

Press release

3 December 2014 – UNISDR 2014/29

BRAZIL'S SÃO PAULO STATE RECOGNIZED BY UN FOR PIONEERING WORK IN BUILDING URBAN RESILIENCE TO DISASTERS

GENEVA, 3 December 2014 — UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient Campaign usually recognizes exceptional performance by cities and towns in disaster risk management but today it granted role model status to São Paulo State, Brazil, for its ability to mobilise 211 cities and towns in the populous state to join the Campaign.

The four year old campaign now has over 2,400 cities and towns committed to basic principles of disaster management which protect citizens from a range of natural hazards through improved land use, urban planning and strong building codes.

Margareta Wahlström, Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, said: "Brazil recognizes clearly that building urban resilience to disasters is vital for saving lives and avoiding disruption to basic services which all citizens depend on such as hospitals, schools, transport links, food security, water, energy and communications.

"These are things which we should not take for granted and I would like to congratulate the Governor of the State of São Paulo, Geraldo Alckmin, for his strong leadership, and all those mayors and politicians across the state who have contributed to São Paulo State being singled out as a role model for local governments around the world."

Governor Alckmin said: "We are happy that our work on developing the State Programme for Prevention of Natural Disasters and Mitigation of Geohazards has been recognised by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. It is an honour to be chosen as a role model for others and this will motivate us to maintain and strengthen our commitment to best practice in managing risk."

Highlights from São Paulo State Programme include the State-wide coordination and organization of environmental recovery in forests and coastlines and high risk areas in the São Paulo Metropolitan Region. The State's Geological Institute and the Technological Research Institute have mapped the municipalities' risk areas and Civil Defense public education programmes have been launched. Budget has been allocated to address problem areas and social housing policy allows for the relocation of families from high risk areas.

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."