

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**VIDEO MESSAGE FOR SECOND SESSION
OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
Geneva, 16 June 2009**

[Salutations]
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

You gather for a very important meeting.

Last month, the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction delivered a sobering verdict on disasters around the world.

Risks are growing, especially in poor countries. In many parts of the world, we are losing ground.

Moreover, it is clear that climate change is making things worse.

The storm clouds are gathering. We face a more threatening future from natural hazards.

Millions of people will be hit twice over.

First, by more extreme weather.

Second, by the loss of ecosystems and food and water supplies.

In December, world leaders will attend the United Nations Climate Conference in Copenhagen.

They must Seal the Deal on a comprehensive agreement.

That deal needs to include steps to reduce disaster risk.

Risk reduction is an investment. It is our first line of defence in adapting to climate change. It will pay handsome dividends.

The Hyogo Framework for Action is vital in reducing risk.

We can link the implementation of Hyogo with a new climate agreement.

We can achieve a triple win -- against poverty, against disasters and against climate change.

I challenge you to set a target. Let us reduce loss of life from disasters by half by 2015. Let us also work to significantly reduce economic losses.

I urge you to start working now on the immediate practical steps that will achieve this goal.

The United Nations will back you in this effort. As One UN.

Dear colleagues,

We know the problem. We know what to do. I wish you a successful and productive meeting.