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VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS of

Media Stakeholders' Groups

Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Given its unparalleled reach to wide audiences, the media play a crucial role in promoting disaster risk reduction policies, disseminating early warning messages and advancing regional and national disaster risk reduction agendas. This is even more true in the case of radio, that has proved time after time to be the most resilient and long-lasting reliable source of information in the aftermath of disasters.

In order to fulfill media's immense potential as an information disseminator and powerful behavior changer, media would like to be accepted not as a mere messenger but a partner in developing and implementing DRR policies at regional, national and local levels and also help dismantling the silos in which most stakeholders work at the moment.

Many media organizations already accept their duty to serve wide audiences (including most vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and elderly) before, during, after disasters. They recognize the need to be pro-actively preparing people during quieter times between disasters and commit to expand coverage of climate change and DRR and educate their audiences on these issues.

They also recognize the huge gap in media knowledge and expertise to do so and that the "messengers" have to be educated themselves about the complex issues of climate change impacts and mitigations and DRR. The formation of functional global, regional and sub-regional networks through which the media can engage with other partners in DRR, peer mentorship can be done and skills improved. Media stakeholders' group strongly recommend the need for a fund to facilitate disaster reporting, especially during the quiet times.

In accepting to play such a crucial role in informing, educating the public and galvanizing action for advancing the DRR agenda throughout the world, the Media Stakeholder Group confirms its support for the HFA 2 process and commits to:

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- Work with all stakeholders involved in DRR to facilitate broad partnership in risk prevention and building resilient communities;
- Ensure that the radio and TV organizations' infrastructure and networks are preserved even in the digital future at the terrestrial level, and are better integrated in the early warning disaster communication systems and plans at national and community levels;
- Engage media in the development and implementation of national DRR policies and programmes including national platforms, so the media are comprehensively prepared to inform about risk prevention and DRR;
- Enhance journalists capacity to produce quality programmes on climate change, DRR and sustainable development concepts as part of the same solution for economic growth and social cohesion;
- Create funding opportunities and space for coverage of and discussions on climate change and DRR issues in the form of special regular programmes, editorial columns and mainstreaming DRR in news, current affairs, children programmes and other radio and TV formats. In particular formats for post-disaster and disaster recovery communication need to be implemented based on existing best practices examples. This, of course, will have to happen in the total respect of the editorial independence of each media.
- Permanent dialogue needs to be established between media (using existing regional and worldwide recognized associations) and other initiatives on disaster and emergencies communications existing within WMO, ITU (such as the Focus group on Disaster Relief Systems, Network Resilience and Recovery, and others), UNESCO and so on.

Common Declaration of ABU-AUB/UAR-ASBU-EBU

Sendai, 17-3-2015

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