible social spending programmes, as well as improvements in governance, infrastructure and institution-building, such as those included in establishing property rights for the poor;
- Wealthier nations must adhere to their promises regarding official development assistance, trade access and debt sustainability, all of which are important items on the agenda of the upcoming International Conference on Financing for Development;
- For the 49 least developed countries, the next steps are implementing a global version of the European “Everything but arms” trade programme; increasing official development assistance; fully implementing the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and pursuing measures to promote the cancellation of official bilateral debt;
- Landlocked and small island developing countries are subject to special vulnerabilities that need to be addressed through support to the Global Framework for Transit-Transport Cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries and the donor community and through the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;
- Lastly, the Information and Communications Technologies Task Force, which is to meet in September 2001, will take steps to begin the bridging of the digital divide.

Section IV, “**Protecting our common environment**”, describes the devastating impact that our changing climate is having on the Earth and the consequent necessity of a vigilant approach to conservation and stewardship. It is time to reverse the growing environmental damage that is occurring because of global warming, deforestation, the decimation of biodiversity, soil erosion and desertification, reduction in water tables and the increase in natural disasters. Essential actions include:

- Completing the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol as the next key step towards curbing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Enhancing cooperation and coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, as well as public-private partners;
- Implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;
- Supporting initiatives towards environmentally sound water management;
- Adopting strategies to reduce the impact of natural disasters;
- Respecting the principles of human dignity as research continues on the human genome.

Section V, “**Human rights, democracy and good governance**”, reaffirms that fundamental human rights are the foundation of human dignity and must be protected. It outlines the power of democracy to effect change and empower citizens, and reaffirms the need to work collectively for more inclusive political processes, with genuine political participation. Strategies for moving forward include:

- Fostering national human rights institutions;
- Supporting the practical application of a rights-based approach to development;
- Providing electoral assistance to help consolidate new and restored democracies and work to implement democratic principles through institutional reform programmes;
- Encouraging the further ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Working to protect the rights of migrants and their families;
- Helping to ensure the freedom and independence of the media.

Section VI, “**Protecting the vulnerable**”, focuses on those groups, in particular women and children, that are forced into situations of displacement and abuse because of complex humanitarian emergencies. The changing nature of war has left these groups highly exposed, and both State and non-State actors need to respect the wealth of international laws and frameworks that exist to ensure the protection of civilians, refugees and the internally displaced. The report identifies practical measures that can be taken to provide protection to civilians, including through prosecuting violations of international criminal law, gaining access to vulnerable populations, and separating civilians and armed elements in situations of forced displacement. Essential next steps include:

- Fostering a culture of protection through the consistent use of international criminal law;
- Providing protection for refugees and internally displaced persons and continuing to disseminate international standards such as the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement;

- Supporting national efforts to implement fully the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, and providing special assistance to halt the use of children as soldiers.

Section VII, “**Meeting the special needs of Africa**”, addresses the challenges posed by extreme poverty, devastating debt burdens, disease, conflict and wavering international interest. Some of those problems are general to developing countries, but Africa suffers particularly from its marginalization in the process of globalization. Africa’s share in trade, investment and advances in technology have diminished further over the last decade. But African leadership has galvanized local and international support for a range of initiatives and strategies for moving forward in the following arenas:

- Supporting the New African Initiative as it affects all sectors;
- Strengthening democratic governance;
- Building peacekeeping capacity further, in cooperation with regional organizations;
- Working for sustainable development by increasing official development assistance, enhancing private capital flows and building capacities for trade;
- Forming partnerships in response to the Abuja Summit Declaration in order to combat HIV/AIDS.

Section VIII, “**Strengthening the United Nations**”, argues that renewing the capacity of the Organization to provide a space for genuine dialogue and a catalyst for effective action calls for improved coordination among its principal organs and enhanced partnerships with other multilateral organizations and civil society. For these purposes, key reforms will involve:

- Ensuring that the Organization receives on a timely and predictable basis the financial resources it needs to carry out its mandates;
- Continuing to adopt the best internal management practices;
- Paying particular attention to the safety of United Nations and associated personnel;
- Building a stronger relationship among the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization through the Advisory Committee on Coordination;
- Deepening the relationship with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and engaging the private sector, non-governmental organizations and the rest of civil society through the United Nations Foundation for International Partnerships and the Global Compact.

The road map concludes by noting that there will be annual reports and, every five years, a comprehensive report on progress made or not made in reaching these goals. The entire United Nations family of Member States, international organizations, funds, agencies, programmes, the private sector and civil society must join together to meet the lofty commitments that are embodied in the Millennium Declaration. Success requires solidarity.

IV. Protecting our common environment

164. One of our greatest challenges in the coming years is to ensure that our children and all future generations are able to sustain their lives on the planet. We must tackle, as a matter of priority, issues of climate change, preserving biodiversity, managing our forests and water resources and reducing the impacts of natural and man-made disasters. If we do not act to contain the damage already done and mitigate future harm, we will inflict irreversible damage on our rich ecosystem and the bounties it offers.

GOAL: To make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol,³² preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases

165. In 1997, the world released 23.8 billion tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the most important of the greenhouse gases. Almost half of those emissions were from high-income economies. That level is four times the 1950 level and is currently increasing at a rate of nearly 300 million tons annually. Population growth, increasing consumption and the reliance on fossil fuels all combine to drive up the release of greenhouse gases, leading to global warming. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, increases in greenhouse gases have already caused a temperature rise of 0.3 to 0.6 degrees Celsius during the last 100 years. There has been a sharp upward trend in temperatures in the last 10 years, and the years since 1993 have been the hottest on record. If nothing is done to control greenhouse gas emissions, the global average temperature could rise by a further 0.4 degrees Celsius by the year 2020. Global warming could result in sea levels rising by 34 inches by the end of the twenty-first century, flooding human coastal and island settlements and melting the polar ice caps.

166. The Kyoto Protocol aims to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by industrialized nations to 5.2 per cent below 1990 levels within the period 2008 to 2012. Greenhouse gas emissions in industrialized countries have fallen during the period 1990 to 1998, particularly due to the economic changes in the Russian Federation, other parts of the former Soviet Union and Eastern

Europe. Negotiations are ongoing to implement the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change³³ signed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and to bring into force the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

167. To come into force, the Kyoto Treaty requires the ratification of 55 countries, which must also be responsible for at least 55 per cent of CO₂ emissions. As of 14 August 2001, 37 of the 84 countries that have signed the Kyoto Protocol have ratified it. It is still possible for Governments to meet the target of entry into force by the opening of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002.

168. Formal discussions among the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change were held at the resumed sixth Conference of the Parties, held in Germany in July 2001. The Conference approved rules for implementing the Kyoto Protocol to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The consensus agreement won the backing of 178 nations. Among the incentives that secured the agreement was a provision for developed countries to engage in emissions trading. The idea behind emissions trading is that companies and countries that cut emissions below their assigned target level will have excess credits to sell. Industrialized nations and companies that cannot reach their emissions quotas may find it cheaper to buy the excess credits than install new pollution-abatement equipment. Such a market-based mechanism is expected to direct limited investment money to the most cost-effective emissions-reduction projects. Lawmakers from the nations attending the meeting will consider the implementation measures when they vote on formal ratification.

169. Current United Nations initiatives in support of greenhouse gas reduction include the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which carries out assessments of the science of climate change as well as its potential socio-economic consequences. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) helps countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

170. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002, will constitute the 10-year review of UNCED. A focused agenda should foster discussion of findings in particular environmental sectors (forests, oceans, climate, energy, fresh water, etc.) as well as in cross-sector areas, such as economic instruments, new

technologies and globalization. The Summit must also consider fully the impact of the revolutions in technology, biology and communications that have taken place since 1992. Private citizens as well as institutions are urged to take part in the process. Broad participation is critical. If further action is to be effective in achieving the ultimate goal of sustainability, Governments cannot work alone.

171. For the immediate future, the most important effort is to ensure that the Kyoto Protocol is ratified by 55 nations responsible for at least 55 per cent of the CO₂ emissions in 1990. The United Nations will also encourage the parties to the Convention on Climate Change to introduce instruments and procedures to restrict greenhouse gas emissions and to provide technical means to developing countries to do so.

172. Strategies for moving forward include:

- Ensuring the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol;
- Developing a clear framework to elicit voluntary initiatives from the private sector by giving credit to voluntary actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Encouraging initiatives that will help reduce the vulnerability of the poor and strengthen their adaptive capacity to deal with the adverse impacts of climate change;
- Encouraging new partnerships and strengthening of institutions to deal with the adverse impact of climate change.

GOAL: To intensify our collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests

173. Forests and woodlands are vital to the social and economic well-being of people. They provide a wide range of products for economic development as well as subsistence for millions of people, including indigenous people, who live in and around forests. Furthermore, forests also provide indispensable environmental services, such as soil and water conservation, the preservation of biological diversity and the mitigation of climate change through carbon storage and sequestration.

174. As of 2000, 3.9 billion hectares (ha) of land, about one third of the world's total land area, are covered by forests, 17 per cent in Africa, 14 per cent in

Asia, 5 per cent in Oceania, 27 per cent in Europe, 14 per cent in North and Central America and 23 per cent in South America.

175. Forest resources contribute to the subsistence of communities and economies, but many current forms of usage are unsustainable. The world's natural forests continue to be converted to other land uses at an alarming rate. Currently, deforestation is greatest in the tropics. The global deforestation rate is estimated to be about 14.6 million ha per year. Major causes of deforestation and forest degradation include agricultural expansion and the harvesting of fuel wood. Half of the wood harvested in the world is used as fuel, mostly in developing countries. In developed nations, forest resources are used mainly for industrial products. Only 6 per cent of the forest area in developing countries is covered by a formal and nationally approved forest management plan, compared with 89 per cent in developed countries.

176. Forest policy deliberations, initially conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Sustainable Development, are now carried out by their successor, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), itself a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests, consisting of 12 multilateral forest-related organizations, has also been formed to support the activities of UNFF.

177. Strategies for moving forward include:

- Enhancing cooperation and coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, as well as public-private partners;
- Strengthening political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, including the special needs and requirements of countries with low forest cover.

GOAL: To press for the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity³⁴ and the Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa³⁵

178. The world's biological diversity is being lost at an alarming rate. For example, of the 1.75 million

species that have been identified it is estimated that 3,400 plants and 5,200 animal species, including one in eight bird species and nearly one in four mammal species, face extinction.

179. The 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity has 181 States parties as of 14 August 2001, and commits Governments to conserve biodiversity, to use its components in a sustainable manner and to share equitably the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Despite this, the world's biological diversity is being irreversibly lost at an alarming rate, as a result of large-scale clearing and burning of forests; the overharvesting of plants; the indiscriminate use of pesticides and other persistent toxic chemicals; the draining and filling of wetlands; the loss of coral reefs and mangroves; destructive fishing practices; climate change; water pollution; and the conversion of wild lands to agricultural and urban uses.

180. There is a clear need for additional resources to assess status and trends on biological diversity and to mainstream biodiversity concerns into sectoral and cross-sectoral planning, policies and projects. The issue of further scientific assessment of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology will require close attention.

181. The Cartagena Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted by more than 130 countries on 29 January 2000, in Montreal. Called the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in honour of the Colombian city which hosted the Conference of Parties to the Convention in Cartagena in 1999, the Protocol, upon entry into force, is expected to provide a framework for addressing the environmental impacts of bioengineered products or "living modified organisms" that cross international borders. The Cartagena Protocol will help to protect the environment without unnecessarily disrupting world food trade. As of 31 July 2001, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety has been signed by 102 countries and one regional economic organization — the European Community.

182. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, was negotiated after UNCED and it entered into force in December 1996. It stressed the need for a new grass-roots participatory approach to solving the problem of desertification. Desertification affects the topsoil that is crucial to agriculture and the world's food supply. This

is predominantly due to overcultivation, poor irrigation, drought and overgrazing. The Convention emphasizes partnerships, both internationally and domestically, as well as the need to afford special consideration to those affected by desertification in developing countries.

183. Strategies for moving ahead include:

- Supporting the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification by taking measures that prevent land degradation and focus on new participatory approaches to solving the problem of desertification;
- Ensuring the universal ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, as well as the harmonization and implementation of biodiversity-related instruments and programmes.

GOAL: To stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies

184. The supply of clean and safe water has not kept up with the increases in demand for it. Water tables are falling in every continent. Although 70 per cent of the world's surface is covered by water, only 2.5 per cent of the water on earth is freshwater. Less than 1 per cent of the world's freshwater resources is accessible for human use. Water use grew at more than twice the rate of population during the twentieth century. In 2000, at least 1.1 billion people or 18 per cent of the world's population lacked access to safe water. If present trends in water consumption continue, almost 2.5 billion people will be subject to water shortages by 2050.

185. The United Nations played an active role in the World Water Forum held in The Hague in 2000, where discussions focused on strategies for the sustainable management of water resources and their related coastal and marine environments. These strategies are currently being implemented by various nations, with the active involvement of the United Nations, and include programmes for the management of freshwater systems and their related coastal and marine environments.

186. Strategies for moving ahead include:

- Conducting global assessments of priority aquatic ecosystems with a view to developing appropriate policy responses;
- Developing policies, guidelines and management tools for environmentally sustainable integrated water management;
- Helping developing countries and countries with economies in transition to use environmentally sound technologies to address urban and freshwater basin environmental problems;
- Ensuring a comprehensive review of chapter 18 of Agenda 21,³⁶ which is the main framework for United Nations activities in the management of freshwater resources, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in 2002;
- Ensuring that such measures as the “polluter pays” principle and the pricing of water, which were raised at the World Water Forum, are further examined.

GOAL: To intensify our collective efforts to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters

187. In 1999, natural disasters resulted in the loss of more than 100,000 human lives. If the projected impact of climate change on disasters is also factored into the equation, human and economic losses resulting from disasters will be significant unless aggressive measures are implemented to prevent the occurrence of or mitigate the effects of natural and man-made disasters.

188. There has been a major conceptual shift from the traditional emphasis on disaster *response* to disaster *reduction*. The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999) led to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the establishment of an inter-agency task force and secretariat. Disaster reduction prevents, mitigates and prepares for the adverse impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. It must be promoted as an urgent priority on the international development agenda.

189. Many countries, with the assistance of non-state actors, have begun to adopt initiatives, including the increased application of science and technology,

designed to reduce the impact of natural hazards and related technological and environmental phenomena.

190. The Geneva Mandate on Disaster Reduction reaffirms the necessity for disaster reduction and risk management as essential elements of government policies. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction will help societies in their endeavours to mitigate and to the extent possible to prevent the effects of natural hazards. Separately, the General Assembly mandated the Strategy to continue international cooperation to reduce the impacts of El Niño and other climate variability, and to strengthen disaster reduction capacities through early warning.

191. Strategies for moving ahead include:

- Supporting interdisciplinary and intersectoral partnerships, improved scientific research on the causes of natural disasters and better international cooperation to reduce the impact of climate variables, such as El Niño and La Niña;
- Developing early warning, vulnerability mapping, technological transfer and training;
- Encouraging Governments to address the problems created by megacities, the location of settlements in high-risk areas and other man-made determinants of disasters;
- Encouraging Governments to incorporate disaster risk reduction into national planning processes, including building codes.

GOAL: To ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence

192. In 2000, the publicly funded Human Genome Project and the commercial Celera Genomics Corporation jointly announced success in listing the sequence of the 3.1 billion bases of human DNA. But although the DNA sequence has been listed, decoding it or making it meaningful will take several more years. The Project, a multinational public-sector research consortium, has announced that its genome database will be made freely available on the Internet, but Celera is expected to charge royalties. The decoding of the human gene has brought the issue of patenting genes to the fore. The genome project is an excellent example of technology transfer at work, with numerous laboratories operating in at least 18 different countries. Although some biotechnology innovations originate in

the South, most of the more complex biotechnology is still being advanced in developed countries.

193. In 1997, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) members unanimously signed the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights,³⁷ stating that the human genome in its natural state must not give rise to financial gains, and that no research concerning the human genome should prevail over respect for human rights. Also, practices contrary to human dignity, such as reproductive human cloning, should not be permitted and benefits from advances concerning the human genome must be made available to all. In addition, research concerning the human genome shall seek to offer relief from suffering and improve health.

194. Strategy for moving forward:

- Taking into account the UNESCO declaration of 1997, nations are urged to ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence.

V. Human rights, democracy and good governance

195. The United Nations exists to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, the equal rights of men and women, and the right of minorities and migrants to live in peace. All human rights — civil, political, economic, social and cultural — are comprehensive, universal and interdependent. They are the foundations that support human dignity, and any violations of human rights represent an attack on human dignity's very core. Where fundamental human rights are not protected, States and their peoples are more likely to experience conflict, poverty and injustice.

GOAL: To respect and fully uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights³⁸ and strive for the full protection and promotion in all countries of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for all

196. Currently, the ratification status of key international human rights treaties is as follows (numbers of countries which have ratified in parentheses): the International Covenant for Economic Social and Cultural Rights³⁹ (145), the International

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights⁴⁰ (147); the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination⁴¹ (158); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women⁴² (168); the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment⁴³ (126), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴⁴ (191).

197. While the increasing willingness of Governments to make these commitments should be applauded, the gulf between commitments and concrete action must still be bridged. People throughout the world remain victims of summary executions, disappearances and torture. Accuracy on numbers is difficult to ascertain because violations take place in too many countries of the world and are rarely reported. One of the very few measures available is the work of the special rapporteurs on human rights. For example, the number of letters sent by the Special Rapporteur on torture of the Commission on Human Rights might give a sense of the situation regarding torture but cannot describe the full magnitude of the problem: in 2000, 66 letters were sent to 60 countries on behalf of about 650 individuals and 28 groups involving 2,250 persons.

198. Thirty-eight countries have undertaken to adopt national plans of action for human rights, following the recommendation of the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,⁴⁵ and at least 14 countries have completed the process. More than 50 national human rights institutions have been established under the Paris principles, a detailed set of internationally recognized principles that provides minimum standards on the status and advisory role of national human rights institutions. The Paris principles were endorsed by the Commission on Human Rights in 1992 and the General Assembly in 1993, and have become the foundation and reference point for United Nations activity in this area. Since 1995 and the start of the Decade on Human Rights Education, at least 17 countries have undertaken national planning programmes and more than 40 have initiated human rights education activities.

199. A mid-term global study undertaken in 2000 found that effective human rights education strategies have yet to be developed. Specific measures for school systems, such as developing and revising curricula and textbooks, human rights training of school personnel and relevant extracurricular activities, have yet to be institutionalized. Similarly, human rights are rarely a focus of study at the university level, except at

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda**

Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

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or economic opportunities hinders already vulnerable populations from again becoming self-sufficient. In post-conflict situations, lack of security or sustainability can plunge societies back into violence. Combatants need to be disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated. Without demining, landmines will continue to kill and disable, and to prevent access to important land resources and infrastructure. Although, not all of these issues can be fully addressed by humanitarian organizations, they have an impact on humanitarian operations and thus require linkages with political, military and other actors.

15. Key to the success of humanitarian action is the coordinated efforts of all players, backed by the political will and support of Member States. Member States have continued to be generous in their response both to natural disasters and complex emergencies, not only in financial terms but also in the provision of personnel and technical support. Yet there are significant needs that remain unmet. At the same time, opportunities to develop more efficient and effective responses exist, along with ways to support the most affected countries in preparing for and responding strongly to the crises that afflict them.

16. In the light of the changed and changing humanitarian environment, it is useful to examine whether the tools created 10 years ago by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/182 to improve coordination and response in humanitarian crises have adapted accordingly. During the past decade, there has been a greater commitment to coordination. More effort is put into deciding coordination arrangements and many have been regularized. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the consolidated appeals process are key examples. But the response to each crisis identifies new lessons to be learned and there are still many challenges to the coordination of humanitarian assistance to be met.

III. Context and challenges of humanitarian assistance, 2000-2001

A. Natural disasters

17. Natural disasters repeatedly strike many of the same regions and countries in an almost predictable manner. Widespread drought in the Horn of Africa threatened 12.3 million people in many parts of the

region, including Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. Severe drought in the first half of 2000 also afflicted much of central and southern Asia, particularly Afghanistan, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Caucasian countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. This resulted in significant losses of livestock and crops and rapid deterioration of health and sanitary conditions. In addition, Afghanistan's Herat province was hit by a cold wave in January 2001. Some 5,000 displaced families, already weakened from a combination of drought and conflict, struggled in difficult and crowded conditions, exacerbated by a severe shortfall in emergency shelter. Many people died, particularly women, children and the elderly.

18. For the second year, Mongolia suffered from a harshly cold winter ("Dzud"), which followed on the heels of a severe drought. Over 115,000 herder families were affected by the loss of more than 2 million head of livestock, which doubled last year's toll, resulting in economic disaster for the country and nutritional problems for large segments of the population.

19. Barely one year after devastating floods in Mozambique affected one million people, floods struck the country and its surrounding region again in 2001, affecting a further 500,000 people. In Malawi, too, floods affected some 340,000 people and, in neighbouring Zambia, floods and drought combined to affect 1.5 million people in different parts of the country. Heavy rainfalls in Zimbabwe resulted in overflowing rivers and floods.

20. Adverse weather conditions also overcame many areas of Asia. Massive floods, triggered by the past year's south-west monsoon rains, swept through several countries in south and south-east Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. Thousands of people died and tens of millions were affected, notably in Cambodia, where more than 2.2 million people (20 per cent of the population) suffered from the worst monsoon floods to strike the country in 40 years. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, longer-term economic problems and continuing poor harvests have been further exacerbated by an ongoing series of natural disasters, namely, floods, drought and tropical storm damage. One third of the population of 22 million

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people is now targeted for assistance with food, health care, water and sanitation.

21. Within a period of one month, two powerful earthquakes hit El Salvador in early 2001, affecting about 25 per cent of the total population. Some 1,159 people died and thousands more were injured. As the international community was engaged in addressing the consequences of the first earthquake in El Salvador, on 26 January 2001, a massive earthquake struck the western State of Gujarat in India, surprising the world with its scale. Over 20,000 people were killed and almost 16 million more were affected. The province, which held some promise in terms of economic development, is now weakened by an estimated \$4.6 billion worth of damage.

B. Complex emergencies

22. Complex emergencies, resulting from conflict and often compounded by natural disasters, have intensified in many regions of the world. In the past year, an already serious humanitarian situation in the West African subregion of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone worsened because of growing confrontations between government forces and dissident groups. Border attacks by armed groups in Guinea's Parrots Beak area, which had been the temporary home for some 200,000 Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees, resulted in massive displacement away from conflict areas. Following the large-scale atrocities and gross human rights violations committed against the resident and refugee populations during the attacks, thousands of people fled back to Sierra Leone, while others were forced to move deeper into Guinea to escape the fighting. The increasing role of armed non-State actors, the transnational nature of their criminal activities, the proliferation of small arms, the ineffective demobilization and reintegration of combatants, the continued recruitment of child soldiers and the use of the population as a "human shield" by the parties to the conflict is a serious threat to regional peace and stability.

23. Afghanistan also witnessed a dramatic deterioration in its humanitarian situation, in which 22 years of internal conflict, punctuated by the worst drought in 30 years, has accelerated the prolonged economic decline and general impoverishment of the people. Over the past year alone, 470,000 people have been added to an already large population that has fled

their homes to escape drought and fighting. Among them are 30,000 people who fled the Yakawlang District of Bamian Province in Central Afghanistan, after the Taliban allegedly murdered some 300 civilians in January 2001, who it had accused of supporting the opposition. Human rights violations are rife and there is particularly brutal discrimination against women.

24. The Middle East is also witnessing a humanitarian emergency. Since late September 2000, strife in the occupied Palestinian Territory has led to deaths and injuries and a severe decline in the economy, devastating the living standards of the vast majority of the population.

25. The Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to suffer from the several differently motivated conflicts being waged in the country. Abuse of political power on a wide scale, including incitements to commit genocide, horrific abuses of human rights, the criminalization of economic activity, the presence of rebel movements and foreign armies, and the proliferation of general banditry, within a context of large-scale impunity, are but a few of the elements that define the existing political and socio-economic environment. An estimated 2.1 million people have been displaced and some 350,000 have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

26. Conflicts also persisted in Angola, Somalia and the Sudan. In Angola, the conflict has escalated with serious ramifications for the neighbouring countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia and Zambia. In May 2000, fighting again broke out between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which, combined with the drought, resulted in the displacement of over one million Eritreans, of whom some 50,000 fled to the Sudan. In addition, some 60,000 Ethiopians were allegedly deported from Eritrea, joining the 350,000 people already displaced within Ethiopia as a result of earlier fighting.

27. In Burundi, the international community negotiated with the Government to change its "regroupment" policy and dismantle many of the camps more recently established under it. Although the numbers of internally displaced persons living in such camps have been reduced by more than half since the beginning of 2001, the humanitarian agenda continues to be dominated by the plight of some 393,000 internally displaced persons in 217 camps. The lack of resolution on a ceasefire, despite the signing of the



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UN Convention to Combat Desertification

ICCD/CRIC(1)/10	<p><i>17 January 2003</i> Report of the Committee on its first session, held in Rom from 11 to 22 November 2002. (See: Chapter V. - E. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought, and F. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment. See also: Chapter VI. - 6. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment; early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought)..... 340</p>
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COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FIRST SESSION,
HELD IN ROME FROM 11 TO 22 NOVEMBER 2002**

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change under the UNFCCC process with the involvement of the UNCCD focal points. The risk of duplication of effort must be minimized to enhance cost effectiveness and promote harmonization at all levels.

