

## Press release

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### UNISDR PRAISES CHILEAN RESPONSE TO EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI

**GENEVA, 2 April 2014** – The Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, today praised the prompt action of the Chilean government in issuing a timely tsunami warning in response to last night's earthquake and the orderly evacuation of thousands of people out of harm's way.

Ms. Wahlström said: "The effective disaster response and preparedness strategies of the Chilean government and its National Emergency Management Office are vital to the safety and well-being of everyone living in a country which is so vulnerable to earthquakes and tsunamis. We saw the tragic loss of life which occurred from similar but more deadly events in 2010 and it is very encouraging to see that effective measures that have been put in place since then."

As many as 900,000 people were evacuated to safety when the 8.2 magnitude earthquake struck last night at 20.46 local time in the Pacific Ocean, 79 kilometres from the city of Iquique. The National Emergency Office of the Ministry of Interior coordinated the precautionary evacuation of the coastal regions of Arica, Painacota and Tarapaca. Ensuing waves reached a maximum height of 2.4 metres. The reported death toll currently stands at six and evacuees are returning home.

**About UNISDR:** UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which seeks "the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries."

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