



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ISDR joins Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union to boost information and education on disasters**

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat is starting a new collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), a professional association of 102 radio and television broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region. The purpose of this new collaboration is to develop new radio and television products to better educate and prepare people against natural hazards in Asia-Pacific Countries.

“ ISDR considers media an essential partner to enhance public safety and adverse impacts of natural disasters. Media are not only part of the early warning chain, they are the best channel to prepare communities for disasters. They can help educate people on the need to reduce risk by regularly informing on the hazards and social vulnerabilities that may lead to disasters. Media also play an important role in convincing Governments and citizens to invest in disaster reduction.” says Salvano Briceño, Director of the ISDR secretariat.

Two media workshops gathering more than 30 broadcasters from the Indian Ocean region will be organised in Bangkok at UN/ESCAP on the 13-16 June together with the participation of UNESCO and WMO. The workshops will be facilitated by CNN.

“ It is just the beginning of a new collaboration. We are planning to promote educational programmes like the ones we are already developing in Africa, in Latin America and the Caribbean and incite broadcasters to invest more in disaster reduction. Education and preparedness are the key to reduce the number of affected people by natural hazards every year. If people know what to do, they can save their own life. Education on disasters should be part of the school’s curriculum like it is in Japan and Cuba for instance. The more people are aware of the risks they face, the better chance they have to save their lives when hazards strikes,” says Salvano Briceño.

The ISDR is planning other events to raise public awareness of disaster reduction and emergency preparedness by promoting specific educational programmes.

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“Broadcasters have a responsibility to educate people and raise their awareness of the dangers of natural disasters. They can do this by airing public service announcements, producing special programmes to mark the anniversaries of previous disasters and creating other content, says Mr David Astley, Secretary-General of the ABU. The ABU is well positioned to both coordinate the improvement of emergency warning systems through television and radio among broadcasters across the Pacific region and to assist in the development of content designed to educate audiences in advance on how to respond in the event of emergencies and natural disasters.”

“ Six months after the tsunami disaster, ISDR encourages media to go to the region and investigate if houses, schools, hospitals, public facilities are built back better as it is promoted by the UN Special Envoy former-President Clinton” says Salvano Briceño.

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