94. Synergies between environmental conventions should be enhanced at the national level through institutional synergies, especially at the local level. The considerable possibilities of the UNCCD for synergistic rationalization and linkages with the other Rio conventions and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands need to be more fully developed. Sustainable land management and use in the drylands can effectively promote biodiversity conservation and genetic resources. It is also critical for range quality and soil conservation. Therefore it is important that the common work plan between the UNCCD and CBD secretariats is extended to the UNFCCC secretariat.

95. Mainstreaming NAP implementation in important national development and investment programmes is a key factor for successful UNCCD implementation. Linkages with other planning frameworks, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) or the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), would be more easily achieved if the required interagency cooperation were supported at country level through a consultative process including the national focal points and donor agencies.

96. One point of entry for developed country Parties is often the PRSP. It would be helpful if Parties could take action from their side to make PRSP frameworks more responsive to the UNCCD and natural resource management. Country-led planning frameworks such as the PRSP, Agenda 21 or NEPAD provide unique opportunities to integrate issues of environmental sustainability in poverty reduction efforts.

97. It was suggested that synergistic implementation would facilitate the sharing of information and knowledge among the involved stakeholders and give impetus to participation. The inherent complexities of the Rio conventions require awareness-raising measures at governmental as well as local level.

98. Methodologies for synergistic implementation have to be established. They can facilitate joining resources for concrete implementation measures: land use planning, watershed management, soil and water conservation, management of pastoral and forest resources including the necessary investments in capacity building.

E. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought

99. It was not always clear that presentations relating to NAP activities should promote and spread best practices for sustainable land and water management, watershed management and erosion control. Control of soil salinization and reduction of nitrate pollution of the ground water are among the rising concerns. A number of successful practices have been introduced. Land slides, salinization, deforestation, water and wind erosion, rangeland

degradation and loss of biomass are some of the problems that have worsened since the entry into force of the Convention but have not been adequately tackled by prevention measures in many countries.

100. Improved on-farm resource management, including organic farming, afforestation, off-farm income generation and strengthening community-level institutions, are some of the necessary elements in the rehabilitation of degraded land. Watershed management and the wise use of scarce water resources have been the focus of renewed attention, notably in relationship with the specific conditions of mountain ecosystems, whose role is particularly important in the drylands.

101. Options to increase the competitiveness of arid or semi-arid dryland products and services to relieve users' pressure on degraded lands include such activities as cash crops (greenhouse/hydroponics production), aquaculture, recreation and eco-tourism or adherence by the mining/extraction industry to codes of sustainable land-use practices.

102. A sharper focus should be given under the UNCCD to supplementing scarce traditional fuels with new and alternative sources of energy.

103. The UNCCD can promote a higher level of preparedness to natural disasters such as prolonged droughts, dust storms, forest fires or flash floods due to deforestation and degradation of soil. Early warning systems and environmental risk assessments should be systematically used as tools to chart the course of NAP implementation, to move from crisis management to risk prevention. Early warning systems need to be less reactive and more prevention-oriented.

F. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment

104. The increasingly erratic distribution of rainfall in several countries and the consequent recurrence of extreme weather events, sometimes with catastrophic consequences, indicate an urgent need to combine early drought and flood warning systems with a preventive focus on an operational early warning system on drought and soil moisture.

105. In a context of increasing vulnerability to droughts and other natural disasters in a large number of countries, the national and/or subregional assessment and monitoring capacities have not received the support necessary to enable them to provide more accurate forecasting and early identification of coping strategies. Monitoring is mostly limited to the observation of the biophysical effects of desertification.

106. The thematic programme networks of the regional action programmes can play an important role in the UNCCD process provided they are built on a comprehensive work programme and on strong commitments by member countries. Progress in resource mobilization is needed if they are to support the work of the CST in such areas as the assessment of biophysical (soils, water, vegetation) or socioeconomic (vulnerability, poverty eradication) factors. They

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could also be instrumental in a regional evaluation effort on impact in specific themes or sectors.

107. Capacity building is required in this field. Limited access to technology for Geographical Information System (GIS) and/or remote sensing remains a widespread concern. Access to base-line information and data processing for an effective early warning system response is not facilitated, as benchmarks and indicators are often aligned to other processes.

108. Benchmarks and indicators are under development, but testing, quantification and standardization have not yet begun. Acceptance of benchmarks and indicators at the operational level remains a challenge.

G. Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected
developing country Parties, to appropriate technology,
knowledge and know-how

109. The constraints most frequently identified remain the same: weak networking among scientific institutions, absence of early warning systems on drought and soil moisture, limited exchange of data and work carried at varying geographic scales, the chronic shortage of financial resources and limited access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how. Furthermore, the results of research, when available, are often not meaningfully absorbed by decision-makers or end-users of natural resources.

110. South-South cooperation, thematic programme networks and/or regional working groups are some of the mechanisms for disseminating traditional knowledge, and they may capitalize on existing initiatives on benchmarks and indicators with a view to achieving common standards for decision-makers.

111. Concerns were expressed about the limited impact of CST-related activities on programme activities. The involvement of the international scientific community and the dissemination of pertinent data must be encouraged through the group of experts.

112. The CST should address issues of land degradation in its work programme. It could encourage work on production technologies for promoting sustainable soil management. It could also encourage a basin-wide approach to natural resource conservation and management. The CST could also encourage cooperation with the private sector.

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5. *Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land*

145. Issues relating to the sustainable management of natural resources are common concerns of the Parties. Partner agencies and all Parties should further strengthen the linkages between planned financial and technical support in these areas and initiatives envisaged under the UNCCD, while interministerial cooperation should be pursued in affected developing countries with a view to promoting integrated programmes.

146. In this context participants expressed a desire to focus action on a specific territorial or spatial scale so as to approach in a more holistic manner the local ecological and socioeconomic conditions. Consequently, further measures and actions should be taken to promote and implement small and medium size projects and activities at the local level.

147. Capacity strengthening for mitigating the effects of drought must be wide-ranging, covering areas such as the adaptation of appropriate agricultural production systems, soil conserving and water-saving technologies and the management of decentralized food storage systems.

148. The prevention of land degradation, rehabilitation and sustainable management of degraded land must rely upon a large number of relevant parameters specific to each location.

149. Preventing further land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas means relieving the land of the burden of unsustainable agriculture practices while maintaining or increasing income generation. This must be facilitated by the use of new and traditional technologies, the creation of alternative livelihood opportunities and by the integration of land and water conservation practices in land management systems.

150. Incentives to support the production-processing-marketing chain of natural resource products, including improved access to national and international markets, must be enhanced.

151. A strong focus should be given to the analysis of the causes of land degradation and on measures for prevention of desertification in parallel with measures for rehabilitation.

6. *Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment; early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought*

152. Available data and observations provided by global climate and modelling centres as well as by regional and national early warning centres should be used more efficiently.

153. The UNCCD secretariat, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and interested partner agencies should extend full support to the further development and implementation of a comprehensive programme of early warning on

a regional basis, including the strengthening of technical capabilities and community-based organizational activities to make the programme operational.

154. Indicators for monitoring the implementation performance of the Convention, covering the establishment of enabling conditions and the impact of measures taken, must be developed and must include key biophysical and socioeconomic indicators, including socioeconomic impact indicators at the community and household levels. These indicators should be reflected in the help guides for national reports and used by Parties.

155. The monitoring systems of benchmarks and indicators and early warning systems should be designed as a function of the necessity of decision-makers for their application in concrete measures in combating desertification.

156. Efforts to enhance preparedness for natural hazards and natural disasters, particularly under the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, including early warning systems, vulnerability and risk assessments or fire/flood prevention systems, should be more closely integrated with the action programmes.

157. Parties are invited to implement the findings and recommendations of the CST ad hoc panels in accordance with the relevant COP decisions.

158. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment and early warning systems require the use of relevant technologies. Consequently, it is advisable that international agencies and developed country Parties make them available to developing country Parties.

7. Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how

159. Developed country Parties should provide developing country Parties with further access to new technologies and know-how for the implementation of their action programmes.

160. Research institutions in affected country Parties need strengthening to develop innovative approaches and technologies, taking due account of, and adapting, as appropriate, traditional knowledge and knowledge systems of indigenous people, to develop both preventive and curative measures.

161. Traditional knowledge and indigenous knowledge systems addressing local problems must be more systematically exploited and innovations based on such knowledge encouraged and, where appropriate, in combination with modern technologies adapted to local conditions. Findings must be recorded and shared, notably through the thematic programme networks of the RAPs and the SRAPs, supported by regional and subregional institutions. The secretariat is urged to assist this effort to facilitate replication of successful solutions.



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EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Report of the ad hoc panel

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By decision 14/COP.4, the UNCCD Conference of the Parties reappointed an ad hoc panel of 10 experts "to examine further the following:

(a) Critical analysis of the performance of early warning and monitoring and assessment systems, linking traditional knowledge and early warning systems, especially in the areas of the collection of data, dissemination of information and measuring for drought preparedness;

(b) Methods for and approaches to the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification, particularly the method of analyzing vulnerability to drought and desertification, especially at the local, subnational and national levels, with special regard to new technological developments;

(c) Mechanisms to facilitate an exchange of information between scientific and technological institutions, in particular focusing on national and subregional networks on the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification;

(d) More detailed measures for drought and desertification preparedness, in cooperation with the approaches, from hazard protection to risk management, adopted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction."

2. By the same decision, the UNCCD secretariat was requested to make the necessary arrangements for the functioning of the ad hoc panel, including the provision of additional expertise, particularly in the area of participatory planning and legal advice.

3. The ad hoc panel was convened from 4 to 8 June 2001 at the Yamanashi Institute for Environmental Sciences in Fuji Yoshida City, Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan. The meeting was co-sponsored by the Government of Japan, in collaboration with the Yamanashi Prefecture. Annex I lists the ad hoc panel members who attended. The panel retained officers selected at the first panel meeting in Bonn, from 31 May to 3 June 2000:

Chair:	Dr. Kazuhiko Takeuchi (Japan)
Vice-Chair:	Mr. Abdellah Ghebalou (Algeria)
Vice-Chair and Secretary:	Dr. Anneke Trux (Germany)
Vice-Secretary:	Dr. Ali Umran Komuscu (Turkey)

4. In accordance with decision 14/COP.4, the secretariat invited additional experts, also listed in annex I, from relevant technical institutions with operational responsibilities in desertification and drought information systems. At the request of the Chair of the panel, additional experts were also invited.

5. The participants reviewed the background documents, including reports provided by Panel members and experts (annex II). Based on these documents, the participants engaged in a substantive discussion. The agenda for the meeting can be found in annex III.

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6. The discussions responded to UNCCD Article 16, which states, "The Parties agree, according to their respective capabilities, to integrate and coordinate the collection, analysis and exchange of relevant short-term and long-term data and information to ensure systematic observation of land degradation in affected areas and to understand better and assess the processes and effects of drought and desertification. This would help to accomplish, *inter alia*, early warning and advance planning for periods of adverse climatic variations in a form suited for practical applications by users at all levels, including local populations."

7. Recognizing the importance of building on existing operational early warning systems within the framework of national action programmes (NAPs) to combat desertification and drought, the participants reviewed and elaborated the four technical topics defined in decision 14/COP.4 and agreed to the conclusions covered in the following sections.

II. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF EARLY WARNING AND MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS, LINKING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF THE COLLECTION OF DATA, DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND MEASURING FOR DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS

Early warning systems (EWSs) for drought and food security have been operational for over 20 years; yet in some instances, famine still occurs and food security is not increasing. This is in spite of the fact that some systems have been improved so that they address not only famine but also food security. This may be an indication of some weaknesses in the current EWS information or institutional arrangements.

The panel noted several positive developments, including:

- Conceptual frameworks of EWSs;
- Improvements in data collection and analysis using remote sensing and Geographical Information System (GIS), in addition to conventional methods;
- Trained personnel.

However, major problems continue to retard the effectiveness of some of these systems, including:

- Weak institutional arrangements;
- Lack of trust/credibility among stakeholders;
- Poor communication networks;
- Lack of coordination among stakeholders;
- Untimely release of EW results;
- Use of information for political and economical reasons, or selfish ends;
- An unsupportive political environment.

Notwithstanding these problems, some successful systems exist. Even if successful, most EWSs stop at famine and do not provide protection from future famine incidents.

The participants saw the existing early warning and monitoring and assessment systems converging into a complementary framework in the future, thereby using the same institutional arrangements, similar datasets and indicators. This will improve their performance and cost-effectiveness. Thus, the conceptual and operational issues differentiating drought EWSs and desertification monitoring and assessments were revisited by the panel. The participants agreed that future effective performance and possibly combined operational frameworks may depend on the following:

1. Conceptually disentangling the complex relations between EWSs for drought and food security and monitoring and assessment of desertification

Early warning for drought prediction and assessment, and monitoring and assessment for desertification, are fundamentally interrelated yet operationally different activities. Parameters and methodologies applied for early warning of drought fall short of what would be required to realize a system for monitoring and assessment of desertification. Desertification is a phenomenon which is slow to develop. In this respect, the main areas requiring consideration, adjustment and inclusion are temporal scales and an enlargement of information on conditions.

There is a need to go beyond "state of the art" assessment and monitoring of desertification, to include vulnerability and risk assessment, using current and past data and information on the status of desertification. Such data would be derived from monitoring programmes for drought and desertification. Such a series of measurements are conducted with a view to providing a warning, should the trend become dramatic.

2. Vulnerability mapping and assessment

It was further agreed that the concept of vulnerability assessment should integrate biological, physical and socio-economic aspects, and management practices. A "system" for vulnerability assessment should not be reduced to a set of materials and data, but should be seen as an assemblage of:

- Methods (for obtaining data, analysing it, formatting, etc...);
- Practices (how things function in practice);
- Institutions and arrangements (rules and regulations for data collection, organizations undertaking data collection, analysis);
- Linkages between scientific institutions (data collection and analysis), decision-makers (action) and services (implementation),

combined in order to achieve an objective. Therefore, it was felt that vulnerability/risk mapping and assessments may be possible in the future. Comparison of the two systems is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of early warning/monitoring systems for drought and famine and desertification

	Drought	Desertification monitoring and assessment
Objective	Operational warning of impending crises of drought and food security in order to propose immediate response	Forewarning of land degradation in order to have proof of land degradation process and to provide decision-making support for policy making
Time scale	Short term: seasonal	Long term: several years
Response	Immediate action	In practice: project/programme approach
Level	Small scale	Large scale
Information needed on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Rainfall, aridity · Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), vegetation cover · Population pressure 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Crops and livestock · Food supply and consumption · Marketing and prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Land information · Socio-economic issues · Human activities
Harmonization of indicators	More or less common understanding of indicators to be used among major systems	At present no agreeable set of common benchmarks and indicators

In light of the above comparison, participants agreed that both types of systems share similar databases and indicators. As previously recommended and adopted by COP 4, monitoring and assessment of desertification should build on existing EWSs. However, whether the difference between drought and desertification EW/monitoring in terms of time scale and land-related indicators would need technically and institutionally separate facilities will depend on specific national, subregional and regional situations.

3. Clearly defining the elements of a system for desertification monitoring and assessment

Desertification monitoring and assessment in its widest sense would include a framework encompassing an array of activities over a number of parameters; table 2 includes some important elements.

The concept implies fundamental research and data collection that can provide results only in the long term. The uniform collection of dataset parameters is not always possible because of differences in prevailing local or national situations. In order to meet countries' expectations of obtaining results within a short term, the following proposals were made:

- Separate scales and details of datasets for policy-making from those for validating results;
- With regard to the limited capacities in most countries, it was proposed that an up-scaling approach is mandatory and not optional; small-scale and large-scale assessment for representative vulnerable areas has to be combined. Details given at the local level are not always important at the international level. However, sufficient details are needed in order to identify vulnerable areas;
- The system must be flexible; some of the data might be dropped, in a case of lack of capacity;
- Use a framework for linkages and for identifying the reasons for collecting the minimum information required;

- Use national resources assessment databases available in most countries which will entail coping with the realities prevailing in those countries;
- "Quick and indicative" assessment methodologies should be considered as part of the system.

Table 2. Elements for implementing desertification EW/monitoring systems

Data analysis system	Understand historical, current and future responses to human and animal pressures, natural processes, landscape vulnerability
Data layers	Land resources Human resources Management practices
Analyse pressure	Decipher human and animal pressure Understand landscape response Understand degradation types
Indigenous knowledge and desertification assessment	Obtain feedback from local people on scientific results
Operation of the EWS	Area approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basin or watershed approach for biophysical resources in stream-dominated areas • An administrative area approach for socio-economic variables • An administrative area approach for all variables in arid areas without surface drainage • Ensure vertical and horizontal integration of institutions engaged in EWSs • Ensure vertical and horizontal integration of institutions working in EWSs • Improve coordination with national development efforts • Desertification assessment should promote local anti-desertification actions

4. Closely linking the work of ad hoc panels on EWSs and on benchmarks and indicators

The UNCCD stresses the importance of monitoring and evaluation in order to provide better feedback and lessons learned, and to give scientific advice on the process of implementation of action programmes. In this regard, the OSS/CILSS/GRULAC/China Working Group on monitoring with regard to supporting decision making within UNCCD implementation has made several proposals:

- Inventory and follow-up of ongoing activities;
- Monitoring of implementation processes, using the criteria established by the UNCCD (participation, partnership, coordination etc.) and as adopted by the COP;
- Monitoring of policies adopted within the NAP;
- Monitoring and assessment of desertification;
- Monitoring of impact of NAP.

The last two are closely interlinked; indicators for impact monitoring of NAPs are being developed and tested.

5. Developing close links between activities on early warning and monitoring and assessment with traditional knowledge

Scientific data often requires calibration and validation; crosschecking and identifying collaborative evidence; and filling gaps and identifying explanations

of scientific research results. These often need contextual interpretation based on traditional and local knowledge in order to be relevant and sound. Nevertheless, it should not be a one-way flow of information; partnership and sustainability require mechanisms for feedback to local-level decision makers, including local government, communities, and resource users/owners.

6. Conclusions

- Reviewing lessons learned from drought early warning systems, the participants recognized that early warning is a concept which has developed mainly in the context of natural hazards, especially drought, with a view to improving food security. However, significant conceptual and scientific advancements could be made in existing systems which might apply to desertification as well.
- Recognizing linkages between drought EWSs and desertification, information on land degradation is also valuable for poverty reduction strategies and food security analyses. The accumulation of information on drought is important for desertification monitoring.
- Recognizing the links between benchmarks and indicators and drought EWSs, ongoing discussions and the testing of a common list of indicators for impact monitoring in several regions begin with definition and testing of general desertification monitoring indicators.
- In order to develop realistic assessments of local situations and to ensure local ownership, early warning systems should connect local communities at risk with the technical structures of EWSs.

7. Recommendations

The panel made the following recommendations:

- (a) Develop a common terminology in order to facilitate interaction;
- (b) Facilitate access to, and enhance the transparency of, databases;
- (c) Ensure that the systems are more demand driven and develop adequate subnational nodes;
- (d) Focus on developing decision-making rather than just keeping up with technological advances;
- (e) Build up real partnership in order to establish an enabling institutional and political environment;
- (f) Improve drought early warning systems by integrating land degradation information;
- (g) Build up desertification monitoring systems on existing drought early warning systems as much as possible;
- (h) Encourage joint efforts between operational EWSs and organizations working on impact indicators;

(i) Work with community groups responsible for data collection, with particular regard to women's participation;

(j) Collect and analyze a variety of socio-economic data, disaggregated by gender where possible, and conducted with participatory tools such as field observations and individual interviews, among other participatory tools;

(k) Discuss and validate results and develop strategies with local communities, taking account of local cultural practices.

**III. METHODS FOR AN APPROACHES TO THE PREDICTION OF DROUGHT AND
MONITORING OF DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY THE METHOD OF
ANALYZING VULNERABILITY TO DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION,
ESPECIALLY AT THE LOCAL, SUBNATIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS
WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO NEW TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

Discussions by the panel on this topic demonstrated that there are several methods being used for the prediction of drought which do not predict desertification. Clearly, there are also a number of approaches, influenced by various factors, and depending upon different situations, especially in the sourcing of data and analytical facilities available.

1. Data

To a large extent, both desertification monitoring and drought early warning require data from remote sensing and from field surveys. Field survey data can be used independently in their original form, or used for the validation of remotely sensed information. In addition, operational drought EWSs acquire and analyse the same field and remote sensing data required to monitor the extent and impacts of desertification.

The primary data used for desertification monitoring and drought early warning on a small scale are rainfall measurements and the remote sensing-derived Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI). Other remote sensing data sources are currently available, including data from new satellite systems in orbit. Such data, as well as data obtained from the field, can be used to demonstrate changes in vegetation cover and species composition.

Further, it was recognized that desertification monitoring requires the systematic tracking of land conditions, work not undertaken by most drought EWSs and which the older generation of satellites do not sufficiently cover.

2. Methods and approaches

(a) Remote sensing data and field data are currently used to analyse and map vulnerability to food insecurity and to desertification in the GIS environment.

(b) Remote sensing data are mostly dimensionless indices, which require ground-truthing and calibration to transform them into real units. Specifically, effective desertification monitoring requires quantifying vegetative conditions in their current status, as well as verification of previous vegetative conditions covering a period of more than 20 years; this requires reliable and accurate

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records, or the use of local knowledge which can only be obtained from the residents.

(c) New developments in data analysis and integration frameworks are being carried out for both desertification assessment and monitoring and drought EW by various national and international organizations in different regions. Of particular significance, it was noted, are the prospects of using new analytical procedures to derive indicators on land conditions, soil erosion models and vegetation structure and conditions, using digital information from a series of historical sets of high-resolution satellite images which cover several years. Results can be validated using local knowledge and interpretation of the effects of previous policy regimes on agriculture or natural resources management. This can influence the formulation of new policies.

(d) GIS technology can be utilized in handling several layers of huge data sets during such an analysis. Further, GIS is mandatory for upscaling approaches and the integration of socio-economic data. There are, for example, possibilities for integrating remote sensing data analysis results with grazing statistics at the community level. This approach is new and provides better information extraction and analysis capability. Unfortunately, the cost may be prohibitive for many developing nations. Therefore, in spite of the high scientific value of the technique, it may be difficult to apply in most affected nations.

(e) Monitoring of desertification at different scales requires images of different resolutions. At the local level, high resolution images are necessary, while at national and regional levels these can be tracked using low resolution satellite information. Furthermore, the cost of these low resolution products may not be a constraint; yet they can influence decision making at local to national levels, especially with respect to drought EW. New and alternative technologies may provide better information, so long as these are cost effective.

(f) Traditional knowledge must be incorporated into the data analysis system, and more emphasis should be given to such knowledge, especially where data generation through high technology may be difficult; this will help to validate the information and to obtain feedback.

(g) Another strategy to enable the technological and cost-effective utilization of all sources of information is first to identify areas vulnerable to degradation by means of reconnaissance level studies using low-resolution images. Then the area should be rapidly ground truthed, followed by the use of recent high-resolution remotely-sensed data to detail vulnerable areas. It is necessary to test and use this kind of technology and data by integrating it with socio-economic data through GIS, and to analyse the results in order to draw conclusions. Since cost is normally a factor, it should be broken down into hardware, software and data components. These may be partly one-time costs, but the collection of field information may be high for most of the developing affected countries.

3. New technological developments

The newly-launched very high-resolution satellites may provide data at a much higher resolution and are therefore better placed for tracking desertification. However, this will correspondingly require more powerful computers to handle the increased volume of data. These systems are already providing more information on land conditions than was previously possible.

Plans were also noted to launch high spectral resolution satellite systems for capturing more information on parameters necessary for predictive modelling.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion the panel agreed that:

- Long term data series (such as NDVI) and matching of different remote sensing technologies have recently made available a number of new applications. They have added value to scientific and decision-making processes at a global level, as well as contributing to better understanding of global land degradation issues, and to linkages between land degradation, climate change and modelling.
- Proof of land degradation through remote sensing is often useful to decision makers, in order to target investments.

5. Recommendations

(a) Capitalize on the experience of operational drought early warning systems in using remote sensing to track indicators which are also used to assess desertification namely, rainfall, vegetation, and land use;

(b) Capitalize on remote sensing and geographic information system experiences in assessing desertification through a wide range of physical, biological, social, and economic indicators;

(c) Improve the understandability and accessibility of remote sensing products for decision-makers and end-users;

(d) Promote dialogue between scientists and decision-makers at strategic decision points, especially during the NAP process;

(e) Integrate local communities in monitoring and assessment programs;

(f) Integrate traditional knowledge into monitoring and assessment activities.

IV. MECHANISMS TO FACILITATE AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS, IN PARTICULAR FOCUSING ON NATIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL NETWORKS ON THE PREDICTION OF DROUGHT AND MONITORING OF DESERTIFICATION

The regional thematic programme networks (TPNs) that have been developed under the UNCCD offer useful frameworks for promoting information exchange. In accordance with UNCCD regional annexes, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Northern Mediterranean and Eastern and Central Europe have been developing TPNs on specific topics. An overall review was presented to the panel on institutions offering mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of information between scientific and technological institutions, in particular focusing on national and subregional networks, for the prediction of drought and the monitoring of desertification. It was noted that the roles of such scientific and technological institutions under review are:

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- data collection, accessibility, and integration
- evaluation and prediction of drought and desertification and measures for preparedness
- dissemination of information to end-users on the application of EWSs and desertification monitoring and assessment, and strengthening appropriate response mechanisms
- research institutions producing information
- research institutions monitoring basic processes

Analysis showed that there are some differences in the institutional arrangements from one region to another due to historical and environmental situations and differences in priorities set by those regions.

