



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

AFRICA CONVENES CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK AS REGION ENDEAVOURS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

29 August 2016, NAIROBI – The Government of Mauritius, in cooperation with the African Union Commission (AUC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), will host a major conference of governments and partners in Africa which will examine progress in disaster risk reduction across the continent and the ongoing challenges of responding to extreme weather events which have left 60 million people in severe need across the region.

“It will be the first time that the region as a whole is coming together to discuss progress on implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction since the global plan to reduce disaster losses was adopted in March 2015. The outcome of the 6th Africa Regional Platform and the 5th High Level Meeting of African Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Reduction should be a sharper focus on risk reduction activity based on lessons learned from this current crisis.” said Mr Khemraj Servansing, Director-General, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre in Mauritius.

El Niño induced drought and floods led to a SADC appeal last month for \$2.5 billion to meet humanitarian needs and to build resilience to future disaster events. Five SADC member countries have declared states of emergency as a result of the devastating droughts and floods. Mauritius, a Small Island Developing State in the Indian Ocean, is a member of SADC.

“This conference will be a crucial step towards the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa, thus paving the way for development planning and investment that take disaster and climate risks into account and ultimately builds a culture of safety and resilience”, said H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural economy and agriculture, African Union Commission.

The Regional Platform and High Level Meeting will take place from 22 to 25 November and will be hosted by the Mauritius Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management, with its constituent National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre. The Regional platform will develop an Africa Position and Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The High Level Meeting of Government Ministers will



agree on a Declaration which will be submitted through African Union organs to the African Union Summit for endorsement.

Mr. Amjad Abbashar, Head of UNISDR's Regional Office for Africa, said: "The conference comes at a key moment when many governments, UN agencies and NGOs will still be grappling with the consequences of one of the strongest El Niños ever recorded. In addition, climate change is proving catastrophic for many countries".

The event is being convened with financial support from the Government of Mauritius and several other donors, including the European Union as part of its cooperation with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States under the Building Disaster Resilience to Natural Hazards in Sub-Saharan African Regions, Countries and Communities programme.

For more information see: <http://www.unisdr.org/conferences/2016/afrp>

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