

## Press release

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### UN PRAISES INDIA'S "ZERO CASUALTY" FOCUS ON CYCLONES

**14 October 2014, GENEVA** – The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) today said India has clearly demonstrated to the world that a “zero casualty” focus in the face of extreme weather events is both feasible and actionable following its second major success in 12 months at minimising the loss of life in the face of a severe cyclone packing winds of up to 200 kms per hour.

Margareta Wahlström, Head of UNISDR, said: “India has demonstrated again to the world that if you set the bar high for reducing your exposure to risk then you will save many lives and reduce your economic losses. Cyclone Hudhud was just as great a threat as last year’s cyclone Phailin to a densely populated coastline. The authorities, with the support of the Indian Meteorological Department, acted with speed to order the evacuation of up to 400,000 people. This, along with a great effort to keep the public informed, kept casualty figures low.”

Ms. Wahlström said: “India’s journey from the loss of 10,000 people in the Odisha super cyclone of 1999 to today’s relatively low death tolls from similar events demonstrates the value of agreeing on global priorities for reducing disaster risk. The continuous stream of bulletins and alerts from the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha inspired confidence. The Indian National Coastal, Ocean Information Systems and the National Disaster Management Authority also played vital roles in ensuring that all measures taken were based on real-time sea and weather forecasts. Science, technology, education and logistical preparations all played their part in this latest success.”

She added that the Indian experience will be referenced in Geneva next month at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction meeting in Geneva which will seek to finalize a draft of a new global framework for disaster risk reduction which will be presented for adoption in Japan next year. The new post-2015 framework will revise the existing Hyogo Framework for Action which was adopted in 2005 after the Indian Ocean tsunami.

**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.”