1. Conclusions

The panel observed that a number of the networks cited showed some characteristics or indications which encompassed some key factors for a successful network: set clear common goals; establish well-defined intermediate goals to ensure feelings of progress; and encourage strong leadership.

The panel noted that the following categories of actors need to be recognized as partners in the networks at every level of operation. These actors involved in networks include, among others:

- (a) Non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- (b) Local communities;
- (c) Grassroots organizations;
- (d) Government technical agencies;
- (e) Political decision makers;
- (f) The private sector;
- (g) Research institutions;
- (h) Educational institutions;
- (i) International organizations.

2. Recommendations

(a) Move from a project to a programme approach, first establishing frameworks in the context of national, subregional, and regional action programmes;

(b) Reinforce or establish communication mechanisms by promoting direct contact among individuals representing the relevant institutions, and by providing the proper technical means, such as data bases, meta-data bases, and e-mail lists;

(c) Facilitate free access to data and information, through negotiating frameworks, with definite rules for direct and innovative arrangements and with

guidelines developed by regional, subregional and national organizations and networks;

(d) Cultivate clear agreements on institutional networking and on responsibilities and leadership at the regional, subregional and national levels;

(e) Promote ownership by network members, for example through common publications, Web sites, and other communication mechanisms;

(f) Enhance capacities through technical assistance and training.

**V. MORE DETAILED MEASURES FOR DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION PREPAREDNESS,
IN COOPERATION WITH THE APPROACHES, FROM HAZARD PROTECTION TO
RISK MANAGEMENT, ADOPTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY
FOR DISASTER REDUCTION (ISDR)**

The similarities of both the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) and the UNCCD processes with regard to minimizing the impacts of natural disasters, particularly drought, were considered. This has created an opportunity to develop synergies and linkages between the UNCCD and ISDR (which succeeded IDNDR in 1999) in areas of drought and desertification. The main point to be noted is the ISDR's goal of moving from short-term disaster protection approaches to risk management strategies which focus on disaster prevention in the long-term, and which embrace sustainable development. It was also noted that the UNCCD promotes sustainable development and encourages the inclusion of NAPs in National Development Frameworks.

The purpose of the national action programmes is to identify the factors contributing to desertification and also the practical measures necessary to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. Consequently, national action programmes constitute the fundamental framework for desertification preparedness.

The socio-economic and political impacts of drought have a long history in some drylands of the world. In recent years, it has been shown that the economic impact of drought can be very serious. It causes serious social disruption, reduced food and crop production, health problems, reduced hydropower generation, conflicts over resources and political insecurity. This is in spite of the fact that droughts are expected events, for example in arid and semi-arid regions in Africa.

To overcome some of these problems, especially in the use of information for planning purposes, participatory planning in EWSs was considered. This approach emphasizes the importance of involving the people at risk, the communication and exchange of information, methods of raising awareness, planning, and participatory monitoring and evaluation. In order to identify a realistic assessment of local situations and to ensure ownership of measures to be taken, EWSs should not be based entirely on scientific and technical information, but should include communities at risk as well.

1. Conclusions

- Existing and even improved EWSs in Africa have not necessarily led to effective drought mitigation
- Weaknesses in the EWSs include: (a) weakness in EWSs information dissemination and use, (b) institutional constraints including coordination problems, (c) logistical constraints leading to untimely responses, (d) political constraints and (e) the lack of inclusion of participatory planning approaches
- Few countries are systematically adopting drought risk management approaches instead of continuing with drought hazard protection
- The use of EWS data and information for long-term national development programmes and strategies intended to minimize or prevent drought and desertification hazards is not apparent. In other words, information on drought and desertification is not used adequately in national planning
- There are few examples of measures being undertaken for desertification preparedness, although examples relating to drought preparedness abound

2. Recommendations

Detailed definitions of, and measures for, desertification preparedness and for combating desertification must be part of the NAP process. Because the NAP process is a consultative process which includes all stakeholders, the guiding principles for such measures are:

- (a) Create appropriate conditions for the participation of local resource users in the planning, implementation and evaluation of local action programmes;
- (b) Create appropriate conditions for decentralization of decision-making in land management;
- (c) Create appropriate mechanisms for funding at the local level;
- (d) Assure communication and consultation among key stakeholders;
- (e) Reinforce local capacities through training and the sharing of experiences;
- (f) Negotiate partnership arrangements;
- (g) Arrange appropriate NAP monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

In accordance with these principles, the panel recommends that organizations carry out desertification assessment and monitoring in the context of desertification preparedness plans, especially through vulnerability and risk assessments which would estimate the possible magnitudes of problems within different scenarios. This approach should facilitate the preparation of suitable local interventions and action programmes to combat the problems.

Achieving this form of desertification preparedness depends on the following:

- (a) Surveying existing information;
- (b) Using scientifically sound information on desertification which integrates traditional knowledge;
- (c) Establishing feedback mechanisms with local and grassroots organizations;
- (d) Integrating cultural considerations into desertification countermeasures.

All countries host a range of institutions for national development. Appropriate synergies between these institutions and the principal actors involved in the NAP, especially local resource users, research and development institutions engaged in desertification activities, administrative offices and local representatives, could produce more effective responses to prepare for, and to combat desertification.

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Annex 1

**PARTICIPANTS AT THE AD HOC PANEL MEETING
ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS**

Members of the ad hoc panel

Ms. Nana Bolashvili	Georgia
Dr. Edmundo Garcia Moya	Mexico
Mr. Abdellah Ghebalou	Algeria
Dr. Ali Umran Komuscu	Turkey
Mr. Octavio Perez Pardo	Argentina
Dr. Valentin Sofroni	Moldova
Dr. Anneke Trux	Germany
Dr. Kazuhiko Takeuchi	Japan

Consultant

Mr. Ruben K. Sinange	Kenya
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Experts of relevant institutions

Mr. Alhassane Adama Diallo	Centre Regional AGRHYMET, Niger
Dr. Patrick Gonzalez	U.S. Geological Survey, the United States of America
Dr. Patrick Hostert	University of Trier, Germany
Dr. Amal Kar	Central Arid Zone Research Institute, India
Mr. Haruo Miyata	Global Environment Forum, Japan
Dr. Tadakuni Miyazaki	Yamanashi Institute of Environmental Science, Japan
Ms. Hortense Palm	Organisation Internationale de Recherche et de Formation Technique, Mali
Dr. Masato Shinoda	Tokyo Metropolitan University, Japan

Annex II

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE AD HOC PANEL ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Background documents

1. Decision 14/COP.4 (Early warning systems)
2. ICCD/COP(4)/CST/4 (Report of the ad hoc panel on early warning systems)
3. Document ICCD/COP(3)/CST/6 (Early Warning Systems: existing experiences of Early Warning Systems and specialized institutions operating in this field)
4. Towards an Early Warning System for Desertification. Dr. Amal Kar and Dr. Kazuhiko Takeuchi, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan.
5. Advances in Desertification Monitoring and Drought Early Warning. Dr. Patrick Gonzalez, U.S. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
6. Mechanisms to facilitate an exchange of information related to early warning systems between scientific and technological institutions, in particular focusing on national and subregional networks, for the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification. Mr. Haruo Miyata, Global Environmental Forum, Tokyo, Japan.
7. Measures for drought and desertification preparedness, with particular reference to African countries. Mr. Ruben Sinange, Nairobi, Kenya.

Conference room documents

1. Remote Sensing Driven Early Warning Systems for Desertification and Land Degradation, Results and Conclusions from DeMon-II: An Integrated Approach to Assess and Monitor Desertification Processes in the Mediterranean Basin. Department of Remote Sensing, Faculty of Geography and Geosciences, University of Trier, Trier, Germany.
2. Proceedings of UNCCD Regional Meetings for Asia, Beijing, China, July 22-27, 1999: Asia-Africa Technical Workshop on Early Warning Systems held from 22-23 July, 1999.
3. La Planification Participative dans le Système d'Alerte Précoce. Ms. Hortense Palm, Bamako, Mali.
4. Système d'Alerte Précoce: Contribution du Centre Regional AGRHYMET. Mr. Alhassan Adama Diallo, Niamey, Niger.

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Annex III

AD HOC PANEL MEETING ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS
Fuui-Yoshida City, Japan, 4-8 June 2001

Agenda

Location: Yamanashi Institute for Environmental Sciences, Fuji-Yoshida City,
Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan

Monday, 4 June 2001

- 09.30 - 10.00 Registration
10.00 - 10.45 Opening session - Opening remarks by:
- Mr. Hidetoshi UKJTA, Director for the Global Environment
Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan
- Mr. Katsunori SUZUKI, Director for the Global Environmental
Issues Division, Ministry of the Environment, Japan
- Mr. Kimihiko NAGANUMA, Deputy Director General, the Yamanashi
Prefecture on behalf of Mr. Ken AMANO, Governor of the Yamanashi
Prefecture
- Mr. Ahmed Cissoko, Senior Scientific Advisor, United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification
- 10.45 - 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 - 11.30 Opening remarks by Chairman of ad hoc panel
11.30 - 11.40 Remarks by the Representative of the UNCCD secretariat
11.40 - 12.30 Appointment of Topic Chairs and Rapporteurs
- 12.30 - 14.00 Lunch break
- Topic 1: Critical analysis of the performance of early warning
and monitoring and assessment systems, linking traditional
knowledge and early warning systems, especially in the areas of
the collection of data, dissemination of information and
measuring for drought preparedness.
- 14.00 - 15.00 Presentation of Topic 1
15.00 - 16.15 Discussion of Topic 1
16.15 - 16.30 Coffee break
16.30 - 17.30 Discussion of Topic 1

Tuesday, 5 June 2001

Topic 2: Methods for and approaches to the prediction of drought
and monitoring of desertification, particularly the method of
analyzing vulnerability to drought and desertification,
especially at the local, subnational and national levels, with
special regard to new technological developments.

09.00 - 10.00	Presentation of Topic 2
10.00 - 11.00	Discussion of Topic 2
11.00 - 11.15	Coffee break
11.15 - 12.30	Discussion of Topic 2
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 - 16.00	Working groups on Topics 1 and 2
16.00 - 16.15	Coffee break
16.15 - 17.30	Conclusion of Topics 1 and 2

Wednesday, 6 June 2001

Topic 3: Mechanisms to facilitate an exchange of information between scientific and technological institutions, in particular focusing on national and subregional networks on the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification

09.00 - 10.45	Presentation of Topic 3
10.45 - 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 - 12.30	Discussion of Topic 3
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch break

Topic 4: More detailed measures for drought and desertification preparedness, in cooperation with the approaches, from hazard protection to risk management, adopted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

14.00 - 16.00	Presentation of Topic 4
16.00 - 16.15	Coffee break
16.15 - 17.30	Discussion of Topic 4

Thursday, 7 June 2001

09.00 - 10.45	Working groups on Topics 3 and 4
10.45 - 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 - 12.30	Conclusion of Topics 3 and 4
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 - 16.00	Drafting
16.00 - 16.15	Coffee break
16.15 - 17.30	Drafting (continuation)

Friday, 8 June 2001

09.00 - 11.30	Drafting conclusion by Rapporteur of AHP/EWS
11.30 - 12.15	Adoption of the Report
12.15 - 12.30	Closing ceremony
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 - 17.30	Field visit (experimental sites on reforestation and biodiversity)

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Decision 14/COP.5

Early warning systems

The Conference of the Parties,

Considering the reports and recommendations of the ad hoc panels on early warning systems¹ as well as the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology²,

Recalling decision 14/COP.4 to reappoint an ad hoc panel on early warning systems,

1. *Requests* the secretariat to seek the necessary resources to publish and distribute in a suitable form, as widely as possible, the report together with the background papers submitted to the reappointed ad hoc panel on early warning systems;

2. *Invites* the Parties, according to their financial and technical capacities, to carry out pilot studies on early warning systems utilizing the recommendations of the ad hoc panel, and to report on progress to the CST at an appropriate session;

3. *Encourages* Parties and international organizations to provide technical and financial support to developing country Parties wishing to carry out such pilot studies on early warning systems.

*11th plenary meeting
12 October 2001*

¹ ICCD/COP (4) /CST/4 and ICCD/COP (5) /CST/4.

² ICCD/COP (5) /INF.6.



**UNITED
NATIONS**



**Convention to Combat
Desertification**

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ICCD/COP (4) /CST/4
30 October 2000

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Committee on Science and Technology
Fourth session
Bonn, 12-14 December 2000
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Report of the ad hoc Panel

Note by the secretariat

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1. Introduction

1. By decision 14/COP.3, the Conference of the Parties of UNCCD appointed an ad hoc panel of 10 experts "to review and elaborate on the following technical topics emerging from national reports of Parties and regional forums on implementation of the Convention:

(a) Data collection, accessibility, and integration;

(b) Evaluation and prediction of drought and desertification, and measures for preparedness, in cooperation with the follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

(c) Dissemination of information to end-users on the applications of early warning systems and desertification monitoring and assessment, and strengthening of appropriate response mechanisms, particularly in the national action programmes to combat desertification."

2. The ad hoc Panel convened in Bonn, Germany, from 31 May to 3 June 2000. The ad hoc Panel members who attended are listed in annex I. The Panel selected the following officers:

Chair:	Dr. Kazuhiko Takeuchi (Japan)
Vice-Chair:	Mr. Abdellah Ghebalou (Algeria)
Vice-Chair and Secretary:	Dr. Anneke Trux (Germany)
Vice-Secretaries:	Dr. Patricio Aceituno (Chile)
	Dr. Ali Umrhan Komuscu (Turkey)

3. In accordance with decision 14/COP.3, experts from relevant technical institutions with operational responsibilities in desertification and drought information systems also participated in the meeting (see annex I).

4. The participants reviewed the background documents, including reports provided by Panel members and experts (see annex II).

5. Based on those documents, the participants developed a common understanding of the terms of reference and engaged in a substantive discussion.

6. The discussions responded to article 16 of UNCCD, which states that "The Parties agree, according to their respective capabilities, to integrate and coordinate the collection, analysis and exchange of relevant short-term and long-term data and information to ensure systematic observation of land degradation in affected areas and to understand better and assess the processes and effects of drought and desertification. This would help accomplish, *inter alia*, early warning and advance planning for periods of adverse climatic variations in a form suited for practical applications by users at all levels, including local populations."

7. Recognizing the importance of building on existing operational early warning systems within the framework of National Action Programmes to Combat Desertification (NAP), the participants reviewed and elaborated the three technical topics defined in decision 14/COP.3 and agreed to the conclusions covered in the following sections.

2. Data collection, accessibility and integration

The participants recognize that data collection, access, and integration are the responsibilities of Governments at the national level. National Action Programmes should address these data responsibilities and define clear objectives for data collection, access and integration of programmes as well as the need for better data access.

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Data collection

- It is far more important to maintain and strengthen existing observation networks than to expand or create new systems. Hydrological and meteorological networks in many desertification-affected countries, especially in the developing regions are falling into disrepair. *The Panel recommends that Parties provide adequate support to maintain existing observation networks.*
- Early warning systems should capitalize on the techniques and methods developed already by researchers and operational programmes and operationalize them as soon as possible.
- The participants underlined the need for data reliability. Metadata, which fully describes the details of data format, sources and calculation, should accompany every database. Organizations involved in data collection must pay attention to standardization and compatibility in data content and format and compatibility among scales of analyses, from local to subnational, national, subregional, regional, and global levels.
- Where appropriate, the local population should be actively involved in the data collection process and efforts must be made to ensure that useful information is conveyed back to them.
- Given the extend of the drought and desertification problem, data collection should span a range of spatial and temporal scales and should serve long-term planning.
- Some indicators are common to both drought early warning systems and desertification information systems.

Data access

The participants recognized the following constraints:

- Inadequate infrastructure
- High costs in cases when data are treated as commercial property
- Political restrictions, e.g. national security
- Lack of protocols for data exchange between institutions

In order to improve data accessibility, the Panel recommends the following:

- Easy and unlimited public access to databases is a prerequisite for effective early warning systems: However, the issue of data sovereignty must be taken into account in facilitating universal access to the different actors involved
- Define appropriate distribution and pricing policies in order to have the easiest and most cost-effective access to data and information for the different categories of users
- Take advantage of the recent development of technical tools especially in telecommunication in order to facilitate decentralized data management and access

Data integration

- The participants recognize the development in the use of such tools as geographical information systems (GIS) for faster and more efficient integration of data from different sources. Attention should be paid to developing capacities at national, subregional and regional levels to take advantage of such tools and techniques.
- The Panel invites the Parties to encourage donors who are in a position to provide assistance to support such capacity-building activities in developing countries.
- Early warning systems operate through a multidisciplinary approach. Therefore, partnerships between different disciplines that strengthen cooperation and transparency will advance the work of early warning systems.

3. Evaluation and prediction of drought and desertification, and measures for preparedness, in cooperation with the follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

For its deliberations, the participants recall the definitions in Article 1 of the Convention of "desertification," "drought," "combating desertification", and "mitigating the effects of drought".

The Panel and the experts also examined early warning systems in the light of the approach adopted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). This approach proceeds from hazard protection to risk management through four stages: public awareness, commitment from community leaders and public authorities, implementation of measures to enhance the resilience of communities to disaster, and the mitigation of social and economic losses.

General comments

- Early warning for drought prediction and assessment, and monitoring and assessment for desertification are fundamentally interrelated yet operationally different activities. Currently no operational early warning system exists for desertification.
- In the short-term, early warning systems for drought prediction and assessment provide information for contingency response planning. Desertification monitoring and assessment will provide information in the long-term to improve systems of community-based natural resource management and institutional capacities.
- Desertification monitoring systems should be built in connection with the operational drought early warning systems.
- Early warning systems for drought and desertification monitoring systems must examine the full range of biological, physical, climatic, social and economic factors involved in desertification.
- In the interest of sustainability, operating costs of early warning systems must be taken into account. The profitability of early warning systems is related to their utilization.

Assessment of drought

- Drought is a natural hazard originating from a deficiency of precipitation that results in a water shortage for some activities or some groups. Lack of precipitation occurring over an extended period of time, usually a season or more in length, is often associated with other climatic factors (such as

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high temperatures, high winds and low relative humidity) and can aggravate the severity of the event. From a hydrological viewpoint, extended shortage of rainfall forces a corresponding flow variability in dryland rivers, and consequently in runoff and in soil moisture. The latter, of critical importance to crop productivity, is affected not only by the amount and seasonal incidence of rainfall, but also by the ability of soils to absorb and store water and by moisture losses through evapotranspiration.

- For effective assessment of drought, systematic observation, collection, analysis and exchange of meteorological, climatological and hydrological data and information are necessary. National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) are actively involved in these activities and in the development of relevant techniques for the assessment of drought. The Panel emphasized the importance of enhancing national climatological, meteorological and hydrological capabilities for timely assessment of drought and its dissemination of information as enshrined in article 10 of the UNCCD.
- It is important to remember that drought severity is dependent not only on the duration, intensity and geographical extent of precipitation deficiency, but also on the demands made by human activities and vegetation on region's water supplies. Drought assessment efforts must take into account the influence of these factors.
- Drought assessment can use climate, hydrological, physical, biological and socio-economic indicators. These indicators can be used alone or in combination and sometimes two or more indicators can be combined to form derived indices. Meteorologists and climatologists have made considerable progress in drought assessment and have developed a number of indices. There are a number of indices in use for drought assessment and these provide specific information on a range of issues related to drought assessment.

Prediction of drought

The socio-economic upheavals that have occurred, especially in Africa, over the past few decades due to drought, have underlined the urgent need to predict interannual climatic variations for drought, prediction still heavily relies on the monitoring of observed patterns of monthly and seasonal rainfall, streamflows, groundwater levels, snowpack and other parameters. Developing predictive skills for large geographical regions on monthly and seasonal timescales (e.g. physically and statistically based Global Circulation Models (GCMs)), offers promise for increasingly useful forecasts of the onset, severity and duration of drought.

Climate variability brings lower precipitation in some areas and higher precipitation in others. CLIVAR, a research programme on climate variability and prediction for the 21st century, in the framework of the World Climate Research Programme and the advances made in the use of the predictive properties of Sea Surface Temperature (SST) and ocean-atmosphere coupling processes have led to improvements in drought prediction. For example, a strong coherence of climate anomalies in the Asia and Pacific region is associated with El Niño - Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon; this is the basis for current prediction on seasonal time scales. Practicable, usable seasonal and inter-annual forecasts of precipitation in areas with a strong ENSO signal are becoming more reliable and can be made with longer lead times. Significant advances have been made in the past three years through the organization of climate outlook forums in different regions of the world under the auspices of the Climate Prediction and Information Services (CLIPS) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in issuing climate forecasts. Drought related forecasts were issued during the

1997-1998 El Niño event and were stated in terms of probability of below average, average or above average precipitation. Some meteorological services have developed a drought watch service, utilizing real-time hydrological and meteorological data.

The Panel highlights that augmenting the growing capability to provide seasonal and inter-annual climate forecasts is essential to combat the effects of drought in diverse regions of the world. Data from meteorological satellites are being used for prediction of rainfall and remotely sensed data from geostationary satellites and polar orbiting satellite are being used as input data for seasonal rainfall prediction. Early warning systems currently provide maps of the location of socio-economic groups vulnerable to drought and organizations involved in drought mitigation urgently need this information for quick action.

Assessment of desertification

Assessment of desertification depends on the availability of physical, biological, social and economic information from different sources. The most useful parameters, among others, are climate, land-use and cover change, vegetative productivity, soil productivity, land management practices, demographic factors as well as institutional parameters.

The Overall Assessment of Desertification (OAD) proposed by the UNCCD secretariat will provide information on trends of degradation of natural resources, specifically water, vegetation and soils as well as the main socio-economic and driving factors on a global scale. National, subregional and regional desertification assessments should provide data on a smaller scale.

The Panel concludes that it is essential to concentrate assessment on the elements that can eventually be influenced.

Identification of populations at risk and conducting desertification assessment in the context of sustainable development is crucial to programmes that are beneficial to local communities.

Prediction of desertification

- Desertification is difficult to predict because of the complexity of the interaction of the multiple driving forces and its long-term nature. Therefore the Panel suggests using "monitoring" rather than "prediction" where desertification is concerned.
- At least two types of analysis that currently help assess desertification vulnerability are current vulnerability analyses produced by operational drought early warning systems and global desertification assessments.
- One key end product of desertification monitoring systems will be the spatial identification of populations at risk to promote timely appropriate action.

Measures for drought preparedness

Provision of information for preparedness is an integral part of an early warning system and should be designed to help each population at risk to effectively prepare for risks and hazards.

The information on measures for preparedness must take into account a range of coping strategies of the population at risk as well as their perception of risks and the costs to them, particularly in proportion to the expected benefits.

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Public information and education about the risk of drought and desertification also improve the acceptance of the information concerning preparedness by strengthening people's capability to understand and interpret the information on risks.

Long-term adaptation involves the development of community based natural resources management plans, developed and implemented through a participatory approach, and making full use of traditional knowledge.

Recommendations

- Use the proposed UNCCD Overall Assessment of Desertification (OAD) as a baseline for monitoring at the global level.
- Establish National desertification information systems and include country profiles on desertification.
- Operational drought early warning systems should incorporate desertification monitoring into their activities and integrate systems to address both drought and desertification rather than establishing separate systems.
- Establish benchmarks and monitor indicators of desertification over time and strengthen institutional arrangements at all levels in accordance with the methodology developed by the ad hoc panel on benchmarks and indicators and contained in ICCD/COP(3)/CST/3/Add.1, and produce maps of vulnerability to desertification.
- Integrate early warning results with the results of other climate prediction systems such as the Climate Information and Prediction Services (CLIPS) and the Climate Variability Programme (CLIVAR).
- Encourage the further development and application of seasonal climate forecasting and long-range forecasting as tools for early warning systems.
- Establish institutional arrangements that improve coordination at the local, subnational, national, subregional, regional and global levels.

4. Dissemination of information to end-users on the applications of early warning systems and desertification monitoring and assessment, and strengthening of appropriate response mechanisms, particularly in the national action programmes to combat desertification

A. Dissemination of information

Methods and means

- The methods for information dissemination for drought and desertification may differ both between and within countries depending on the user and levels of development. Methods and means include the following:
 - Local satellite receivers located at village level to provide one way video and two way audio communication
 - Digital radio with printing capabilities
 - Internet
 - Workshops, farmers meetings and village meetings
 - Extension programmes
 - Knowledge centres
 - Traditional methods of information dissemination such as cultural events and religious meetings

- The type of information to be disseminated needs to be well defined. It is also important to ensure that the information be conveyed to communities rather than to individuals. The information also needs to be relayed with proposals for action to local communities.
- Vulnerability analysis provides an effective tool to disseminate information contained in early warning systems
 - Vulnerability analysis combines historical series of bio-physical and socio-economic data
 - For desertification carrying capacity analysis can indicate populations at risk
 - Vulnerability mapping assists in priority setting in natural resources management policies in time and space
 - Integration of vulnerability assessments at various spatial and temporal scales can assist in rational distribution of scarce resources.

