

**ROME: High-Level Communiqué of the Chair
Protecting Europe's citizens: the social contract on disaster
resilience**

22 November 2018

1. The High-Level Roundtable was held on Thursday 22 November 2018 in Rome, Italy, at the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, chaired by H.E. Giuseppe Conte, Prime Minister of Italy.
2. The roundtable, co-chaired by Mr. Edoardo Rixi, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transport for the Government of Italy and Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, saw the participation of Ministers and Deputy Ministers from 20 Countries, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the European Commission and the World Bank.
3. The High-Level Roundtable recognized that, disasters caused by natural and man-made hazards are leading to unsustainable economic losses affecting the economy both globally and at European level. Between 1980 and 2016, disasters accounted for 83% of the monetary losses in EU Member States. The Roundtable also highlighted that the European region has experienced devastating heatwaves and floods and deadly forest fires which have exposed the vulnerability of citizens and natural systems.
4. Acknowledged the correlation between demographic changes, urbanization, food security, impacts on capital markets and ageing infrastructure that undermine current efforts for sustainability and prosperity.
5. Considered the fundamental value of cultural heritage for the resilience of the communities.
6. Emphasized the interlinked nature of our society and cascading effects of hazards that demands an integrated approach.
7. Considered that disasters affect the security of nations and communities and pose severe risks across borders and within the European region and that climate change and disaster risks linked to

natural and man-made hazards are overwhelming our systems and our capacities. This is a trend that heavily challenges the capacity of the affected but also neighboring countries, compromising and in the worst case reversing hard-won development achievements, whilst also driving humanitarian needs.

8. Highlighted the opportunities offered by the current ongoing reforms implemented by the European Region in terms of investment requirements, many of which related to infrastructure.
9. Stressed that ensuring new decisions that are risk-informed is essential to deliver a sustainable future.
10. Reiterated that under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, governments have committed to national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020, a fast approaching deadline. Their effectiveness depends on the political leadership to articulate how they will better protect citizens.
11. Agreed that in addressing these challenges, a shift from enhancing disaster response to managing disaster risk in the long term is urgently required to ensure safety and resilience in Europe and beyond.
12. Highlighted the importance of a whole-of-society approach, which must involve key stakeholder groups including women, persons living with disability, youth and children, elderly persons, the private sector and civil society in all its diversity.
13. Underlined the crucial role of prevention, preparedness, innovation (technical and financial) and public-private partnerships as tools for disaster and climate resilience.
14. Valued that building resilience to disasters is an effective way to tackle the underlying causes of fragility and crises.

Building on the 2015-2020 EFDRR Roadmap, resolved to work together towards:

15. Establishing and enabling the National and Local disaster risk reduction strategies through a system wide approach promoting inclusiveness and resilient investments;
16. Ensuring disaster risk assessments as a prerequisite for infrastructure investments, with time horizons commensurate to their life cycles and for cultural heritage conservation;
17. Promoting public and private risk informed investments and capital flows while ensuring that the private sector is engaged in contributing to building resilience to disasters;
18. Support the disaster risk management and civil protection authorities to better systematically integrate the risks of climate change into risk reduction, prevention, preparedness and response actions, including through engagement with relevant institutions; explore innovative decision-making support tools to help stress test current systems against realistic climate impact scenarios;
19. Putting people at the center of disaster risk reduction investments, paying special attention to those groups which are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of disasters.

Thus, accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, in coherence with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change with renewed leadership and engagement.