Guiding principles

- The guiding principles for information dissemination include the following:
 - Use of local languages
 - Set priorities in information and response
 - Adapt scale of information to users
 - Monitor the impact of information
 - Let users define information needs and adapt time, place and means of communication to local use
 - Relate drought warning information to support options for the populations concerned

B. Strengthening of appropriate response mechanisms within NAPs

- NAPs need to identify key decision-making authorities at national and local level for issuing warning and coordinating response.
- The information must be streamlined and the information flow needs to be both vertical and horizontal. It is always important to target high-risk areas that are more prone to desertification. Telecommunication infrastructure also needs to be in place particularly in high-risk areas.
- Response to desertification and drought will be different. It is necessary to look at the response at the three levels listed below. It is important to stress that response mechanisms must be able to meet the needs of the local populations, so as to enable them to use the information effectively.
 - Response mechanisms to drought
 - Short-term response measures have embedded crisis management elements such as water and food and supply
 - Medium- and long-term gradual and broadening mechanisms cited below for desertification also serve as medium- and long-term mechanisms for the mitigation of the effects of drought
 - Utilize existing tools of other early warning systems and test them at local level

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- Response mechanisms to desertification
 - short term response measure are mostly technical measures
 - gradual response mechanisms: change of behaviour, production patterns, agricultural systems and consumption patterns at local level
 - Broader measures: overall sustainable development strategies, change of agricultural policies,
 - Utilize tools existing in other early warning systems and test them at local level
- Response mechanisms to both drought and desertification
 - at local, subnational, national, subregional, regional and global levels
 - defining which response has to come from which level
 - non-governmental organizations, with assistance from the Government, have responsibility at the local level
 - Assess land capability criteria: soil, slope, microclimate etc.

Implementation of the response measures within NAP

- Include responses in the NAPs
- Establish multidisciplinary national expert networks for drought early warning systems and monitoring and assessment of desertification
- Promote structured international exchanges on drought early warning systems and the monitoring and assessment of desertification

Concluding recommendations

Concluding, the Panel makes the observation that further work is needed in order to elaborate on pending questions on early warning systems and monitoring and assessment of desertification. Whereas ISDR already is in charge of an ad hoc group for disaster reduction including drought as a natural disaster, there is not such a platform regarding the monitoring and assessment of desertification.

With regard to the pending questions:

- Critical analysis of the performance of early warning and monitoring, and assessment systems;
- Open questions on methods and approaches for the prediction of drought and monitoring desertification;
- Mechanisms to facilitate exchange between scientific and technical institutions
- More detailed measures for drought preparedness

The Panel recommends to the COP to reappoint the present Panel on drought early warning systems and monitoring and assessment of desertification to keep the actual members in order to assure continuity and to ask the Panel to elaborate in depth on the above-mentioned questions.

Annex I

PARTICIPANTS TO THE AD HOC PANEL MEETING ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC PANEL ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Mr. Patricio Aceituno	Chile
Mr. Abdellah Ghebalou	Algeria
Dr. Ali Umran Komuscu	Turkey
Mr. Zengyuan Li	China
Mr. Richard Muyungi	United Republic of Tanzania
Mr. Octavio Perez Pardo	Argentina
Dr. Valentin Sofroni	Republic of Moldova
Dr. Kazuhiko Takeuchi	Japan
Dr. Anneke Trux	Germany

Consultant

Dr. Ajai	Department of Space, Space Applications, ISSRO, India
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Experts of relevant institutions

Mr. Alhassane Adama Diallo	Centre Regional AGRHYMET, Niger
Mr. Andrea de Vecchia	Centro Studi per l'applicazione dell'Informatica in Agricoltura (CeSIA), Italy
Dr. Patrick Gonzalez	United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United States of America
Mr. Richard Masundire	Southern African Development Community (SADC), Zimbabwe
Mr. Haruo Miyata	Global Environmental Forum, Japan
Mr. Mauro Pedalino	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy
Dr. M.V.K. Sivakumar	World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Switzerland
Mr. Papa Boubacar Soumare	Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE), Senegal

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Annex II

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE AD HOC PANEL ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Background documents

1. Decision 14/COP.3 (Early Warning Systems)
2. Document ICCD/COP(3)/CST/6 (Early Warning Systems: existing experiences of Early Warning Systems and specialized institutions operating in this field)
3. Document ICCD/COP(3)/CRP.1 (Early Warning Systems and Desertification: report of the workshop held in Niamey, Niger, from 25 to 28 October 1999)
4. Document ICCD/COP(3)/CRP.2 (Asia-Africa technical workshop on Early Warning Systems: report of the workshop held in Beijing, China, from 22 to 23 July 1999)
5. Early Warning Systems and Desertification. Paper presented to the workshop held in Niamey, Niger, from 25 to 28 October 1999. CeSIA, Florence, Italy.
6. Early Warning Systems in the context of Drought and Desertification. A background working paper for the UNCCD Ad Hoc Panel of Experts' Meeting to be held in May, 2000. Ajai, ISRO, Ahmedabad, India.

Conference room documents

1. Comments on the background paper to be discussed at the UNCCD ad hoc Panel Meeting on Early Warning Systems. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Rome, Italy.
2. Desertification Status and Trends in China. Zengyuan Li, Institute of Forest Resources Information Technique, Chinese Academy of Forestry.
3. Early Warning Systems in the Context of the UNCCD. Haruo Miyata, Committee for Research on Combating Desertification and Land Degradation in Asia and Africa, Global Environmental Forum.
4. Overall Assessment of Desertification (OAD). Background document aiming to support discussions to be held at an expert consultation on the OAD, foreseen to be held end 1999, at the UNCCD secretariat headquarters. FAO, Rome, Italy.
5. Preliminary plan for monitoring the impacts of desertification and climate change. Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET), United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Patrick Gonzalez, USAID, Washington, D.C., 29 May 2000.
6. Report on National and Local Capabilities for Early Warning. Andrew Maskrey, first author, Convener of International Working Group, Member of the IDNDR Scientific and Technical Committee, and General Coordinator of LA RED (Network for Social Studies on Disaster Prevention in Latin America). IDNDR Secretariat, Geneva, Switzerland, October 1997.
7. UNCCD ad hoc Panel on Early Warning Systems. Andrea Di Vecchia, CeSIA-Accademia dei Georgofili, Florence, Italy.
8. Views on early warning systems. Prof. Takashi Kosaki, Kyoto University and Prof. Masato Shinoda, Tokyo Metropolitan University. Excerpts from the Report on the study for promotion of the measures to combat

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desertification, FY 1999. Edited and published by the Global Environmental Forum of Japan for the Environment Agency, Japan, March 2000.

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Annex III

AGENDA OF THE AD HOC PANEL MEETING ON EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Wednesday, 31 May 2000

- 0930 - 1000 Registration
- 1000 - 1030 Welcoming statement by Representatives of the Arbeitnehmer-Zentrum Königswinter (AZK), Dr. Eberhard Pies, Director and Ms. Mary Nisa Punnamparambil, Education & Training Officer
- 1030 - 1100 Remarks by the Representative of CCD Secretariat
- 1100 - 1130 Appointment of the Chairman of AHP/EWS, of topic Chairs and Rapporteurs
- 1130 - 1200 Statement by the Chairman of AHP/EWS

Topic 1: Data collection, accessibility and integration

- 1400 - 1430 Presentation of Topic 1
- 1430 - 1615 Discussion of Topic 1
- 1630 - 1730 Discussion of Topic 1

Thursday, 1 June 2000

- 0900 - 1045 Conclusion of Topic 1

Topic 2: Evaluation and prediction of drought and desertification, and measures for preparedness, in cooperation with the follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

- 1100 - 1130 Presentation of Topic 2
- 1130 - 1230 Discussion of Topic 2
- 1430 - 1615 Discussion of Topic 2
- 1630 - 1730 Conclusion of Topic 2

Friday, 2 June 2000

Topic 3: Dissemination of information to end users on the applications of early warning systems and desertification monitoring and assessment, and strengthening of appropriate response mechanisms, particularly in the National Action Programmes to combat desertification

- 0900 - 0930 Presentation of Topic 3
- 0930 - 1045 Discussion of Topic 3
- 1100 - 1230 Discussion of Topic 3

1430 - 1615	Conclusion of Topic 3
1630 - 1800	Discussion on the conclusions and recommendations of the AHP/EWS



Saturday, 3 June 2000

0930 - 1230	Drafting of report by the <i>Rapporteurs</i> of AHP/EWS
1430 - 1830	Adoption of the report
1830 - 1900	Closing Ceremony

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Decision 14/COP.4

Early warning systems

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 14/COP.3 to appoint an ad hoc panel on early warning systems,

Recalling also the follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Taking note of the report of the ad hoc panel on Early Warning Systems^{1/}, and the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on this subject^{2/},

Taking note also of the existence of networks of early warning systems and desertification monitoring and assessment at the national, subregional and regional levels,

1. Re-appoints an ad hoc panel on early warning systems to be composed of 10 experts in order to examine further the following:

(a) Critical analysis of the performance of early warning and monitoring and assessment systems, linking traditional knowledge and early warning systems, especially in the areas of the collection of data, dissemination of information and measuring for drought preparedness;

(b) Methods for and approaches to the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification, particularly the method of analysing vulnerability to drought and desertification, especially at the local, subnational and national levels, with special regard to new technological developments;

(c) Mechanisms to facilitate an exchange of information between scientific and technological institutions, in particular focusing on national and subregional networks on the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification;

(d) More detailed measures for drought and desertification preparedness, in cooperation with the approaches, from hazard protection to risk management, adopted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

2. Requests the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements for the functioning of the ad hoc panel, including the provision of additional expertise, particularly in the area of participatory planning and legal advice.

12th Plenary
22 December 2000

^{1/} ICCD/COP(4)/CST/4.

^{2/} ICCD/COP(4)/INF.7.



E

Other Documents on UN Conferences

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A/CONF.191/11	<i>8 June 2001</i> Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. Brussels, Belgium, 14-20 May 2001. Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. (See: para. 73-77).....	403

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Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space

United Nations Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Disaster Management for Africa

(Addis Ababa, 1-5 July 2002)

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I. Introduction

A. Background and objectives

1. The Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) and the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development recommended that activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications promote collaborative participation among Member States at both the regional and international levels, emphasizing the development of knowledge and skills in developing countries.¹
2. Disaster management was singled out as one of the areas of focus. Earth observation satellites and other space-based technologies provide important and unique solutions in all disaster management areas: disaster mitigation, disaster preparedness, disaster relief and disaster rehabilitation. Such solutions are already an integral part of disaster management activities in many developed and even developing countries.
3. Although national capabilities in the use of space technologies in developing countries are increasing at a significant rate, there is still a need to support in a more direct way the transfer of available solutions to be used for disaster management activities, while at the same time proposing methodological approaches that are tailored to the specific needs of a country.
4. In order to contribute to increasing the use of space technology for disaster management in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition, the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, within the framework of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, is organizing five regional workshops on the use of space technology for disaster management, bringing together practitioners and space agencies that have already developed space-based technology solutions and those responsible for dealing with disaster management and space technology in developing countries.
5. The first of the five regional workshops was held in La Serena, Chile, from 13 to 17 November 2000, for the benefit of countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Almost 200 participants attended, various partnerships were formed and pilot projects are at present being designed for future implementation. The second of the regional workshops was organized in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and was held in Addis Ababa from 1 to 5 July 2002.
6. The regional workshops are the initial step towards an integrated approach, with the final objective being the incorporation of the use of space technologies in a sustainable manner into operational disaster management programmes around the world through the definition and implementation of pilot projects. In addition to the workshops and pilot projects, the approach also includes a training component and the presentation of results to high-level disaster managers and decision makers from national and international institutions, including funding institutions.
7. ECA, within its harnessing information for development programme, implements and supports activities aimed at assisting African Member States to improve the understanding and use of space-based information technologies for decision-making in the various sectors of development. The United Nations

Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Disaster Management for Africa, held in Addis Ababa from 1 to 5 July 2002, contributed directly to the work ECA had been carrying out in Africa in that area, highlighting the importance of ECA involvement not only in co-organizing the Workshop but also in the many follow-up activities that will result from it.

8. The specific objectives of the Workshop were: (a) to increase awareness among managers and decision makers involved in disaster management of the potential benefits and the cost-effectiveness of using space-based technologies; (b) to provide a forum in which needs that were specific to the region and institutional settings could be identified together with the types of information and communications needed in managing specific disasters and the extent to which they could be met by space technologies; and (c) to develop a regional plan of action that would enable the consolidation of networking among national and regional agencies and the definition of possible partnerships that would lead in the near future to one or more pilot projects that would incorporate and refine the use of space tools in disaster management.

9. The pilot projects to be identified would be designed and carried out with international cooperation and would be aimed at producing synergy among the regional initiatives of various institutions or groups of institutions.

10. Several initiatives, many within the United Nations system, focus on making space technology solutions available to those responsible for dealing with disaster-related activities in developing countries. The workshops, together with the follow-up activities, are planned and implemented taking into consideration the relevant initiatives described below.

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

11. In its resolution 54/68 of 6 December 1999, the General Assembly endorsed the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development"² and urged, inter alia, organizations of the United Nations system to take the necessary action for the effective implementation of the Vienna Declaration. The Declaration includes a number of recommendations, one of which called for action to be taken to implement an integrated, global system, especially through international cooperation, to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention efforts, especially of an international nature, through Earth observation, communications and other space-based services, making maximum use of existing capabilities and filling gaps in worldwide satellite coverage.³

12. At its forty-sixth session, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space decided that it would address several of the recommendations, including the one mentioned above, through action teams with the voluntary leadership of Member States. The Committee received an offer from Canada, China and France to lead the action team on the implementation of an integrated, global system to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention efforts. The first meeting of the Action Team was held in Toulouse, France, on 5 and 6 October 2001. The second meeting was held in Vienna during the thirty-ninth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The third meeting was held in Houston, United States of America, on 13 October 2002. The initial three-year work plan includes the compilation of information on user needs

for disaster management, on national capacity for utilizing space-derived information on disaster management and on existing and planned operational space systems in support of disaster management.

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

13. Recognition of the fact that disasters were an increasing problem led in part to the launch of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction for the period 1990-1999, which in turn led to the establishment of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). ISDR is a global strategy with two institutional components. The first is the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction with the following main functions: (a) to serve as the main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for the reduction of natural hazards; (b) to identify gaps in disaster reduction policies and programmes and recommend remedial action; (c) to ensure complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction; (d) to provide policy guidance to the ISDR secretariat; and (e) to convene ad hoc meetings of experts on issues related to disaster reduction.

14. The second component of ISDR is the secretariat of the Task Force, which is based in Geneva. It serves as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination strategies and programmes for natural disaster reduction. The secretariat is a multidisciplinary team that supports the Task Force, in which international policy can be made and which constitutes an institutional platform from which programmes can be launched. It does not implement programmes but enables others to do so more effectively.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

15. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat was established pursuant to the reform programme of the Secretary-General (A/51/750), which was endorsed by the General Assembly. In accordance with the provisions of Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, the functions of the Emergency Relief Coordinator are focused in three core areas: (a) policy development and coordination functions in support of the Secretary-General, ensuring that all humanitarian issues, including those which fall in gaps between existing mandates of agencies such as protection and assistance for internally displaced persons, are addressed; (b) advocacy of humanitarian issues with political organs, notably the Security Council; and (c) coordination of humanitarian emergency response on the ground, by ensuring that an appropriate response mechanism is established, through Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) consultations.

16. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs discharges its coordination function primarily through IASC, which is chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, with the participation of all humanitarian partners, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and non-governmental organizations. IASC ensures inter-agency decision-making in response to complex emergencies, including need assessments, consolidated appeals, field coordination arrangements and the development of humanitarian policies.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Unit for Disaster Reduction

17. Within the framework of ISDR, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is focusing on building a culture of prevention to counter disasters and reduce vulnerability of populations at risk. UNESCO is engaged in the assessment and mitigation of risks arising from hazards of geological origin (earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and landslides) and contributes to the study of hazards of meteorological origin (storms, floods, prolonged drought and desertification).

18. UNESCO also fosters information, education, transfer of data and experience among countries and communities aiming at integrating geohazard knowledge and expertise in decision-making processes in order to encourage the adoption of policies and actions for sound planning and management of land-use and construction techniques and to promote the development of preventive and preparedness plans, including the implementation of global to local warning systems.

International Charter “Space and Major Disasters”

19. The Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters (also known as the International Charter “Space and Major Disasters”) enables countries where a natural or technological disaster has occurred to receive products derived from satellite images to support disaster mitigation activities. The institutions participating in the Charter are the European Space Agency (ESA), the Centre national d'études spatiales (CNES) of France, the Canadian Space Agency, the Indian Space Research Organization and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the United States. The Office for Outer Space Affairs is currently defining with the Charter the agreement that will enable the Office to become a cooperating body to the Charter, which in turn will enable the United Nations system to have access to the Charter, triggering it in the case of disasters in which the United Nations is involved.

Committee on Earth Observation Satellites, Disaster Management Support Group

20. The Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) is an international organization charged with coordinating international civil space-borne missions designed to observe and study the Earth. Comprising 41 space agencies and other national and international organizations, CEOS is recognized as the major international forum for the coordination of Earth observation satellite programmes and for interaction of those programmes with users of satellite data worldwide.

21. The CEOS Disaster Management Support Group (DMSG) began in February 1997 as one of six initiatives undertaken by CEOS to demonstrate the concept of an Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS). It was recognized that taking an integrated view of disaster management user requirements for Earth observation data, even if confined to space-based data, would be a notable challenge. After its first three years as a pilot project, the disaster management support project developed and identified specific user requirements for seven

hazards (drought, earthquake, fire, flood, landslide, oil spill and volcanic hazards) and produced recommendations for improving the ability of current and planned systems to meet those requirements. The project was given a new mandate when the CEOS plenary established the ad hoc DMSG in November 1999.

22. The objective of DMSG was to support natural and technological disaster management on a worldwide basis by fostering improved utilization of data from existing and planned Earth observation satellites. DMSG completed its work in 2002, and CEOS endorsed its recommendation that DMSG activities be integrated into the International Charter "Space and Major Disasters", the workshops organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and their follow-up activities and the IGOS geohazards theme.

23. Two other working groups within CEOS are involved in activities directly related to the topic of disaster management: the Working Group on Earth Observation Education and Training, which could provide valuable support to disaster management capacity-building, and the Working Group on Information Systems and Services, which aims at stimulating, coordinating and monitoring the development of the systems and services that manage and supply the data and information from participating agencies' missions.

B. Programme

24. The United Nations Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Disaster Management for Africa was organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and ECA and sponsored by CEOS, ESA and CNES. Funding support was also provided by Space Imaging, Inc.

25. The Workshop was hosted by ECA and held at the recently inaugurated United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa.

26. At the opening session of the Workshop statements were made by representatives of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, ECA and ESA. The keynote presentation was given by Levin Lauritson of NOAA. A total of 58 presentations were delivered in 15 thematic sessions covering all aspects of the current use of space technology for disaster management. Topics ranged from Earth observation satellites, meteorological satellites, high-resolution satellites, global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) and communication satellites, and specific presentations were given on geographic information systems (GIS) and capacity-building. Seven discussion sessions enabled further discussion of the main topics that subsequently formed the framework of the proposed plan of action.

C. Attendance

27. A total of 120 participants attended the Workshop and came from the following 44 countries: Algeria, Austria, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Turkey, Uganda, United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the ISDR secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organization, as well as the Office for Outer Space Affairs, were also represented.

28. Funds allocated by the United Nations, by the co-sponsors (NOAA on behalf of CEOS, ESA and CNES) and by Space Imaging, Inc. were used to defray the costs of air travel and/or daily subsistence allowance of 30 participants and the Office for Outer Space Affairs and interpretation services in English and French.

II. Observations and recommendations

A. Approach to establishing a strategy

29. The thematic and discussion sessions were structured around the three topics considered to be the cornerstones of an effective plan of action: availability of information and technology, institutional environment and capacity-building. The Workshop proposed a regional network to coordinate the plan of action and the sharing of experience and expertise.

30. Through the presentations given during the thematic sessions participants gained an understanding of the various issues linked to each cornerstone, whereas during the discussion sessions participants focused on defining the modus operandi of the regional network.

Availability of information and technology

31. Discussions on data were centred on the types of data needed, the present availability of data for Africa and difficulties of distributing and accessing data. The availability of data referred not only to having access to the data needed but also to receiving the data when it was needed and in a format that could be used.

32. A number of available technologies could provide data that would be useful for disaster management: remote sensing technologies (satellite and photography), which provided data on terrain, land cover and so on; light detection and ranging (LIDAR) devices, which were being used to create elevation data for natural landscape features and buildings; ground surveying tools, which produced maps for boundaries and other landscape elements; governmental censuses and surveys, which provided socio-economic data for defined spatial units; GNSS, which offered a means of obtaining positional information for stationary or moving objects; wireless telecommunication developments, which facilitated interpersonal contacts during disasters; wireless technologies, which provided a means for data logging in the field; and Internet products and services, which provided access to and dissemination of data, information and knowledge.

Institutional environment

33. The Workshop considered that "institutional environment" referred not only to the existence of institutions that were involved in disaster management or that

already had competence in the use of space-based solutions but also to current national and regional policies with regard to disaster management. Consideration needed to be given to existing initiatives that would support or contribute to the development of activities that used space-based technologies. Important aspects when analysing the institutional environment were the communication channels already in place and the strength of the networks and partnerships. Dealing with disasters was a multidisciplinary activity that involved all sectors of society.

Capacity-building

34. The third cornerstone of a successful strategy was increasing the current capabilities of the region through training, strengthening of institutions and funding. Human resources could be considered the single most important resource to have available during a crisis, but the training of experts took time to accomplish.

35. Resources for a regional network were limited and mechanisms would need to be put in place to build synergies among institutions, enabling the sharing of expertise and results.

36. After 58 presentations and many hours of discussion, many valuable observations were made and conclusions drawn. These are presented below.

B. Availability of information and technology

37. The availability and use of spatial data was part of and affected every aspect of society. Spatial data should be made available to the people who needed them, when they needed them and in a form that they could be used to make decisions with minimal pre-processing.

38. Data were usually considered the starting point of any strategy. There was consensus that there was an urgent need to update the base map data in many African countries, in particular in those countries which had lost relevant portions of their data infrastructure owing to recent disturbances. It was pointed out that existing options for accessing free and low-cost data should be considered first. There was also a significant amount of archived data that should be catalogued and made widely available. Whereas at the beginning of the information technology revolution data were always considered to be the bottleneck in implementing successful systems, data were currently widely available and in many cases free of charge.

39. Access to data would be greatly facilitated through the implementation and strengthening of national spatial data infrastructures, which would contribute to guaranteeing that all data be made available and easily accessible. It was recommended that all spatial data holdings be publicized through the ECA clearing house node (the standard-based geoinformation system project). In order to do that efficiently, it was also necessary to establish and use metadata standards.

40. Participants stressed the need to increase data sharing, which could be fostered by federated and distributed databases. An important recommendation was to make sure, when acquiring spatial data or compiling a spatial database, that all the needs of present and potential users were taken into account.

41. Data access was a concern raised at the Workshop. Even when remote sensing data had been identified, access to the data might be a slow process, if not an impossible one, owing to the slow Internet connections at present available throughout the region.
42. It was stressed in various presentations that information was useful only when it reached the end-user. The radio and Internet project was a successful example of how communication satellites could be used to inform the end-user (see www.ranetproject.net for further information on the project).
43. Even though current data were available, the same could not always be said for benchmark or reference data, which were needed as historical data when carrying out impact and/or vulnerability studies.
44. Participants pointed to the need to develop data requirements for each hazard scenario and to make those scenarios available to the regional network. The data requirements must take into consideration both spatial and temporal characteristics.
45. The last recommendation on the availability of information and technology, and perhaps one of the most important ones made at the Workshop, was to take advantage of initiatives already in place that made spatial data that could be used for disaster response available free of charge, such as the initiative of the International Charter "Space and Major Disasters" (see para. 19 and www.disastercharter.org).

C. Institutional environment

46. Many participants stressed that not all countries in the region had institutions that were competent in the use of space-based technologies and furthermore that many countries did not have centralized disaster management coordination. Thus, a first step towards strengthening institutional aspects was to help establish national disaster management centres in those countries that would promote an integrated and coordinated system of disaster management, with a special emphasis on prevention and mitigation, involving national, provincial and municipal bodies, related institutions, including universities, non-governmental organizations and other role players involved in disaster management and communities.
47. At the same time, to promote an integrated approach to dealing with disasters, specific working groups for each type of hazard should be formed at various levels of government.
48. When defining priority activities, it was necessary to focus on vulnerability. Specifically, the focus should be on preparedness and prevention and less on emergency response.
49. Many examples of successful regional coordination in Africa were given at the Workshop. Such cooperation was important, in particular in Africa, because it led to improvements in access to satellite data and to reductions in the cost of data acquisition. Even so, many participants stressed that there was room for improvement, especially in the case of disasters that crossed international borders such as occasional flooding of international boundary rivers. Thus, the need for strengthening intergovernmental coordination was also stressed.

50. Participants also noted the need to build upon existing regional networks such as the Southern African Fire Network, a part of the Global Observation for Forest and Land Cover Dynamics, and the Southern African Water Information Network, strengthening initiatives that had already determined the best modus operandi and using the existing channels of communication.

51. Participants noted that often, when alternative approaches using unfamiliar technology-based solutions were proposed, decision makers had not understood the benefits. There was thus a need to continuously demonstrate to decision makers the cost-benefit of using remotely sensed data and other space-based technologies.

D. Capacity-building

52. Capacity-building should be aimed at increasing the capability of organizations and individuals to use geospatial information effectively for disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Technology in general had a role to play in expanding access to information, while GIS technology (in the form of databases and software tool boxes) could improve access to information for planning, spatial logistics (for example, evacuation routes) and other purposes, build capacity for understanding, predicting and problem solving in the geospatial domain and help the general public to contribute to disaster awareness and preparedness.

53. Training should be channelled through the existing regional training centres affiliated with the United Nations: the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology—in French language, in Morocco, the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education—in English language, in Nigeria, the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development in Kenya and the Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys in Nigeria.

54. In developing methodological approaches one should consider not only using the available satellite data but also combining such information with traditional knowledge, which could be important for understanding and predicting human behaviour. Local knowledge transmitted through beliefs, taboos and oral history had greatly helped to preserve the environment through generations and should be central to technology-based methodological solutions.

55. Disaster prevention and mitigation required, as a first step, efficient and functional wide-area monitoring information systems that provided accurate near-real-time information, from multiple sources, that could be integrated with ease to produce appropriate products that were easily and freely accessible to all relevant role players, with the added advantage of covering large areas.

56. Partnerships across institutions had to be created so as to maximize the benefit of implementing space-based systems. It was also necessary to increase networking with space agencies, taking advantage of the CEOS forum and in particular building upon work carried out by DMSG.

57. Funding was a major concern and efforts should be made to involve bilateral and multilateral development agencies, such as the United States Agency for International Development and the African Development Bank. The Office for Outer Space Affairs had developed a database of funding institutions that could be contacted for financial support.

III. Plan of action for Africa

A. Implementing a regional network

58. It was agreed at the Workshop that the course of action that would lead to consolidating the use of space technology for disaster management in Africa would be through the creation of a regional network that would provide support in coordinating the efforts of various institutions interested in forming such a network and also in developing terms of reference for pilot projects that would incorporate and test the use of space-based solutions for disaster management.

59. In the course of carrying out their activities, the institutions taking part in the regional network would take into consideration the observations and recommendations put forward at the Workshop. The regional network would also work with the Action Team on Disaster Management established by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

60. The regional network should recognize work in progress, especially work that already had local commitment. The network would work primarily using the Internet and facsimile, providing information to all interested institutions on activities being proposed or carried out and fostering viable partnerships among the different initiatives and interests. Once partnerships had been defined, a further step would be to identify pilot projects that the institutions could jointly become involved in. To define the responsibilities of each institution, terms of reference for each pilot project would be developed.

61. Teams would work on a "best efforts" basis. Each institution would be responsible for its own expenses. If additional funding support was needed for satellite imagery and/or hardware and software, the team could contact interested space agencies and/or bilateral and multilateral development institutions to secure the additional support.

62. In defining the role of the proposed regional network, the Workshop took a two-stage approach. During the first stage, it defined 18 hazards that should be considered separately, namely: coastal and marine systems (coastal erosion); desertification and deforestation; earthquakes/tsunamis; epidemiological and entomological risks; fires; floods; drought; food security; cyclones; land degradation; landslides; oil spills; plagues; pollution; refugee flows; transportation accidents; volcanoes; and windstorms and other extreme climate conditions.

63. During the second stage, institutions expressed their interest in participating or even taking on a coordinating role in each hazard area. A total of 87 institutions demonstrated their interest by showing a tentative commitment to participating in one or more hazard areas, as shown in the table in the annex.

64. The next stage for the regional network would involve the following activities: extending the network to other institutions; setting up a web-based discussion list (to support both regional and global activities); setting up a web page to disseminate information; following up on the tentative commitments, defining viable partnerships and finally developing terms of reference for pilot projects.

65. The regional network that was established at the Workshop was aimed at governmental and academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, private

industry and United Nations bodies. Institutions could become involved at any time either by indicating that they had an interest in participating or by indicating that they wished to take on a coordinating role, that is, they would be willing to identify possible pilot projects with other institutions and take the lead in implementing them.

B. Role of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Economic Commission for Africa in implementing the regional network

66. It was agreed that, as a follow-up to the tentative commitments made at the Workshop, the Office for Outer Space Affairs and ECA would send a letter to each of the 87 institutions presenting the background of the network and inviting each one to formally confirm their participation, either as participant or coordinator, in the areas in which they expressed interest. A letter would also be sent to Governments informing them of the establishment of the network and the confirmed interest. Letters would also be sent to space-related institutions in the international community. Once pilot projects had been designed, letters would also be sent to funding institutions to secure their support.

67. The Office for Outer Space Affairs agreed to maintain the regional network table, periodically verifying the information on institutions that had demonstrated interest in participating, the names of points of contact and areas of participation and/or coordination. The Office also reported that it would focus on bringing into the network interested space agencies and development agencies and facilitate coordination with the activities of the Action Team on Disaster Management.

68. The web site with relevant links and information on space technology and disaster management (www.oosa.unvienna.org/SAP/stdm) would be maintained for the benefit of the regional network. All institutions would be responsible for providing information to be posted on it. A discussion list created was already being used by participants in the regional network (www.ungiwg.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/unoosa-stdm).

69. The Office for Outer Space Affairs and ECA would also focus on capacity-building through the provision of short training courses in space technology and disaster management. Training would be channelled through the existing regional training centres (see para. 53).

C. Building upon the regional network

70. As the world witnesses an interminable succession of disasters—floods, storms, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions and wildfires—the topic is becoming a growing concern. The number of people that are at risk has been growing steadily, by 70-80 million per year.⁴ Action needs to be taken immediately to alleviate the effects of such disasters in future.

71. The Workshop demonstrated that space-based technologies had a real contribution to make in all areas of disaster management and that measures needed to be taken to ensure the use of what was currently available. It was agreed at the Workshop that the establishment of a regional network was an important step

towards the final goal, which was to see the increased use of space technology to support disaster management activities, and that it was now up to the 87 institutions that had demonstrated their interest in becoming involved, as well as all other institutions that would be given the opportunity to join, to take advantage of cutting-edge technologies and to define and implement solutions to the pressing disaster threats that were an everyday reality in Africa.

Notes

¹ *Report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III)*, chap. I, resolution 1, part I, para. 1 (e) (ii) and chap. II, para. 409 (d) (i).

² *Ibid.*, chap. I, resolution 1.

³ *Ibid.*, part I, para. 1 (b) (ii).

⁴ *Living with Risk: A Global Review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives* (forthcoming United Nations publication). A preliminary version is available at www.unisdr.org/unisdr/Globalreport.htm

Annex

Space technology and disaster management: regional network for Africa

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Earthquakes/tsunamis</i>	<i>Floods</i>	<i>Drought</i>	<i>Coastal and marine systems (coastal erosion)</i>	<i>Epidemiological and entomological risk</i>	<i>Desertification and deforestation</i>	<i>Oil spills</i>	<i>Food security</i>	<i>Cyclones</i>	<i>Land degradation</i>	<i>Fires</i>	<i>Plagues</i>	<i>Windsstorms—extreme climate conditions</i>	<i>Pollution</i>	<i>Refugees</i>	<i>Volcanoes</i>	<i>Landslides</i>	<i>Transportation accidents</i>
Eastern Africa																		
Arid Lands Resource Management Project, Kenya																		
Department of Geology, University of Nairobi, Kenya																		
Department of Meteorology, Uganda																		
Department of Meteorology, University of Nairobi, Kenya																		
Department of Surveying, University of Nairobi, Kenya																		
Disaster Management and Refugee Studies Institute, Sudan																		
Disaster Management Center, Rwanda																		
Disaster Management Department, United Republic of Tanzania																		
Ethiopian Mapping Authority																		
Humanitarian Aid Commission, Sudan																		
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya																		
Kenya Meteorological Department																		
National Disaster Operations Centre, Kenya																		
National Environment Management Council, United Republic of Tanzania																		
National Meteorological Service Agency, Ethiopia																		
United States International University, Nairobi																		
University College of Lands and Architectural Studies, United Republic of Tanzania																		
Northern Africa																		
Centre national des techniques spatiales, Algeria																		
Centre royal de télédétection spatiale, Morocco																		



<i>Institution</i>	<i>Earthquakes/tsunamis</i>	<i>Floods</i>	<i>Drought</i>	<i>Coastal and marine systems (coastal erosion)</i>	<i>Epidemiological and entomological risk</i>	<i>Desertification and deforestation</i>	<i>Oil spills</i>	<i>Food security</i>	<i>Cyclones</i>	<i>Land degradation</i>	<i>Fires</i>	<i>Plagues</i>	<i>Windstorms—extreme climate conditions</i>	<i>Pollution</i>	<i>Refugees</i>	<i>Volcanoes</i>	<i>Landslides</i>	<i>Transportation accidents</i>
Civil Defence Authority, Egypt	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P										
National Authority for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences, Egypt	P	P	P	C	C	P	C											
Southern Africa																		
Agricultural Research Council, Institute for Soil, Climate and Water, South Africa		P	C	P	P	P	C	C	C	C	P		P	C			C	
Catholic University of Mozambique, GIS Centre, Mozambique		P	P	P	P			P	P	P	P			P				
Department of Communications, Institute for Satellite and Software Applications, South Africa		P	P	P	P	P	C											
Department of Meteorology, Zambia		P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P			P			P	
National Disaster Management Centre, South Africa		P	P	C	C	C	P	P	C	P	P		C	P			P	
Satellite Applications Centre, South Africa		C	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P			P	
Southern African Fire Network, Botswana		P	P	P	P	P					C		P	P			P	
Department of Surveys, Malawi		P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P	P			P	
Western Africa																		
African Center for Environmental Information, Côte d'Ivoire		P	P	P	P	P			C	P				P				
Agence béninoise pour l'environnement, Benin		P																
Bureau national d'études techniques et de développement, Côte d'Ivoire		P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P					
Centre de suivi écologique, Senegal		P	P	P	P	P												
Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Services, Ghana		P	P	P	P	P												P
Centre national de gestion des réserves de faune, Benin																		
Centre national de recherche agronomique, Côte d'Ivoire			P							P								
Centre national de télédétection et de couverture forestière, Benin			P															
Comité national de télédétection et d'information géographique, Côte d'Ivoire		P	P	P	P	P												
Centre SIG et télédétection, Adjaratou, Burkina Faso		P	C	C	C	P	C	C	C	C	P							
Direction des forêts et ressources naturelles, Benin		P																P
École nationale supérieure polytechnique, Cameroon		P	P															P
Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana		P	P	P	P	P												C

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Earthquakes/sunamis</i>	<i>Floods</i>	<i>Drought</i>	<i>Coastal and marine systems (coastal erosion)</i>	<i>Epidemiological and entomological risk</i>	<i>Desertification and deforestation</i>	<i>Oil spills</i>	<i>Food security</i>	<i>Cyclones</i>	<i>Land degradation</i>	<i>Fires</i>	<i>Plagues</i>	<i>Windstorms—extreme climate conditions</i>	<i>Pollution</i>	<i>Refugees</i>	<i>Volcanoes</i>	<i>Landslides</i>	<i>Transportation accidents</i>
Geography Department, Burkina Faso			P		P	P				P								
Institut de recherche agricole pour le développement, Cameroon								P										
Institut de recherches géologiques et minières, Centre de recherches hydrologiques, Cameroon	C	P	C	P	C	P	P	P		P				P		C	C	
Institut médical et des plantes médicinales, Cameroon					P													
Institut national de cartographie, Cameroon																		P
Institut national de recherches agricoles du Bénin, Benin			P										C					
Institut universitaire de technologie, Cameroon				P														
Laboratoire de télédétection appliqué, Institut des sciences de la terre, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal																		
Ministry of Rural Development, Mauritania			C	P	P	P	P	P										P
Ministry of the Environment, Nigeria			P	P	P	P	P	P			P							
Ministry of Water Resources, Nigeria			P	P														
National Emergency Management Agency, Nigeria			P	C														
National Space Research and Development Agency, Nigeria			C	P	C		P	C										
Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation and Department of Petroleum Resources, Nigeria			P	P	P	P	P	P						P				
Organisation de coordination pour la lutte contre les endémies en Afrique centrale																		
Protection Civile, Ministère de l'intérieur, Mauritania			P	P	P	P				P	P			C				
Société de développement des forêts de Côte d'Ivoire			P															
University of Ibadan GIS Laboratory, Nigeria			P	P	P	P	P	P										
University of Yaoundé, Cameroon																		P
Regional institutions																		
Drought Monitoring Centre, Nairobi			C	C	P	P	P	P	C		P			C	C			P
Niger Basin Authority			P															P
Oakar Services Ltd., Kenya			P															P
Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development			P	P	P	C	C	C	C	C	P							P



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II

Third United Nations Conference on the
Least Developed Countries
Brussels, Belgium, 14-20 May 2001

**PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
FOR THE DECADE 2001-2010**

Adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries
in Brussels on 20 May 2001

INTRODUCTION

1. The least developed countries (LDCs) represent the poorest and weakest segment of the international community. The economic and social development of these countries represents a major challenge for LDCs themselves, as well as for their development partners. Extreme poverty, the structural weakness of their economies and the lack of capacities related to growth and development, often compounded by geographical handicaps, hamper efforts by these countries to improve effectively the quality of life of their peoples. These countries are characterized by their exposure to a series of vulnerabilities and constraints such as limited human, institutional and productive capacity; acute susceptibility to external economic shocks, natural and man-made disasters and communicable diseases; limited access to education, health and other social services and to natural resources; poor infrastructure; and lack of access to information and communication technologies. In the context of these vulnerabilities and constraints, needed international support has been inadequate. More commitment to provide increased and more effective international support for LDCs is required to overcome these conditions. To be effective, sustainable development strategies concerning LDCs should seek to address these vulnerabilities, taking into account the special needs, problems and potentials of each country. This Programme of Action aims to do so.

2. Ten years after the adoption of the Paris Programme of Action by the Second United Nations Conference on LDCs in 1990, the objectives and goals set therein have not been achieved. LDCs are being bypassed by the process of globalization, leading to their further marginalization. For their part, most LDCs have pursued economic reform programmes set out in the previous Programmes of Action, including eliminating or substantially reducing tariffs and other trade barriers, liberalizing currency regimes, privatizing public enterprises, establishing and strengthening institutional and regulatory frameworks and adopting liberal investment policies. The results of these reform efforts have been below expectations. Declining availability of financial resources, domestic and external, including ODA, a heavy and unsustainable debt burden, falling or volatile commodity prices, complex trade barriers, lack of economic and export diversification and market access for key products which LDCs benefit from, as well as supply-side constraints, have seriously affected the growth and development prospects of LDCs.

3. This Programme of Action articulates policies and measures by LDCs on the one hand and their development partners on the other to reverse these trends and to promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development of LDCs and their beneficial integration into the world economy. It also builds on the outcomes of recent major UN Conferences and summits in the specific context of LDCs and adopts ways and means of their application to address the particular problems facing those countries. Effective mechanisms and arrangements for implementation, follow-up, review and monitoring of these policies and measures are critical to the success of the Programme. It is recognized that only by absorbing the previous experiences and lessons can a new, realistic and action-oriented programme be produced.

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I. OBJECTIVES

4. This Programme of Action aims to significantly improve the human conditions of more than 600 million people in 49 LDCs during the present decade. Against the backdrop of lack of progress in socio-economic development in the LDCs and in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the 1990s, it provides a framework for a strong global partnership to accelerate sustained economic growth and sustainable development in LDCs, to end marginalization by eradicating poverty, inequality and deprivation in these countries, and to enable them to integrate beneficially into the global economy.

5. This Programme of Action is based on the international development targets, actions by LDCs and commensurate support measures by their development partners, and on the values, principles and objectives of the Millennium Declaration. These political, economic and social objectives and, as appropriate, other UN targets are incorporated into the commitments of the Programme of Action.

6. The overarching goal of the Programme of Action is to make substantial progress toward halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and suffering from hunger by 2015 and promote the sustainable development of the LDCs. This will require, among other things, significant and steady increases in GDP growth rates in LDCs. To that end, LDCs, with the support of their development partners, will strive to attain a GDP growth rate of at least 7 per cent per annum and increase the ratio of investment to GDP to 25 per cent per annum. In this regard, civil society, including the private sector, is an important participant.

7. National policies of LDCs and external support measures by their partners during the decade will focus *inter alia* on the following priorities:

- (a) A significant reduction in extreme poverty;
- (b) Developing human and institutional resources to support sustained growth and sustainable development;
- (c) Removing supply-side constraints and enhancing productive capacity and promoting the expansion of domestic markets to accelerate growth, income and employment generation;
- (d) Accelerating LDCs' growth with the aim of enhancing their share in world trade and global financial and investment flows;
- (e) Environmental protection, accepting that LDCs and industrialized countries have common but differentiated responsibility;
- (f) Attaining food security and reducing malnutrition.

8. The Programme of Action recognizes the following as cross-cutting priority issues: poverty eradication, gender equality, employment, governance at national and international levels, capacity-building, sustainable development, special problems of landlocked and small island LDCs, and challenges faced by LDCs affected by conflict.

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9. Poverty eradication requires a broad approach, taking into account not only the sheer economic aspects, but also the social, human and environmental dimension. This implies an increased focus on issues like good governance at national and international levels and the fight against corruption, respect for all internationally recognized human rights, gender issues, capacity and institutional building, social services supply and environmental concerns. The majority of the poor live in rural areas. Increasing the sustainable productive capacity of agriculture and fisheries and the income of people working in these sectors in LDCs is therefore a key priority. Women remain the vast majority of the poor in both economic and non-economic terms.

10. A comprehensive policy of confidence building and conflict prevention is an important element of a sustainable development strategy.

11. There are important linkages between development, poverty reduction and gender equality. Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are therefore essential strategic components for poverty reduction.

12. The implementation of this Programme of Action shall be guided by the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. The Programme of Action seeks, with particular reference to national programmes of action, concrete ways and means to effectively arrest and reverse the continued socio-economic marginalization of LDCs, improve their share in international trade, foreign direct investment and other financial flows and create an enabling environment for them to be able to benefit from globalization and minimize adverse consequences thereof. It is an ethical imperative for the international community to adopt international support measures to help LDCs to arrest and reverse their marginalization and to promote their expeditious integration into the world economy and fight social exclusion. Implementation of the Programme will also restore confidence and enhance the new form of partnership and cooperation between the LDCs and their development partners. The success of this Programme of Action will be judged, in the end, by its contribution to the overall socio-economic progress of LDCs, especially towards achieving international development targets.

13. Another important objective of the Programme of Action is to contribute to the renovation and invigoration of partnership between the LDCs and their development partners by promoting mutual and shared responsibility, as well as greater opportunity and integration of the LDCs into the global economy. The Programme of Action, among other things, should create conditions necessary for the implementation of policies and strategies based on the new development paradigm where economic growth and development are prerequisites for the eradication of poverty. It should also contribute to the growth and expansion of the private sector, entrepreneurship and innovation by facilitating access to technology, private capital flows and other related resources.

Commitment 6: Reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment

73. Long-term threats to the global environment are a common concern of all countries, and there is an urgent need to address this issue on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. The LDCs are acutely vulnerable to a variety of natural shocks, including natural disasters, and severe structural handicaps, and are susceptible to global environmental phenomena such as the loss of biological diversity and adverse effects of climate change which *inter alia* exacerbates drought, desertification and sea level rise. LDCs are at present contributing the least to the emission of greenhouse gases, while they are the most vulnerable and have the least capacity to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. Such vulnerabilities generate considerable uncertainties and impair the development prospects of these countries, and they tend to affect the poor most, in particular women and children. Environmental degradation in LDCs also results from poverty that deprives households, village communities or enterprises of the means and technology required to preserve the environment. Economic growth, social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities in LDCs and are themselves essential to meeting national and global sustainability objectives. Eradicating poverty is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and has to be addressed in an integrated and comprehensive manner, taking fully into account the legitimate priority needs of LDCs.

A. Protecting the environment

74. LDC-specific objectives defined in Agenda 21 and Rio + 5, as well as commitments from multilateral environmental agreements, must be the basis for actions.

75. Actions by LDCs and the development partners will be along the following lines:

(i) Actions by LDCs

- (a) Developing and implementing national strategies for sustainable development, with the assistance of development partners, so as to reverse trends in the loss of national environmental resources;
- (b) Increasing efforts to ensure integrated responses to environmental and economic constraints, in the light of country-specific environmental and economic constraints and profiles of poverty and vulnerability;
- (c) Strengthening the institutional and technological capacity to promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development by increasing the ability of policy makers to formulate and implement relevant legislation and environmental management plans;
- (d) Strengthening the important role of women in land and forest management and in the choice and dissemination of appropriate technology;

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- (e) Encouraging sensitization and advocacy activities through greater reliance on local communities and their traditional knowledge and practices, civil society and educational institutions;
- (f) Building their capacity in order to be able to respond adequately to existing and new environmental challenges;
- (g) Identifying the special vulnerabilities and possible adaptation measures that need to be fully integrated into the country's development strategies, including development cooperation programmes.

(ii) Actions by development partners

- (a) Continuing to make available financial resources from all sources, including new and additional resources on an adequate and predictable basis and technical or other resources and facilitating and financing access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, and supporting LDCs' efforts in environmental protection in the context of sustainable development;
- (b) Bringing to fruition the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development by, *inter alia*, and where appropriate, granting special priority to LDCs in international support, as well as facilitating relevant actions as recommended in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and implementing multilateral environmental agreements to which they are parties, *inter alia* the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. This involves, among other elements, financial transfers and capacity-building efforts, including for the development and dissemination of modern and non-polluting energy resources, as well as improved technology for traditional energy resources, including fuel wood, especially in rural areas;
- (c) Renewing the international community's commitment towards LDCs to continue to support the formulation of national environmental policies, development of human resources and institutional capacities, and environmental data bases;
- (d) Supporting the strengthening of the capacity of the LDCs to participate in international environmental negotiations;
- (e) Providing assistance, through financial, technical and/or other forms of assistance, to LDCs' efforts to develop and implement national strategies for sustainable development in every country so as to reverse the current trends in the loss of national environmental resources;
- (f) Supporting the LDCs in their efforts to integrate the environmental component into national development policies and strategies;

- (g) Assisting LDCs in establishing public-private sector partnerships to address environmental challenges.

B. Alleviating vulnerability to natural shocks

76. Post-emergency action, using effective and flexible mechanisms, must ease the transition from the emergency phase to the development phase, promote the socio-economic reintegration of the parts of the population affected, remove as far as possible the causes of the crisis and strengthen institutions and ownership by local and national actors of their role in formulating a sustainable development policy. Both LDCs and development partners should encourage the involvement of the private sector, *inter alia* in the areas of disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness.

77. Actions by LDCs and the development partners will be along the following lines:

(i) Actions by LDCs

- (a) Strengthening disaster mitigation policies and mechanisms, with a particular focus on the poor, especially women and children, and with the involvement of local communities and NGOs in disaster mitigation, early warning systems and preparedness and relief efforts;
- (b) Pursuing or intensifying efforts to strengthen national early warning and forecasting mechanisms, implementing preventive measures and sensitizing relevant parts of the population to the benefits of disaster preparedness and prevention;
- (c) Developing and implementing comprehensive disaster mitigation and preparedness, policies and actions. Such policies should also respond to prolonged disasters with a slow onset such as drought, which often has very severe economic, environmental and social impacts;
- (d) Considering the creation of innovative financial instruments, such as special insurance schemes, to facilitate post-disaster reconstruction with a view to maintaining standards of living and productive capacities in the LDCs.

(ii) Actions by development partners

- (a) Giving priority attention to the LDCs in the substantive programme and institutional arrangements for implementing the new International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;
- (b) Providing assistance for disaster mitigation, at the request of affected countries, as well as for improving the capacity of LDCs to identify mitigation scenarios and establishing protective measures and contingency plans;

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- (c) Supporting LDCs' enhancement of capacity to effectively participate in and benefit from regional and international early warning and disaster mitigation and response networks, including through satellite-driven technologies;
- (d) Sharing operationally useful disaster information, including satellite data, as widely as possible within the international disaster relief community, through appropriate programmes such as the UN web site ReliefWeb.

Section III

Other relevant documents prepared by ISDR

Disaster Reduction and Sustainable Development: Understanding the links between vulnerability and risk to disasters related to development and environment 413

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION: For the Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), 2001 437



Landslide, El Salvador, 2001
Photo: El Diario de Hoy, El Salvador



“Communities will always face natural hazards, but today’s disasters are often generated by, or at least exacerbated by, human activities. At the most dramatic level, human activities are changing the natural balance of the earth, interfering as never before with the atmosphere, the oceans, the polar ice caps, the forest cover and the natural pillars that make our world a livable home. But we are also putting ourselves in harm’s way in less visible ways. At no time in human history have so many people lived in cities clustered around seismically active areas. Destitution and demographic pressure have led more people than ever before to live in flood plains or in areas prone to landslides. Poor land-use planning; environmental mismanagement; and a lack of regulatory mechanisms both increase the risk and exacerbate the effects of disasters.”

Kofi Annan¹

Millennium Goal:

“To intensify our collective efforts to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters.”

Placed under section IV. Protecting our common environment
Road map towards the implementation
of the United Nations Millennium Declaration²

¹ 2002, UN Secretary-General, Foreword to “Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives,” ISDR.

² 2001, Secretary-General Report to GA A/56/326.

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Disaster Reduction within the WSSD Process

Background documentation on disaster risk reduction for WSSD

The present paper builds on the official Background paper No 5, *Natural Disasters and Sustainable Development: understanding the links between development, environment and natural disasters*, presented to PrepCom2 in January 2002. It was compiled by the ISDR Secretariat in collaboration with experts, practitioners and many UN agencies, among them UNDP, UNEP, UN-Habitat, WMO, UN/DESA and UN/OCHA. The current version, has been revised and expanded based on contributions from 350 participants from 80 countries who participated in an **online debate**, organized for the period 15 April-9 May, by the Stakeholders Forum for our Common Future and the ISDR Secretariat (see websites www.unisdr.org and www.earthsummit2002.org/debate).

It was also reviewed and commented on by many individual experts, including:

- Participants at the fourth and fifth meetings of the ISDR Inter-Agency Task Force (Geneva, November 2001, and April 2002);
- Participants at the expert meeting on Environmental Management and Disaster Risk Reduction: a Gender Perspective (Ankara, 6-9 November 2001);
- Experts attending the Hemispheric Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Costa Rica, 4-6 December 2001);
- Participants of the Asian meeting on the ISDR in New Delhi, 24 January (organized by the governments of Japan and India);
- Members of the IATF Working Group 4 on Wildland Fire (Freiburg, 8-9 March 2002);
- Experts at the meeting on Early Warning and Sustainable Development (Bonn, 11-12 March 2002, organized by the German Committee on Disaster Reduction-DKKV); and
- Many individual experts, among them Charlotte Benson, Camilo Cardenas, Juan José Castro Chamberlain, Irene Dankelman, Ian Davis, Yianna Lambrou, Haris Sanahuja, Ben Wisner.

A side event on “Disaster Risk and Sustainable Development—Reducing Vulnerability to Natural Hazards” was organized by the ISDR Secretariat during the last and fourth PrepCom held in Bali, Indonesia, 28 May 2002. Panelists from IFRC, UNDP, WMO, DKKV-Germany, Ecuador and the Stakeholder Forum for our Common Future discussed the topics covered in this paper.

The preliminary version of *Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives*, undertaken by the ISDR secretariat with support from partners, was launched on 9 August in Tokyo. The publication and CD-ROM were distributed at WSSD and to governments, UN agencies and experts, as part of the promotion of the subject and the consultation process (available at: www.unisdr.org, www.eird.org).

Follow-up expected:

- During 2003-2004, a process will take place to review the achievements and shortcomings in the field of disaster reduction since the adoption of the Yokohama Plan of Action for a Safer World (1994). This process is expected to evolve into new and enhanced guidance in this field, building on the Millennium Development Goals and the Programme of Implementation of Johannesburg. A participatory review and formulation process at national, regional and global/thematic levels is being planned for 2003-2004.
- At its 57th Session, the United Nations General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide specific proposals to Member States for the implementation of the actions on this matter agreed to by WSSD (A/Res/57/256 paragraph 3). The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the ISDR are following-up on this request.



Disaster Reduction and Sustainable Development: Understanding the Links between Vulnerability and Risk Related to Development and Environment



1. *Can sustainable development, along with the international strategies and instruments aiming at poverty reduction and environmental protection, be successful without taking into account the risk of natural hazards and their impacts? Can the planet afford the increasing costs and losses due to so-called natural disasters? The short answer is, no.*
2. *Disaster reduction policies and measures need to be implemented to build disaster resilient societies and communities, with a two-fold aim: to reduce the level of risk in societies, while ensuring, on the other hand, that development efforts do not increase the vulnerability to hazards but instead consciously reduce such vulnerability. Disaster and risk reduction is therefore emerging as an important requisite for sustainable development.*
3. *The Secretary General, in his report on Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change,³ paragraph 40, states: "I also believe that we need to be better prepared for natural disasters and incorporate disaster risk management into our poverty reduction, development and environmental strategies."*

¹ Report of the Secretary General (prepared in the context of his comprehensive review of the work of the Organization of the United Nations), A/57/387.

I. Disaster Impact on Development

4. During the past four decades, natural hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic activity, landslides, tsunamis, tropical cyclones and other severe storms, tornadoes and high winds, river floods and coastal flooding, wildfires and associated haze, drought, sand/dust storms, and insect infestations have caused major loss of human lives and livelihoods, the destruction of economic and social infrastructure, as well as environmental damage. Economic losses have increased almost 10 times⁴ during this period. In recent years, floods in Algeria, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sudan, Thailand, Venezuela and Vietnam, volcanic eruptions in Ecuador, Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Montserrat, and the Philippines, and earthquakes in Afghanistan, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Japan, Peru and Turkey, have created widespread social, economic and environmental destruction. In some cases, natural disasters can amplify man-made emergencies or vice versa, as epitomized by the drought, earthquakes and unfolding events in Afghanistan.

5. The escalation of severe disaster events triggered by natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters is increasingly threatening both sustainable development and poverty-reduction initiatives. The loss of human lives and the rise in the cost of reconstruction efforts and loss of development assets has forced the issue of disaster reduction and risk management higher on the policy agenda of affected governments as well as multilateral and bilateral agencies and NGOs. This trend led to the adoption of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)⁵ by governments to succeed and promote implementation of the

Floods in 2002- affected over 17 million people worldwide

(29 August 2002, WMO) Floods in more than 80 countries have caused hardship for more than 17 million people world-wide since the beginning of 2002, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Almost 3,000 people have lost their lives while property damage is amounting to over thirty billion US dollars. The total area affected by the floods is over 8 million square kilometres, almost the size of the United States of America.

At any time throughout the world a river somewhere is in flood and its waters are threatening communities, their property and even their lives. Few of these events are reported in the headlines due to their local impact. However, the floods in Central Europe and China have drawn international attention. At the other end of this extreme water overload are droughts that have been and are still occurring around the world at the same time.

Droughts and floods both have major impacts on the socio-economic well being of countries. In some cases, countries experience both extremes simultaneously as is currently occurring in India and Niger. Serious droughts are occurring in the SADC countries of southern and central Africa, which is resulting in starvation and global outcry for food aid. In North America, over 37% of the United States are suffering from a severe drought with the longest-lived drought in the southeastern states.

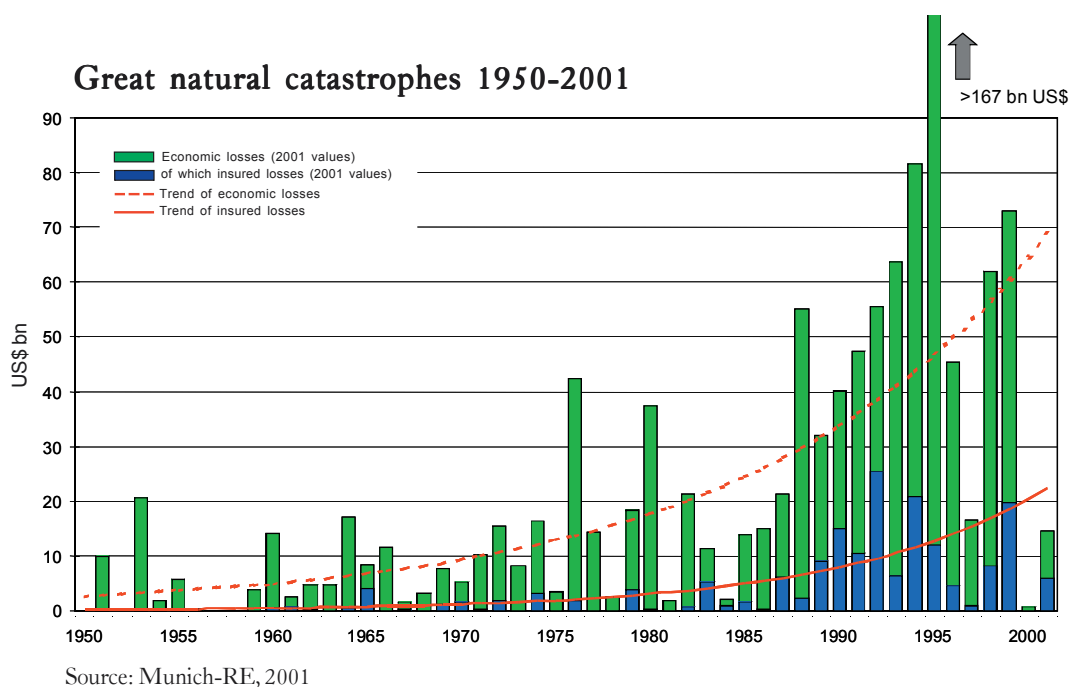
A delayed monsoon in India has resulted in unseasonably hot and dry conditions throughout northern and western parts of the country; its impact is a 10 million-ton drop in India's rice crop. Australia is stricken by severe rainfall deficiencies across eastern portions of the country, resulting in serious crop loss and a need for drought aid packages to farmers.

⁴ Munich Re Topics 2000, Natural Catastrophes—the current position.

⁵ Resolution, UN General Assembly 54/219.



recommendations emanating from the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR, 1990-1999). The aim of the ISDR is to mobilize governments, UN agencies, regional bodies, the private sector and civil society to unite efforts in building resilient societies by developing a culture of prevention and preparedness. The Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), which falls under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, was established together with the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Disaster Reduction,⁶ as the international mechanisms to coordinate the development and implementation of the ISDR.



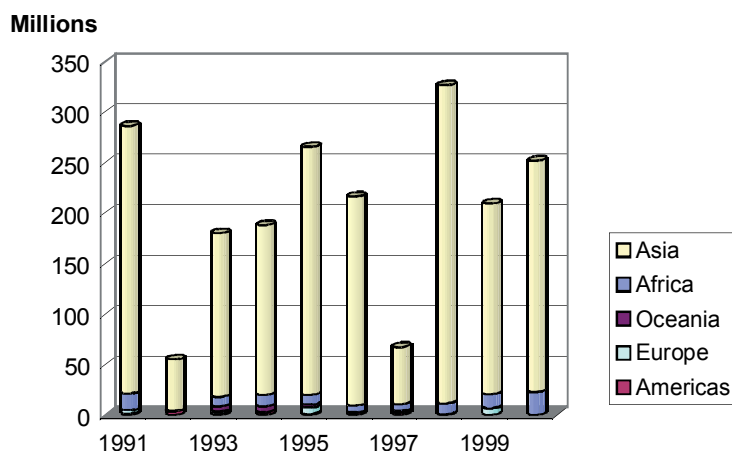
6. In addition to the projected estimate of 100,000 lives lost each year due to natural hazards, the global cost of natural disasters is anticipated to exceed \$300 billion annually by the year 2050,⁷ if the likely impact of climate change is not countered with aggressive disaster reduction measures. The environmental impact of natural hazards, in particular the loss of environmental services (water, forest, biodiversity, ecosystem function, etc.), is still difficult to assess and is often underestimated. Indirect economic losses of 'market share,' following the disruption to trade after a disaster, can also go largely unnoticed. For example, almost seven years after the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake (1995) in Kobe, Japan, devastated the facilities of one of the country's primary ports, the equipment and harbor facilities have all been rebuilt and modernized, yet the amount of shipping trade in Kobe has dropped by about 15 percent from pre-earthquake revenues.⁸

⁶ By UN General Assembly resolution 54/219, on 3 February 2000, reconfirmed in resolution 56/195, January 2002.

⁷ SEI, IUCN, IISD: Coping with Climate Change: Environmental Strategies for Increasing Human Security, August 2001 (Source: Munich Re and UNEP).

⁸ Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, Kobe, November 2001.

**Total Numbers of people affected by Disasters (by continent)
1991 - 2000**



Source: EM-DAT database, CRED, 2002.

See: www.cred.be

7. While no country in the world is entirely safe, lack of capacity to limit the impact of hazards remains a major burden for developing countries. An estimated 97 percent of natural disaster-related deaths each year occur in developing countries⁹ and, although smaller in absolute figures, the percentage of economic loss in relation to the Gross National Product (GNP) in developing countries far exceeds that in developed countries. This fact becomes even more relevant for small-island developing States (SIDS). In addition, 24 of the 49 least developed countries still face high levels of disaster risk; at least six of them have been hit by between two and eight major disasters per year in the last 15 years, with long-term consequences for human development.¹⁰ These figures would be much higher, and some experts estimate at least double or more, were the consequences taken into account of the many smaller and unrecorded disasters that cause significant losses at the local community level. The chart also clearly demonstrates the considerable geographic variations in the occurrence and impact of natural hazards. Asia is disproportionately affected with approximately 43 percent of all natural disasters in the last decade. During the same period, Asia accounted for almost 70 percent of all lives lost due to natural hazards.¹¹ During the two El Niño years of 1991/92 and 1997/98, floods in China alone affected over 200 million people in each year.
8. While the world has witnessed an exponential increase in human and material losses due to natural disasters, there is an ongoing debate about the increase of the frequency and intensity of extreme hydro-meteorological events due to, in particular, climate change. There is, however, no evidence of more frequent or intense earthquakes or volcanic eruptions. For these geological hazards, the reasons for increased losses are found in the global rise of people's vulnerability, induced by currently determined paths of development. The effects of climate change and the risks posed by the increasing degradation of the environment, epitomized by deforestation, loss of biodiversity and associated knowledge, reduced water supply and desertification, can only contribute to increased concern on these issues. The capacity to cope with the impact of disasters is determined by a number of factors, including the composition and circumstances of the social group affected; for example, whether the group is rich or poor, male or female, young or old, able or disabled.

⁹ World Bank, World Development Report, 2000-1:170.

¹⁰ UNDP, ERD: Disaster Profiles of the Least Developed Countries, May 2001.

¹¹ EM-DAT database, CRED, 2002, see: www.cred.be

II. Need to Reverse Trends of Vulnerability to Natural Hazards

9. The emphasis on disaster response and humanitarian assistance has absorbed significant amounts of resources, which could have been allocated for development efforts. If this trend were to persist, coping capacities of societies in both the developed and developing countries are likely to be overwhelmed. In these circumstances, a practical alternative is to promote and broadly support local, national and regional programmes and initiatives, under the framework of the ISDR, to enable societies to become resilient to the negative impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters.
 10. Vulnerability to disasters is, to a large extent, a function of human action (or inaction) and behaviour. It describes the degree to which a socio-economic system or physical assets are either susceptible or resilient to the impact of natural hazards. It is determined by a combination of several factors, including awareness of hazards, the condition of human settlements and infrastructure, the nature and application of public policy, the resources available to a given society, and organizational abilities in all fields of disaster and risk management. The specific dimensions of social, economic and political vulnerability are also related to inequalities, gender relations, economic organizations, and ethnic or racial divisions. In addition, vulnerability is largely dependent on development practices that do not take into account the susceptibility to natural hazards. The level of risk in relation to natural disasters in a society is determined by the level of vulnerability combined with the level of probability and intensity of the occurrence of a natural hazard. Risk reduction refers to activities taken to reduce both vulnerable conditions and, when possible, the source of the hazard (especially addressing drought, floods and landslides).
 11. In order to tailor development policies that reduce vulnerability, it is convenient to review some of the global trends which convert exposure to natural hazards into disasters. These are all related, interdependent processes, dealt with elsewhere in Agenda 21¹², but they have not been sufficiently emphasized from a disaster risk reduction perspective. Lack of awareness amongst decision makers and the public about the factors and human activities that contribute to environmental degradation and disaster vulnerability are aggravating these trends.
- **Human vulnerability, environmental degradation and increasing impoverishment in developing countries**
12. There is a close correlation between increased demographic pressure, especially in developing countries (and most notably in the least developed countries), growing environmental degradation, increased human vulnerability and the intensity of the impact of disasters. Detrimental development and inappropriate use of resources are contributory factors to natural disasters. They can accelerate or amplify recurrent phenomena such as droughts. Environmental degradation increases the intensity of natural hazards, and is often the factor that transforms the hazard, or a climatic condition such as heavy downpour, into a disaster. For example, river and lake floods are aggravated by deforestation, which, in turn, causes erosion and clogs rivers. Floods or droughts leading to famines dislocate families who become refugees as they are forced to migrate elsewhere.

¹² Chapter 7: "Promoting sustainable human settlement development," Programme area E, F; Chapter 11: "Managing fragile ecosystems: Combating deforestation and drought"; Chapter 13: "Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development," Prog. areas A and B; Chapter 17: "Protection of the oceans, all kinds of seas ...," Programme areas A and G; and Chapter 18: "Protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources: application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources."

Poverty and hazard vulnerability are integrally linked and mutually reinforcing. The poor are forced to exploit environmental resources for survival, thereby increasing both the risk and exposure to disasters, in particular those triggered by floods, drought and landslides.

13. Sustainable and integrated management of natural resources, including reforestation schemes, proper land use and good management of rivers and coastal areas, will increase the resilience of communities to disasters by reversing current trends of environmental degradation.

Globalization has increased the risks faced by the marginalized and excluded. Whilst no country is safe from natural hazards, lack of capacity to limit the impact of hazards remains a major burden for developing countries. Traditional coping mechanisms have come under severe pressure and adaptation strategies, once valid, are no longer appropriate. Globalization has weakened the organizational capacities that still exist in small towns and rural areas to deal with hazards by introducing dependency factors. Due to inequitable access to resources, poor people in developing countries are far more vulnerable to negative environmental changes than their wealthier counterparts, since they lack the means to cope and recover from the impact of such changes.

14. Deforestation, land degradation, and related food security are shaped by the practices of men and women who make livelihood decisions about how to use these resources. It can be claimed that the major impacts upon these issues are due to unsustainable western consumption patterns and investment decisions in the richer nations. In poorer communities, motivated by poverty, migration, illness, etc., these decisions may also have a profound impact on the environment. In some cases, rural development practices have marginalised and segregated farming and livestock which, in many cases, have turned agriculture into an independent area of economic growth, without linkage to economic and food security of the broader community.

15. Least developed countries are more vulnerable to natural hazards. They are subject to the highest rates of population growth, which is projected to double in less than 30 years. Poverty and social

The ecological footprint

Every human requires an area of land and shallow sea for food, water, shelter, transport, energy, commerce and waste. This is called an ecological footprint.

Demographic pressures result in more forest loss and more land degradation. This means increased flooding, drought, or both. In rich nations such as the US, this ecological footprint is almost 10 hectares per person. But even in the poorest places in the US this footprint is at least one hectare.

Every day, another 200,000 newborns will require up to 200,000 hectares of what might have been a benign and necessary wilderness. More people also means more fossil fuel consumption, which means more carbon dioxide emission, which means climate change.

Such a world, climate scientists have warned repeatedly, is a world with a greater frequency of extreme events. The combination of climate change and population growth will exact a price. The latest UN calculation is that three decades from now, around 70 per cent of the world's land will be affected in some way by human activity and half the people in the world will be short of water. Many of the other half will be at risk from increased flooding. By that time, there could be eight billion people on the planet.

Source: Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives, ISDR, 2002



and economic pressures, such as migration, unemployment and illegal land tenure practices, make people more vulnerable by forcing them to live in dangerous locations, often on unsafe land and in unsafe shelters or low-cost dwellings, because there is no other land available at reasonable cost sufficiently close to employment opportunities. Disasters contribute to, and are also exacerbated by other factors that make people vulnerable, for example: unemployment, political instability, poor economic conditions, unequal distribution of wealth, food insecurity, lack of personal security, and violation of human rights. Repeated exposure to disasters can lead the poor into a downward spiral of chronic poverty, even though poverty alone is not the only vulnerability factor.

- **Trends related to climate change and disasters¹³**

16. In industrialized and transition countries, the non-sustainable overuse of resources causes pollution and ultimately leads to changes in the environment. In particular, there is an increasing likelihood of human-induced climate change,¹⁴ which, according to the latest projection of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, will result in more water-related disasters, especially for countries in tropical and subtropical latitudes. These changes in temperature and related local rainfall variations affect the environment through accelerated desertification, land degradation, and the availability of water resources, as well as reducing the overall agricultural output. There are adverse impacts on human well-being, for example, on people's health and the "slow death" caused by loss of livelihoods. In addition, climate change is expected to affect sea levels and cause climate extremes. All these factors have a compound effect on the occurrence and impact of disasters. On the one hand, they affect the intensity and frequency of extreme hydro-meteorological events, and on the other hand, they increase the vulnerability of societies. Particularly sensitive regions, such as mountainous and coastal zones, as well as island countries, are especially at risk.
17. A rise in sea-level will further exacerbate this situation in small islands and low-lying coastal areas. Storm surges may already have increased coastal erosion and damage to human settlements because of the removal of or damage to natural protective elements such as mangroves, reefs and dunes. It is known that more than one third of the world population live within 100 kilometers of coastlines and many are therefore under threat.
18. Wildland fires often occur as a consequence of extreme weather, such as droughts caused by El Nino. This can be detected and the effects predicted by existing systems for early warning and mitigation of fires. Previously, for many fire-dependent areas, the periodic fire occurrence was an integral part of the ecological development. Today, the human vulnerability and the devastating environmental effects of many wildfires are a result of demographic growth, land-use changes and climate variability. While the effects of devastating wildfires can be mitigated through early warning and local actions, wildfires are the one natural disaster that can be prevented through local actions that reduce the potential for occurrence. Mechanisms for developing community-based approaches exist but they are not widely applied. Resources to organize the transfer of technical knowledge and effective fire management networks to provide support to local communities are not sufficient.

¹³ Relates to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

¹⁴ IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Working Group II, 19 February 2001.

- **Migration and unplanned urbanization**

19. Rapid urban growth, particularly when it is accompanied by a large influx of poor migrants from rural areas, is one of the main factors contributing to increased vulnerability to natural hazards in many parts of the world. The accelerated, and often uncontrolled, growth of cities has contributed to the ecological transformation of their immediate surroundings (pressure on scarce land, deforestation, etc.). In addition, the lack of appropriate drainage systems makes some cities susceptible to flash floods and their populations to water-borne disease. Other factors contributing to the urban vulnerability include: lowering or rising of the water table; subsidence; loss of bearing capacity of soil foundations; and instability of slopes.
20. The destruction of natural resources is one of the factors that forces people to seek a new future elsewhere, for example, by migrating to urban areas or uncultivated regions. In the past three decades, the urban population of developing countries has tripled to 1.3 billion. The growth of large urban areas, especially the 'megacities' in the developing world, poses a new vulnerability, for example, in its proximity to earthquake- or flood-prone zones. In the 1990s, 60-70 percent of urbanization was illegal.¹⁵ More and more populations are forced, through lack of choice, to expand into disaster prone areas such as flood plains, unstable hillsides and deforested lands, therefore causing disproportionate setbacks to the economies and livelihoods of the affected communities and nations when disaster occurs.

- **Increasing infrastructure vulnerability**

21. Recent catastrophic earthquakes highlight other key deficiencies and trends in the approach to disaster risk reduction, such as a poor understanding by decision makers of seismic related risk, as well as the tendency of some builders to use the cheapest designs and construction materials available to increase short-term economic returns on their investment. At the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Japan, 90 percent of immediate deaths (more than 5,000) were caused by the collapse of buildings. Another aspect of infrastructure vulnerability caused by natural hazards is related to energy production in hydroelectric power plants. For example, drought can cause problems for production of sufficient energy for the community, and floods are imminent if the dams are full and need to be emptied quickly.
22. By way of a domino effect, natural hazards can trigger technological hazards, which in turn can cause environmental and humanitarian disasters. In major industrial infrastructure areas, extreme natural hazards, such as earthquakes or floods, can result in environmental disasters, a fact not given enough consideration in some regions. This should be taken into account by carrying out environmental and human risk assessment.
23. Current trends towards a globalized society have made societies much more dependent on services and infrastructure "lifelines," in both urban and rural areas, including transportation, water and electric supply, gas, drainage, sanitation, storage facilities and communication networks. A failure of these services due to natural or other hazards can have considerable consequences even for people in areas not directly affected. The concentration of political, economic and other resources in an urban area can have national, regional and even international repercussions. More specifically, the impact of a natural (or other) hazard on an urban centre can have a far-reaching effect on a wide range of social groups in that environment. However, there is likely to be a particularly significant impact on women since female-headed households are often disproportionately represented in informal settlements found in urban communities.

¹⁵ UNCHS, Risk and Disaster Management Unit, Urban Development Branch: ISDR public awareness kit, September 2001.

III. Strategies for Development Policies to Reduce Vulnerability to Disasters

24. Disaster reduction strategies are aimed at enabling societies at risk to become engaged in the conscious management of risk and the reduction of vulnerability. The adoption of appropriate development policies can reduce disaster risk. These policies should be gender sensitive and need the necessary political commitment. They involve the adoption of suitable regulatory and other legal measures, institutional reform, improved analytical and methodological capabilities, financial planning, education and awareness. Risk reduction should be seen as a comprehensive process that goes beyond traditional response to the impact of individual national hazards. This process should be multi-sector and inter-disciplinary in nature and comprise a wide range of interrelated activities at the local, national, regional and international levels.
25. Based on the lessons drawn from the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR, 1990-99),¹⁶ four overriding objectives have been identified as the guiding principles of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.¹⁷ These overall objectives provide broad guidelines for action by national governments, civil society organizations, regional institutions and international organizations:
- **Obtaining political commitment from public authorities.** This objective needs to be addressed through increased intersectoral coordination at all levels, the adoption of risk management strategies and the allocation of appropriate resources, including the development of new funding mechanisms. Disaster reduction should be dealt with as a primary policy issue for which public authorities should assume responsibility and should be pursued as a cross-cutting issue aimed at ensuring policy integration among various sectors and across topics such as agriculture, food security, health and education.
 - **Increasing public awareness** and public participation to reduce vulnerability to hazards. This involves programmes related to formal and non-formal education and should be addressed through public information, education and multidisciplinary professional training. The media, schools and higher education systems, as well as organizations such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent and locally based NGOs around the world, have a crucial role to play.
 - **Fostering better understanding and knowledge of the causes of disasters** through the transfer and exchange of experiences and by providing greater access to relevant data and information. The issues to be addressed in this context are: the assessment and analysis of gender-specific socio-economic impact of disasters; the construction of databases on disasters; the formulation of suitable coping strategies for different social groups; the introduction of early warning systems; and the promotion of relevant scientific research, which takes into account both indigenous or traditional knowledge and the development and transfer of new knowledge and technologies. Efforts to link natural resource management with disaster reduction should also be encouraged.
 - **Stimulating interdisciplinary and intersectoral partnerships** and the expansion of risk reduction networking amongst governments at national and local levels, greater involvement of the private sector, academic institutions, the Red Cross and Red Crescent

¹⁶ Including the Yokohama Strategy adopted in 1994, the strategy document resulting from the 1999 IDNDR Programme Forum, entitled a "Safer World in the 21st Century", and the UNGA Resolution A/54/219.

¹⁷ ISDR Inter-Agency Task Force, Framework for Action for the Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, May 2001.

Societies, NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs). This will require effective coordination mechanisms, such as appropriate institutional arrangements for disaster management, preparedness, emergency response and early warning, as well as the incorporation of disaster reduction concerns in national planning processes.

26. **Globalization:** The relationship between disaster and risk reduction and globalization will constitute a major challenge in the formulation of future disaster reduction strategies. The desire for quick economic returns and increasing deregulation often lead to increased vulnerability to disasters by encouraging unregulated construction, the inappropriate siting of important facilities, deforestation and the destabilizing of slopes for potential landslides. On the other hand, disaster and risk reduction measures are needed to protect investment trade opportunities, whilst ensuring that no new risks are created, and that business is not interrupted by preventable destruction due to natural hazards. In particular, more effective capacities and methodologies for assessing the economic impact of natural disasters will need to be developed. This will require ongoing analysis of the implications of such impact on the economic competitiveness of national economies. In a globalizing world, risk reduction is an essential element in building competitiveness and a basis for sustainable development. A creative partnership will need to be developed between governments and the private sector in pursuing a strategy in this regard.
27. **Transboundary nature of natural hazards:** The cause and impact of natural hazards often involve adjoining countries which highlights the need for a harmonized approach to the management of such hazards related to, for example, transboundary river basins, volcanoes and seismic faults. Regional and subregional approaches, strategies and institutional arrangements are therefore necessary. Efficiency can be optimized through the exchange of experiences among countries and constructive dialogue among stakeholders through participatory processes. Risk assessment and monitoring, information exchange and early warning systems, enhanced preparedness and response capacities, particularly in border areas, can be facilitated by the conclusion of subregional and regional agreements.



IV. Specific Actions

28. In the context of the objectives outlined above, the following areas should be seen as constituting the key elements of an effective disaster reduction strategy:
29. **Capacity building and strengthening of institutional arrangements** at all levels is necessary to address risk reduction as an ongoing activity, based on the need to ensure the existence of disaster reduction related legislation, land-use regulation, building codes and reinforced links to environmental protection. Capacity building at the national level should include the development of an integrated disaster risk management plan that covers risk assessment, early warning systems, training and public awareness programmes, transfer of technical knowledge, emergency response management and recovery resources, including the strengthening of community-based organizations. This capacity building needs to take into account other primary actors in disaster risk management such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and other major players at the local level. It also includes the increased capacity, sector synergies and networking for sustainable management of forest, land, and water resources.
30. **Advocacy for the integration of disaster risk reduction in national development plans**, which should include risk assessments and related measures as basic requirements to deal with medium and risk management and reduction. This requires the integrated participation of all relevant sectors (environment, finance, transport, construction, agriculture, education and health). Public policy and local development plans are also crucial to adequately minimize the impact of disasters. The implementation of local sustainable development plans and activities, such as Local Agenda 21 initiatives, should include disaster risk assessments and measures.
31. Linked to the above, the **design of development projects** should take risk assessment into account at the appraisal stage. Environmental impact assessments should systematically include a section on hazard proneness and consider disaster reduction measures where appropriate, with particular regard to the protection of lifeline infrastructure and critical facilities, such as health and education. In rural programmes and drought-prone areas, specific attention should be paid to food security and the promotion of agriculture techniques and inter-cropping that reduce hazard-related agriculture losses. Vulnerability goes far beyond geographic location and thus a holistic approach is advocated. Vulnerability assessments or hazard mapping can forget or overlook the expertise of a local population. This resource, if harnessed and developed from the beginning of a project, can be a valuable asset. Gender impact analysis should also be taken into account, highlighting the need for greater integration of gender equality issues in sustainable development and risk reduction goals.
32. Development of **public awareness programmes** and campaigns on the relationships linking sustainable development, natural hazards, vulnerabilities and disasters, to enhance disaster reduction measures. The process starts with formal educational programmes including curricula revision, teacher training and development of resource centres. However, the process needs to expand to all levels of society by training efforts, especially targeting professionals and community-based leaders and organizations. Strategies to support community mobilization and action for disaster reduction are also essential. Involvement of the media in public awareness programmes would ensure that the information reaches a larger segment of society. Dissemination of easily comprehensible information to those who most need it is often the weakest link.
33. Creating and implementing **comprehensive urban development strategies and land use plans**, provide a number of opportunities to mitigate damages caused by hazards. As location is

the key factor, land-use plans and mapping tools should be used to determine the level of risk and to identify the most suitable use for vulnerable areas (e.g., location of buildings, roads, power plants, and storage of fuels). Local governments also need to play an increasing role with regard to issues such as building standards, including the enforcement of building codes, the regulation and taxation of land and property markets, planning, infrastructure construction and management. The retrofitting of existing structures that are vulnerable is also necessary in order to “reduce the possibility of injury.”

34. Global, regional, national and local **early warning systems** and preparedness schemes need to be strengthened and made more effective. Improving communication flows is imperative. The objective of early warning is to provide individuals and communities exposed to disaster risk with accurate information about an impending hazard as early as possible, allowing them to act in a timely and appropriate manner to reduce the probability of suffering, personal injury, death and property losses. Increased sophistication in prediction technology, trained professionals and adequate finances are not effective if there remains poor communication amongst authorities and disaster managers. In the face of a disaster, this can lead to conflict, contradiction and confusion with bad decisions being taken. Early warning must be more than a technological instrument to detect, monitor and submit warnings and alerts. It should also include identification of hazards, risk assessments and combined efforts required by all sectors to plan ahead and build people's capacity to respond rapidly and appropriately at the local level, and, more specifically, to identify increasing vulnerabilities in their communities. Early warning needs to become part of a management information system for decision-making in the context of national institutional frameworks for disaster management and as part of national and local strategies and programmes for disaster risk reduction. The utilization of indices and indicators is an important tool for environmental vulnerability but results must reach the appropriate decision makers. There is little point in monitoring if there are inadequate resources and support for follow-up actions.
35. Continued research regarding the **relationship of climate, natural hazards and related socio-cultural and environmental vulnerability**, gender analysis and gender specific data-collection, as well as the coordinated application of the results generated by research programmes at the national and international levels should be supported. This includes, in particular, improved international cooperation to reduce the impact of climate variables, such as El Niño and La Niña. Some suggested actions are:
- Provide scientific, technical and financial assistance to support the establishment of the “International Centre for the Study of the El Niño Phenomenon” and other regional and subregional institutions and networks devoted to addressing the problems caused by natural disasters, mainly those associated with extreme weather events linked to climate change.
 - Encourage international joint observation, research and the dissemination of scientific knowledge for effective disaster and risk reduction of sudden-impact disasters (e.g. floods, sand storms, forest fires, storms, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions) and slow-onset disasters (e.g. sea level rise, desertification, droughts), and ensure wide dissemination of warnings.



V. The Outcomes from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

36. Losses from disasters caused by natural hazards will continue to increase unless there is a shift towards proactive solutions. Sustainable development is not possible without addressing vulnerability to hazards. It is a crosscutting concern relating to the social, economic, environmental and humanitarian sectors. Building on the legacy of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999) and the Action Plan adopted at the First World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction held in Yokohama in 1994, the World Summit on Sustainable Development provided the opportunity for the conceptual integration of disaster reduction within the agenda of sustainable development. Disaster risk reduction was therefore an emerging issue taken into consideration during the preparatory phase of WSSD.

The outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development brought more relevance and commitment towards disaster reduction and a multi-hazard approach to reduce risk and vulnerability, within the context of sustainable development, through:

- a) The political statement adopted by Heads of State at the WSSD acknowledges that today, the impacts of natural disasters are more frequent and more devastating, with developing countries more vulnerable to hazards than ever before. The challenge, therefore, lies in recognising the severe threat that natural disasters pose to sustainable development, and requires immediate attention at the global, regional and local levels.
- b) The Plan of Implementation, which includes commitments related to disaster and vulnerability reduction and improved early warning capacities under the sections of protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Africa, small-island developing States and means of implementation (see extracts, annex 2).
- c) A set of initiatives and partnerships, which support the implementation of the areas committed to, were launched during the WSSD. Partnerships already underway, in support of the ISDR objectives, include: integrating early warning and disaster risk management into the sustainable development agenda and practice; regional partnerships for Central America and SIDS for increased coping capacities to confront and reduce vulnerability to natural hazards; resilient cities; and environmental emergency preparedness (see list in Annex 3).

ANNEX 1

TERMINOLOGY: Basic terms of disaster risk reduction¹⁸

Coping capacity

The manner in which people and organizations use existing resources to achieve various beneficial ends during unusual, abnormal, and adverse conditions of a disaster event or process.

The strengthening of coping capacities usually builds resilience to withstand the effects of natural and other hazards.

Disaster

A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community/society to cope using its own resources.

A disaster is a function of the risk process. It results from the combination of hazards, conditions of vulnerability and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce the potential negative consequences of risk.

Disaster risk reduction (disaster reduction)

The systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse impact of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

The disaster risk reduction framework, as described in this review, is composed of:

- *Risk awareness and assessment, including hazard analysis and vulnerability/capacity analysis;*
- *Knowledge development, including education, training, research and information;*
- *Public commitment and institutional frameworks, including organizational, policy, legislation and community action;*
- *Application of measures, including environmental management, land use and urban planning, protection of critical facilities, application of science and technology, partnership and networking, and financial instruments; and*
- *Early warning systems, including forecasting, dissemination of warnings, preparedness measures and reaction capacities.*

Early warning

The provision of timely and effective information, through identified institutions, that allow individuals at risk of a disaster to take action to avoid or reduce their risk and prepare for effective response.

Early warning systems consist of three elements (i) forecasting and prediction of impending events, (ii) processing and dissemination of warnings to political authorities and population, and (iii) undertaking appropriate reaction to warnings.

¹⁸ Extract from "Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives," ISDR, Preliminary Version, 2002.



El Niño-southern oscillation (ENSO)

An irregularly occurring pattern of abnormal warming of the surface coastal waters off Ecuador, Peru and Chile. This coupled atmosphere-ocean phenomenon is associated with the fluctuation of intertropical surface pressure pattern and circulation in the Indian and Pacific oceans, called the Southern Oscillation.

There has been a number of attempts to define El Niño, both quantitatively and qualitatively, but none has achieved universal recognition. This phenomenon triggers a shift in seasonal patterns of weather systems over many subtropical and mid-latitude parts of the globe.

La Niña is the opposite of an El Niño event, during which waters in the west Pacific are warmer than normal and trade winds are stronger.

Hazard

A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon and/or human activity, which may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption, or environmental degradation.

Hazards can include latent conditions that may represent future threats and can have different origins: natural (geological, hydrometeorological and biological) and/or induced by human processes (environmental degradation and technological hazards). Hazards can be single, sequential or combined in their origin and effects. Each hazard is characterized by its location, intensity and probability.

Mitigation

Structural and non-structural measures undertaken to limit the adverse impact of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards.

Preparedness

Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of disaster, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary removal of people and property from a threatened location.

Prevention

Activities to provide outright avoidance of the adverse impact of hazards and related environmental, technological and biological disasters.

Depending on social and technical feasibility and cost/benefit considerations, investing in preventive measures is justified in areas frequently affected by disaster. In the context of public awareness raising and education, prevention refers to attitude and behaviour towards a "culture of prevention."

Recovery

Decisions and actions taken after a disaster with a view to restoring the living conditions of the stricken community, while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce disaster risk.

Recovery (rehabilitation and reconstruction) is an opportunity to develop and apply disaster risk reduction measures.

Resilience / resilient

The capacity of a system, community or society to resist or to change in order to obtain an acceptable level in functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is

capable of organizing itself, and the ability to increase its capacity for learning and adaptation, including the capacity to recover from a disaster.

Risk

The probability of harmful consequences, or expected loss (of lives, people injured, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable/capable conditions. Conventionally, risk is expressed by the equation $\text{Risk} = \text{Hazards} \times \text{Vulnerability} / \text{Capacity}$.

Beyond expressing a probability of physical harm, it is crucial to appreciate that risks are always created or exist within social systems. It is important to consider the social contexts in which risks occur and that people therefore do not necessarily share the same perceptions of risk and their underlying causes.

Risk assessment

A process to determine the nature and extent of risk by analysing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability/capacity that could pose a potential threat or harm to people, property, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.

The process of conducting a risk assessment is based in a review of both technical features of hazards such as their location, intensity and probability, and also the analysis of the physical, social and economic dimensions of vulnerability, while taking particular account of the coping capabilities pertinent to the risk scenarios.

Risk management

The systematic management of administrative decisions, organization, operational skills and responsibilities to apply policies, strategies and practices for *disaster risk reduction*.

Vulnerability

A set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economical, and environmental factors, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

Positive factors, that increase the ability of people and the society they live in to cope effectively with hazards, that increase their resilience, or that otherwise reduce their susceptibility, are considered as capacities.



ANNEX 2 EXTRACTS¹

from the text of the United Nations Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20) Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002

Full text of the Report is available at <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>

Chapter II. Poverty eradication

7. (l) Combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought and floods through such measures as improved use of climate and weather information and forecasts, early warning systems, land and natural resource management, agricultural practices and ecosystem conservation in order to reverse current trends and minimize degradation of land and water resources, including through the provision of adequate and predictable financial resources to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, as one of the tools for poverty eradication;

11. (b) Use low-cost and sustainable materials and appropriate technologies for the construction of adequate and secure housing for the poor, with financial and technological assistance to developing countries, taking into account their culture, climate, specific social conditions and vulnerability to natural disasters;

* * *

Chapter IV. Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development

24. Human activities are having an increasing impact on the integrity of ecosystems that provide essential resources and services for human well-being and economic activities. Managing the natural resources base in a sustainable and integrated manner is essential for sustainable development. In this regard, to reverse the current trend in natural resource degradation as soon as possible, it is necessary to implement strategies which should include targets adopted at the national and, where appropriate, regional levels to protect ecosystems and to achieve integrated management of land, water and living resources, while strengthening regional, national and local capacities.

* * *

¹ Extracts prepared by UN/ISDR.

26. Develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries, through actions at all levels to:

(d) Develop programmes for mitigating the effects of extreme water-related events.

* * *

37. An integrated, multi-hazard, inclusive approach to address vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, is an essential element of a safer world in the 21st century. Actions are required at all levels to:

- (a) Strengthen the role of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and encourage the international community to provide the necessary financial resources to its Trust Fund;
- (b) Support the establishment of effective regional, sub-regional and national strategies and scientific and technical institutional support for disaster management;
- (c) Strengthen the institutional capacities of countries and promote international joint observation and research, through improved surface based monitoring and increased use of satellite data, dissemination of technical and scientific knowledge and the provision of assistance to vulnerable countries;
- (d) Reduce the risks of flooding and drought in vulnerable countries by, inter-alia, promoting wetland and watershed protection and restoration, improved land-use planning, improving and applying more widely techniques and methodologies for assessing the potential adverse effects of climate change on wetlands and, as appropriate, assisting countries that are particularly vulnerable to these effects;
- (e) Improve techniques and methodologies for assessing effects of climate change and encourage the continuing assessment of these adverse effects by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;
- (f) Encourage the dissemination and use of traditional and indigenous knowledge to mitigate the impact of disasters, and promote community-based disaster management planning by local authorities, including through training activities and raising public awareness;
- (g) Support the on-going voluntary contribution of, as appropriate, NGOs, the scientific community, and other partners in the management of natural disasters according to agreed, relevant guidelines;
- (h) Develop and strengthen early warning systems and information networks in disaster management, consistent with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;
- (i) Develop and strengthen capacity at all levels to collect and disseminate scientific and technical information, including the improvement of early warning systems for prediction of extreme weather events, especially El Niño/La Niña, through the provisions of assistance to institutions devoted to addressing such events, including the International Centre for the Study of the El Niño phenomenon;
- (j) Promote cooperation for the prevention and mitigation of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from major technological and other disasters with an adverse impact on the environment in order to enhance the capabilities of affected countries to cope with such situations.

* * *

38. Change in the Earth's climate and its adverse effects are a common concern of humankind. We remain deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks of negative impacts of climate change and recognize that, in this context, the problems of poverty, land degradation, access to water and food and human health remain in the centre of global attention...

* * *



41. Strengthen the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa to address causes of desertification and land degradation in order to maintain and restore land, and to address poverty resulting from land degradation. This would include actions at all levels to:

- (d) Integrate measures to prevent and combat desertification as well as to mitigate the effects of drought through relevant policies and programmes, such as land, water and forest management, agriculture, rural development, early warning systems, environment, energy, natural resources, health and education, and poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies;
- (e) Provide affordable local access to information to improve monitoring and early warning related to desertification and drought;

* * *

42. Mountain ecosystems support particular livelihoods, and include significant watershed resources, biological diversity and unique flora and fauna. Many are particularly fragile and vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and need specific protection. Actions at all levels are required to...

* * *

VII. Sustainable development of small island developing States

58. (h) Extend assistance to small island developing States in support of local communities and appropriate national and regional organizations of small island developing States for comprehensive hazard and risk management, disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, and help relieve the consequences of disasters, extreme weather events and other emergencies;

- (i) Support the finalization and subsequent early operationalization, on agreed terms, of economic, social and environmental vulnerability indices and related indicators as tools for the achievement of the sustainable development of the small island developing States;
- (j) Assist small island developing States in mobilizing adequate resources and partnerships for their adaptation needs relating to the adverse effects of climate change, sea level rise and climate variability, consistent with commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, where applicable;

* * *

VIII. Sustainable Development for Africa

65. Deal effectively with natural disasters and conflicts, including their humanitarian and environmental impacts, recognizing that conflicts in Africa have hindered, and in many cases, obliterated both the gains and efforts aimed at sustainable development, with the most vulnerable members of society, particularly women and children, being the most impacted victims, through efforts and initiatives, at all levels, to:

- (a) Provide financial and technical assistance to strengthen the capacities of African countries, including institutional and human capacity, including at the local level, for effective disaster management, including observation and early warning systems, assessments, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery;
- (b) Provide support to African countries to enable them to better deal with the displacement of people as a result of natural disasters and conflicts and put in place rapid response mechanisms;

- (c) Support Africa's efforts for the prevention and resolution, management and mitigation of conflicts and its early response to emerging conflict situations to avert tragic humanitarian consequences;
- (d) Provide support to refugee host countries in rehabilitating infrastructure and environment, including ecosystems and habitats, that were damaged in the process of receiving and resettling refugees.

* * *

X. Means of implementation

89. Reduce unsustainable debt burden through actions as debt relief and, as appropriate, debt cancellation and other innovative mechanisms geared to comprehensively address the debt problems of developing countries, in particular the poorest and most heavily indebted ones...

- a) Implement speedily, effectively and fully the enhanced heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative, which should be fully financed through additional resources, taking into consideration, as appropriate, measures to address any fundamental changes in the economic circumstances of those developing countries with unsustainable debt burden caused by natural catastrophes, severe terms-of-trade shocks or affected by conflict, taking into account initiatives which have been undertaken to reduce outstanding indebtedness;

* * *

105. Promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and development, transfer and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, as set out in Chapter 34 of Agenda 21, including through urgent actions at all levels to:

- (e) Promote the access and transfer of technology related to early warning systems and to mitigation programmes to developing countries affected by natural disasters.

* * *

109. Improve policy and decision-making at all levels through, inter alia, improved collaboration between natural and social scientists, and between scientists and policy makers, including actions at all levels to:

- (a) indigenous knowledge in a manner respectful of the holders of that knowledge and consistent with national law;
- (b) Make greater use of integrated scientific assessments, risk assessments and interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches;

* * *

130. Encourage further work on indicators for sustainable development by countries at the national level, including integration of gender aspects, on a voluntary basis, in line with conditions and priorities.

134. Support efforts to prevent and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, including through actions at all levels to:

- (a) Provide affordable access to disaster-related information for early warning purposes;
- (b) Translate available data, particularly from global meteorological observation systems, into timely and useful products.



ANNEX 3

List of selected “Type 2” Partnerships

Among the so-called “type 2 outcome” initiatives and partnerships, launched during the WSSD to support the implementation of the areas committed to in the Plan of Implementation, several were related to disaster reduction and early warning.

These are partnerships with a varying grade of financing available, and lead by either governments, NGOs or the UN (see more information at: www.johannesburgsummit.org/).

The following ones are of immediate interest to the work of ISDR:

- Integrating early warning and disaster risk management into the sustainable development agenda and practice (supported by the WG2 and convened by the ISDR Secretariat);
- Subregional Initiative for the Promotion and Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) (presented by El Salvador on behalf of the governments of the region);
- Initiative to Develop Capacities in SIDS to Manage Vulnerability and Build Resilience Particularly to Disasters (presented by UNDP, Capacity 21, with an additional specific initiative for the South Pacific, presented by SOPAC);
- Integrated Approach to Prevention, Preparedness for and Response to Environmental Emergencies (presented by OCHA/UNEP);
- Resilient Communities (presented by ICLEI and involving the ISDR Secretariat); and
- Enhanced capacity in disaster management for Southern Africa (presented by Germany and Mozambique).



**INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE
ON DISASTER REDUCTION**

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

**For the Implementation of the
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)**

June, 2001

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INTRODUCTION

In many parts of the world, disasters caused by natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, drought, wildfires, tropical cyclones and associated storm surges, tsunami and volcanic eruptions have exacted a heavy toll in terms of the loss of human lives and the destruction of economic and social infrastructure, not to mention their negative impact on already fragile ecosystems. Indeed, the period between 1960 and 2000, witnessed an significant increase in the occurrence, severity and intensity of disasters, especially during the 1990s. This trend poses a major threat to sustainable development and therefore needs to be addressed by the international community with a sense of urgency.

While natural hazards will continue to occur, human action can either increase or reduce the vulnerability of societies to these hazards and related technological and environmental disasters by focusing on socio-economic factors determining such vulnerability. For example, population growth as well as changing demographic and economic patterns, which has led to uncontrolled urbanization, together with widespread poverty have forced large numbers of people to live in disaster-prone areas and sub-optimal shelters, thus increasing vulnerability. On the other hand, there is considerable scope for the reduction of risk through the application of disaster prevention and mitigation efforts based, for instance, on modern forecasting technology in terms of the development of early warning systems as well as improved land use settlements plans and building practices, provided that societies ensure the application of these practices in a manner consistent with the needs of sustainable development.

These considerations led the international community to launch the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR, 1990 - 1999) in order to increase awareness of the importance of disaster reduction. The experience of the Decade has prompted a major conceptual shift from disaster response to disaster reduction underscoring the crucial role of human action.

The emphasis on disaster response, the main area of focus in the past, has absorbed significant amounts of resources, which would normally be allocated for development efforts. If this trend were to persist, coping capacities of societies in both the developed and developing countries, are likely to be overwhelmed. In the circumstances, a practical alternative is to promote and support an international disaster reduction strategy, and initiatives carried out within this framework, to enable societies to become resilient to the negative impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), as the successor arrangement to the IDNDR, is designed to respond to this need by proceeding from protection against hazards to the management of risk through the integration of risk reduction into sustainable development.

In light of the fact that disaster prevention and disaster reduction have tended to be used interchangeably, the nature of the relationship between these two concepts should be clarified. In the more restrictive sense of the term, disaster prevention may be seen as involving the adoption of measures aimed at avoiding disasters, which is not always possible. On the other hand, disaster reduction narrowly interpreted implies that measures would be adopted to reduce or limit the severity of disasters. However, in the broader sense of the expression, disaster reduction involves all measures designed to avoid or limit the adverse impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. Viewed in these terms, disaster reduction includes disaster prevention and, as the title of the Strategy suggests, has emerged as the all-encompassing concept.

The Framework for Action embodied in this document reflects the conceptual underpinnings of the ISDR and identifies the supporting institutional arrangements based on resolutions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and General Assembly, as well as on decisions of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction (IATF).

It should be noted that the present Framework for Action is part of an evolving process reflecting changes and emerging trends in the field of disaster reduction and will therefore be reviewed on a regular basis in order to fully respond to needs and constraints arising with time.

Part I provides a brief definition of the main concepts involved in disaster reduction (i.e. natural hazards, vulnerability and risks). It also outlines the vision of disaster reduction embodied in the ISDR, based on the IDNDR experience, the Yokohama Strategy (1994) and the strategy “A Safer World in the 21st Century: Disaster and Risk Reduction”. The latter has been adopted by the participants of the IDNDR Programme Forum in July 1999 and endorsed by the ECOSOC (E/Res/1999/63) as well as by an omnibus resolution of the General Assembly (A/Res/54/219) in accordance with the recommendation of the Secretary General’s Report on the successor arrangements to IDNDR (A/54/497). Finally it recalls the request by the General Assembly for the ISDR to continue international cooperation on El Niño (A/Res/54/220) and strengthen disaster reduction capacities through Early Warning (A/Res/54/219).

Part II describes the institutional arrangements for the implementation of the ISDR, focusing in particular on the Inter-Agency Task Force and the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the ISDR.

The Annex presents in diagrammatic form the proposed ISDR Framework for action.

PART I

1. **DEFINITION**

The *International Strategy for Disaster Reduction* revolves around three major concepts, namely natural hazards, vulnerability and risk, for which the following definitions apply:

- *NATURAL HAZARDS* comprise phenomena such as earthquakes; volcanic activity; landslides; tsunamis; tropical cyclones and other severe storms; tornadoes and high winds; river floods and coastal flooding; wildfires and associated haze; drought; sand/dust storm; infestations.
- *VULNERABILITY* to disasters is a function of human actions and behaviour. It describes the degree to which a socio-economic system is either susceptible or resilient to the impact of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters. The degree of vulnerability is determined by a combination of several factors including hazard awareness, the condition of human settlements and infrastructure, public policy and administration, and organized abilities in all fields of disaster management. Poverty is also one of the main causes of vulnerability in most parts of the world.

In this context, a *NATURAL DISASTER* is to be understood as the consequences of the impact of a natural hazard on a socio-economic system with a given level of vulnerability which prevents the affected society from coping adequately with this impact. The *ISDR* encompasses *TECHNOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS* only when caused by natural hazards. The expression “natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters” therefore describes situations where natural disasters have been compounded by the occurrence of technological and environmental damages.

- The *RISK* of a disaster is the probability of a disaster occurring. The evaluation of a risk includes vulnerability assessment and impact prediction taking into account thresholds that define acceptable risk for a given society.

2. **THE CONCEPT OF DISASTER REDUCTION EMBODIED IN THE ISDR**

The Geneva Mandate On Disaster Reduction, which was adopted at the IDNDR Programme Forum (July 1999), reaffirms the necessity for disaster reduction and risk management to become essential elements of government policies. In this respect, the IDNDR experience, the Yokohama Strategy (1994) and the Strategy “A Safer World in the 21st Century: Disaster and Risk Reduction”(1999) provide the basis for future endeavors with regard to disaster reduction. Building on these precedents, the ISDR will strive towards:

- Enabling all societies to become resilient to natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters, in order to reduce environmental, human, economic and social losses

This vision will find its realization by focusing on the following four objectives:

- Increasing public awareness;
- Obtaining commitment from public authorities;
- Stimulating interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral partnership and expanding risk reduction networking at all levels;
- Improving further the scientific knowledge of the causes of disasters and the effects of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters on societies

In addition, the General Assembly separately mandated the ISDR:

- To continue international cooperation to reduce the impacts of El Niño and other climate variability;
- To strengthen disaster reduction capacities through early warning.

2.1 The ISDR Vision

To enable all societies to become resilient to natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters, in order to reduce environmental, human, economic and social losses

The capacity of human societies to withstand disasters – “resilience”- is determined by the internal strengths and weaknesses of a given society. To understand these internal dynamics, a variety of factors, including social and economic disparities within the community, would need to be taken into account.

The impact of any disaster is felt directly in terms of immediate human suffering as well as economic and social losses. In many regions of the world it aggravates the condition of poverty, which has been recognized as a major cause of vulnerability. In the medium and long-term it affects vital sectors of the economy including industry, agriculture, health and education.

Appropriate disaster reduction strategies and initiatives at the national and international level, as well as the implementation of Agenda 21, can strengthen the likelihood of reducing or mitigating the human, economic and social losses caused by disasters, and thereby facilitate sustained growth.

These strategies, in turn, require standardized concepts. As illustrated by the IDNDR experience, local, national, regional and global constituencies, should adopt common standards that can quantify losses and assist in setting priorities to improve planning, policy development, programme formulation and implementation.

The participation of communities has proved to be an essential element for successful disaster reduction policy and practice. Vulnerable communities, especially in developing countries, are forced by circumstances to adopt measures based on experience to limit losses from disasters. They often demonstrate extraordinary capacities to prevent such losses. Examples of the merits of incorporating community-based approaches to risk management are numerous, although the adoption of these approaches faces too frequently unnecessary barriers.

Local authorities need to take decisions on the basis of specific scenarios related to vulnerability to different hazards. Risk-assessment tools for land use planners need to be developed taking into account national and global experiences gained during the previous decade.

In order to create disaster-resilient societies and prevent human, economic and social losses, it is of paramount importance to engage public participation at all levels of implementation of the Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

The ISDR vision can be achieved through 1) Public awareness, 2) Commitment by public authorities, 3) Multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral partnership and networking, and 4) Scientific knowledge.

2.2. Public Awareness

Objective:

To increase public awareness of the risks that natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters pose to societies and economies. Further, to increase awareness of existing solutions to reduce vulnerability to hazards, in order to build a global community dedicated to making risk and disaster prevention a public value.

Background:

Promoting a culture of prevention as advocated by IDNDR requires creative and innovative approaches to disseminate its message and to make it an integral part of an overall planning process, targeting especially communities in disaster-prone countries.

Past disasters have served to raise political awareness of the necessity to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards. However, practical tools and guidelines are still lacking or insufficient. To raise public awareness of disaster reduction, there is a need for standardized and widely known indicators to assess risk and implement early warning systems and mitigation programs.

Disaster reduction starts from the understanding of the elements of risk: hazard, vulnerability and resilience. Despite progress made during the IDNDR in building awareness on these issues that led to political commitments and to the incorporation of disaster reduction concepts into national development plans, many factors continue to increase the vulnerability of societies worldwide to the forces of nature. There is an increasing expectation on the part of these societies for concrete application of disaster reduction policies and practices.

In this respect, horizontal exchanges of experience and approaches between local communities, cities, countries and regions are effective means of increasing public awareness, which has enabled many vulnerable communities to apply best practices and techniques to both risk management and disaster reduction.

Issues to be addressed:

- Developing sustained programmes of public information.
- Including disaster prevention in educational programme and curricula at all levels, including school level.
- Institutionalizing training pertaining to hazards and their impact, risk management and disaster prevention practices, for all age-groups.



2.3 Commitment by public authorities

Objective:

To obtain commitment by public authorities to reduce risks to people, their livelihoods, social and economic infrastructures, and their environment, with special attention given to the poor.

Background:

Public authorities face a major challenge in transforming political declarations of support into action. This would require that the “ Culture of Prevention” should influence people who hold decision-making powers not only within national governments but also in local authorities. The ISDR provides a platform to develop even further the basic principles of multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral involvement, engaging both officials responsible for policy formulation as well as those responsible for implementation.

The assignment of responsibility for disaster reduction varies according to national legislation and local regulations. However, joint approaches between local authorities, technical entities and communities to assess risk and to prepare scenarios and action plans, have proved useful. Effective action requires constant dialogue, mutual understanding, co-ordination and co-operation between these entities.

Building commitment for disaster-reduction policies include joint scenario planning and economic incentives for local mitigation. Once concretized at the local level, such initiatives can be consolidated at the national and global level.

Many of the disaster reduction activities initiated at the local level have informed principles for action at the global level, while the contrary is also true. Consequently there is a dialectical relationship between activities carried out at different levels.

Issues to be addressed:

- Engaging relevant public authorities, community leaders, private entrepreneurs and experts in partnerships, to ensure the reorientation of the allocation of resources to facilitate the incorporation of disaster reduction components in relevant development projects and programmes.
- Identifying innovative funding involving private and public sectors, so as to support continued commitment to risk management and disaster prevention work.
- Linking efforts of disaster reduction more closely with the Agenda 21 implementation process for enhanced synergy with environmental and sustainable development issues. In this context, periodic reviews of accomplishments in hazard, risk and disaster reduction efforts relating to policy planning, institutional arrangements, and capacity building at all levels should be undertaken by public authorities. Post disaster evaluation from a disaster reduction perspective should also be carried out.

- Reducing severe and recurrent disasters, by promoting a proactive interface between natural resources management and risk-reduction practices;
- Developing and applying risk-management strategies and measures at all levels bearing in mind the specific requirements of the poor, urban concentrations and agricultural sectors.
- Facilitating the improved coordination of international and inter-agency efforts and promoting coordination of activities on the regional and especially national levels across sectors in policy-making, planning and implementation of disaster-related initiatives.



2.4 Multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral partnerships and networking

Objective:

To stimulate multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral partnerships and expand risk reduction networks by engaging public participation at all stages of the implementation of the ISDR.

Background:

Throughout the IDNDR, and particularly in recent years, the IDNDR National Committees and Focal Points proved to be key organizational mechanisms in many countries by expanding the understanding and perceptions of disaster reduction and increasing the opportunities for association of diverse professional interests committed to the subject.

These bodies, which are multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral in nature, made an important contribution in developing national strategies for their countries and served as a basis for sub-regional, regional and international cooperation with regard to natural disaster reduction. They also contributed to the wide dissemination of the disaster reduction message.

However, the proliferation of actors in the field of disaster reduction in the recent years calls for reviewing and re-committing appropriate forms of local, national and regional platforms for disaster reduction in order to fulfill the objectives of the ISDR. Enhanced partnerships and networking are required in order to ensure cooperation, complementarity of action, synergy and solidarity between governments, private sector, civil society, academia and international agencies.

It is therefore necessary to build on and amend existing structures in the field of disaster reduction by involving as many partners as possible to develop a sense of ownership of the ISDR among actors involved in disaster reduction worldwide and generate a culture of prevention.

Issues to be addressed:

- Strengthening and/or building national, sub-regional, regional and international coordination mechanisms and networks for information exchange, and promoting collaborative arrangements that can increase disaster reduction capacities.
- Emphasizing the critical relationship between risk reduction and economic growth in order to ensure sustainable development.

2.5 Scientific knowledge

Objective:

To further improve the scientific knowledge of the causes of disasters and the effects of natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters on societies and facilitate its wider application to reducing vulnerability of disaster-prone communities.

Background:

Technological change over the past 50 years has been remarkable and it is expected that the pace of change will continue to increase dramatically in the coming decades. Risk reduction practices should benefit from this process. Knowledge, especially scientific and technical research and its application, plays a key role in the development of disaster resilient societies by predicting the likely evolution of disaster reduction requirements.

Technological change and advances in research are expanding opportunities for the improvement of risk assessment, information exchange, disaster-resilient engineering, education, training and early warning, which are essential elements of an effective disaster reduction strategy.

Considerable progress has been made over the last ten years in the translation of scientific and technical knowledge into local, national and regional level disaster prevention strategies. The Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction played an important role in supporting the application of Science and Technology in disaster prevention as shown in the Final Report of the STC (IDNDR, 1999).

However, further solutions need to be found to facilitate the transfer of technology, including south-south transfer in the application of research, science and technology to disaster reduction. As in the case of public awareness, horizontal exchanges of experience and approaches between local communities, cities, countries and regions could increase capacities and promote the transfer of knowledge.

Research, Science and Technology are crosscutting issues with regard to disaster reduction. Their promotion and application in this area remains a key challenge in building a safer world in the 21st Century.

Issues to be addressed:

- Establishing internationally and professionally agreed indicators, standards and methodologies for the analysis and assessment of the environmental and socio-economic impacts of disasters on societies. This would include the quantification of the impact of actual and projected disasters in order to provide the basis for determining insurability and vulnerability indicators and up-front economic investment in prevention;
- Developing and applying standard forms of statistical recording of risk factors, disaster occurrences and their consequences, to enable the development of a cohesive disaster database for monitoring purposes, consistent comparisons and comprehensive risk assessments to be integrated within development plans;

- Promoting research and its application, developing indigenous capabilities and supporting the transfer of knowledge and the exchange of information and experiences among countries with a view to better understanding the characteristics of natural hazards and the causes of natural disasters;
- Stimulating the application of research on socio-economic determinants of vulnerability, on resilience and coping strategies in public policies and practices and on the improvement of the early warning in respect of natural disasters;
- Establishing national, sub-regional/regional and global database and information exchange facilities dedicated to disaster reduction, supported by agreed communication standards and protocols, adequate mechanisms for the control of scientific quality as well as social and cultural appropriateness;
- Increasing opportunities for scientific and technical contributions to public decision making for risk management and disaster prevention drawing from the widest possible range of expertise.

3. AREAS OF COMMON CONCERN

In pursuing the objectives mentioned above, special attention will be given to areas of common concern including:

- Incorporating the recognition of the special vulnerability of the poor in disaster reduction strategies
- Environmental, social and economic vulnerability assessment with special reference to health and food security;
- Ecosystems management, with particular attention given to the implementation of Agenda 21;
- Land use management and planning, including appropriate land use in at-risk rural, mountain and coastal areas, as well as unplanned urban areas in megacities and secondary cities;
- National, regional and international legislation with respect to disaster reduction.

4. MODALITIES

The approach used to realize the ISDR vision should be coherent and initiatives undertaken under each objective should be based on the following modalities:

- Advocacy;
- Coordination;
- Horizontal exchanges of information, knowledge and experiences;
- Mainstreaming of disaster reduction in sustainable development and in national planning processes;
- Regional and national capacity building with special emphasis on developing countries.



5. TASKS MANDATED BY SEPARATE RESOLUTIONS

Background:

In its resolutions (A/Res/54/220) and (A/Res/54/219) respectively, the General Assembly requested the successor arrangements to the IDNDR to continue international cooperation on El Niño and the strengthening of disaster reduction capacities through Early Warning.

These two multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting issues will be addressed within the ISDR as outlined above by giving special emphasis to the following:

These two multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting issues will be addressed within the ISDR as outlined above by giving special emphasis to the following:

- Policy formulation and inter-agency coordination;
- Scientific cooperation and technology transfer;
- Transformation of existing knowledge into action;
- Sharing of knowledge and information; and
- Promotion of the establishment of risk-monitoring capabilities and early warning systems as integrated processes, with particular attention being given to emerging hazards with global implications, such as those related to climate variability and change.

PART II

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISDR BY THE INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE AND THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE ISDR

The ISDR as detailed in the first part of this document will be implemented in a cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary manner and serve as an international platform for disaster reduction. Such implementation will be carried out bearing in mind the need to proceed from protection against hazards to the management of risk through the integration of risk reduction into sustainable development. While all relevant actors involved in disaster reduction activities are called upon to contribute to the implementation of the ISDR, the InterAgency Task Force and the Secretariat for the ISDR have been assigned special mandates described in the report of the UN Secretary General on the Successor Arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster (A/54/497) and endorsed by the General Assembly resolution A/54/219. Moreover, discussions of the Inter-Agency Task Force during its first meeting led to specific understandings concerning allocation of tasks between these two constituents elements of the ISDR.

The InterAgency Task Force

The Task Force, which reflects a tripartite arrangement, is chaired by the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and composed of representatives of United Nations agencies, civil society and the NGO community, and regional entities. Except for United Nations agencies, members of the Task Force rotate every two years to ensure both continuity of work and increased participation of relevant entities representing regional and civil society interests. Governments, organizations not designated among the Task Force members, interagency bodies and experts may participate in the Task Force meetings as observers, upon request.

Functions and responsibilities as set out in Secretary General's report A/54/497

- To serve as the main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for the reduction of natural hazards;
- To identify gaps in disaster reduction policies and programmes and recommend remedial action;
- To ensure complementarity of action by agencies involved in disaster reduction;
- To provide policy guidance to the secretariat; and
- To convene ad hoc meetings of experts on issues related to disaster reduction.

Working groups

The role of the Task Force is to ensure the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction with the active participation of the Task Force members. In doing so, the Task Force may decide to create ad hoc working groups for those areas mandated by relevant UN General Assembly resolutions or identified by the Task Force as a common concern. The working groups will comprise Task Force members and non-Task Force members. The working groups will work with the support of the Secretariat for the ISDR, and prepare recommendations to be submitted to the Task Force for endorsement.

Initiatives

The Task Force, based on its mandated functions will elaborate initiatives of an operational nature to be implemented under the leadership of member organizations of the Task Force and their partners as a contribution to the overall implementation of the Strategy.

Activities by individual Task Force members

The Task Force members, working through the organizations that they represent and their respective operational partners, are important vehicles for advancing the objectives of the Strategy, together with other local, national, regional and international organizations. Task Force members and organizations will benefit from the ISDR platform to promote their own activities in disaster reduction and ensure complementarity with other activities in this field. Members of the Task Force should mobilize support for the ISDR within their own entities, including by facilitating the adoption of decisions relevant to the implementation of the Strategy.

The Secretariat for the ISDR

The Secretariat for the ISDR has been established as a flexible structure with core staff composed of a small number of substantive officers and managed by a Director under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. Staff additional to the core staff can be considered on the basis of special funding for specific activities to be carried out by the Secretariat in connection with its key functions. The ISDR Secretariat is funded exclusively from voluntary contributions.

Functions and responsibilities as per Secretary General's report A/54/497

- To serve as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination of strategies and programmes for natural disaster reduction, and to ensure synergy between disaster reduction strategies and those in the socio-economic and humanitarian fields;
- To support the inter-agency task force in the development of policies on natural disaster reduction;
- To promote a worldwide culture of reduction of the negative effects of natural hazards, through advocacy campaigns;
- To serve as an international clearing house for the dissemination and exchange of information and knowledge on disaster reduction strategies; and
- To backstop the policy and advocacy activities of national committees for natural disaster reduction.

ISDR funding

The Secretariat for the ISDR will raise funds to cover the costs of its mandated functions and selected activities to be carried out under its auspices in collaboration with other partners. Funds raised in this manner will be channeled through the ISDR Trust Fund established for this purpose.

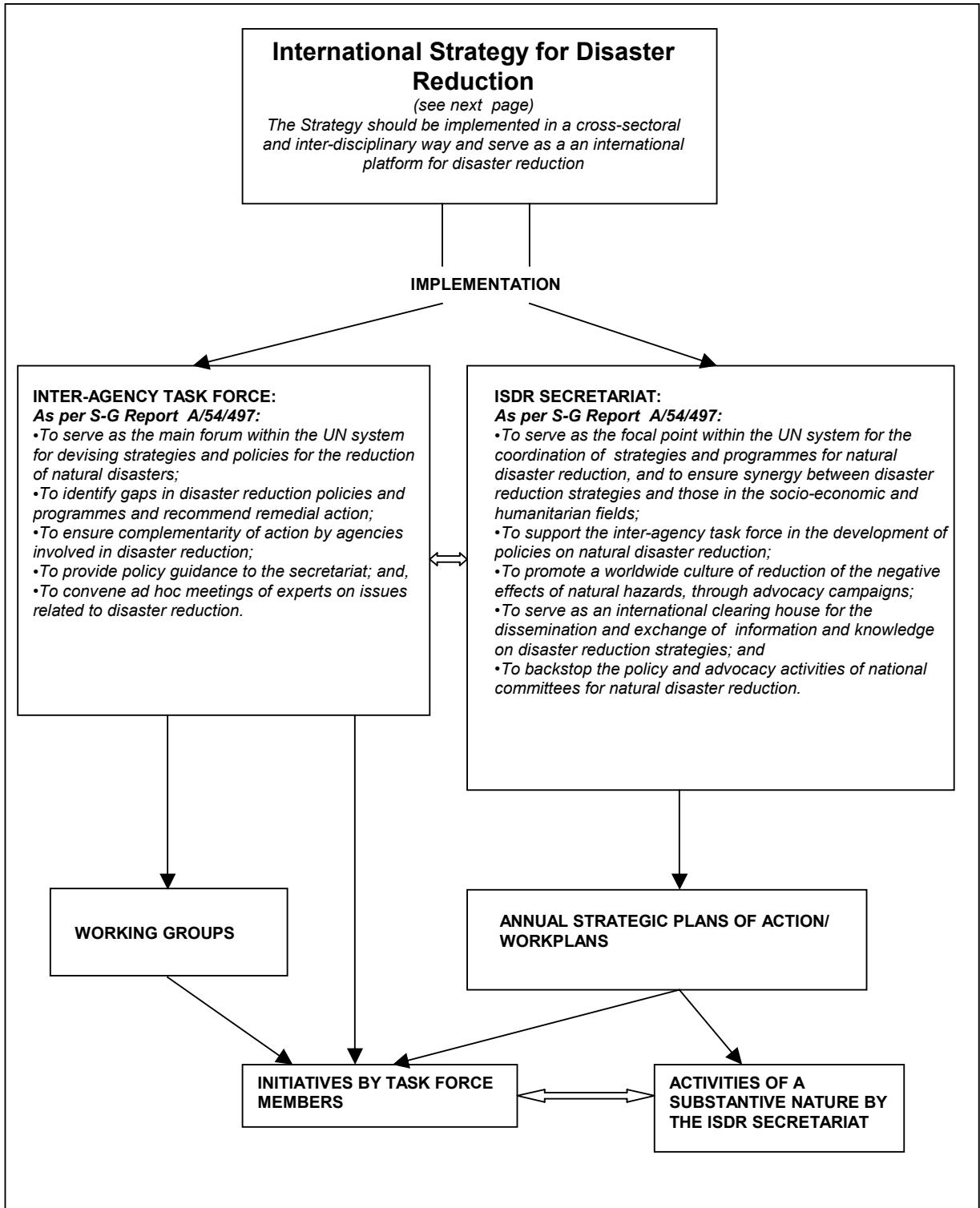
Annual strategic plans of action

The Secretariat will support the implementation of the ISDR by formulating annual strategic plans of action/workplans delineating activities of a substantive nature to be carried out within specified timeframes.

ANNEX

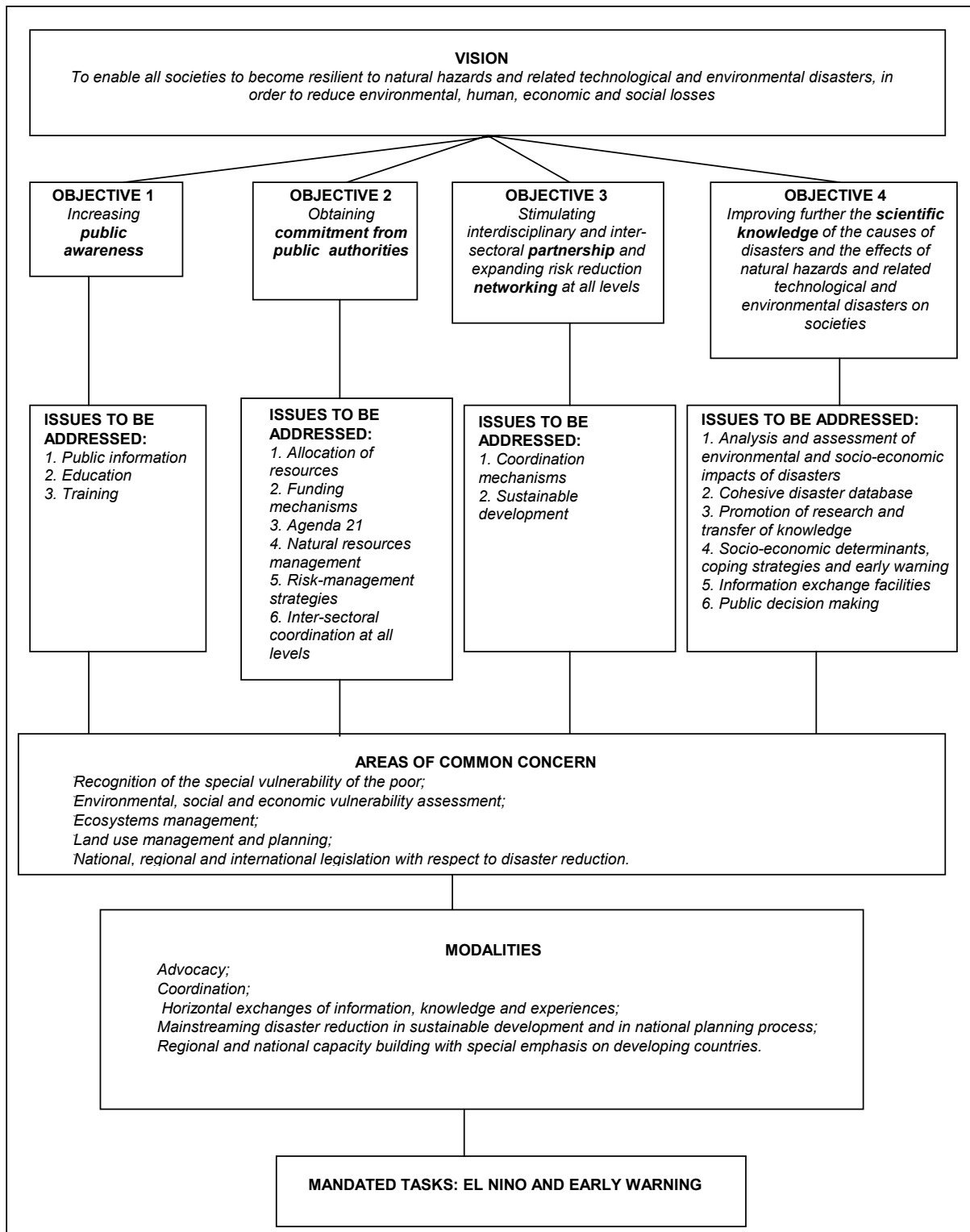
ISDR FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

“to proceed from protection against hazards to the management of risk through the integration of risk reduction into sustainable development”



International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

based on the IDNDR experience, the Yokohama Strategy and the Strategy "A Safer World in the 21st Century: Disaster and Risk Reduction"





International Strategy
ISDR
for Disaster Reduction

The ISDR aims at building disaster resilient communities by promoting increased awareness of the importance of disaster reduction as an integral component of sustainable development, with the goal of reducing human, social, economic and environmental losses due to natural hazards and related technological and environmental disasters.

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