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**Statement by Dr. Michael Staudinger  
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**at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction  
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Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the members of the Human Security Network, a cross-regional Network composed of Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand, my own country, Austria and South Africa as an observer. The Human Security Network is an informal group of States that advocates for the greater usage of the human security approach in policies and programmes at the international, regional and national levels.

First of all, let me thank the Government of Japan for hosting this important conference that puts in motion the processes to achieve the very crucial agenda for this year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the world continues to undergo dramatic demographic, environmental and technological changes, it also faces an increasing threat of natural disasters. The impacts on people and societies in areas affected by natural disasters are immediate and overwhelming and tend to disproportionately affect the vulnerable groups of the population, most notably women, children and the elderly. The multi-dimensional, people-centered, context-specific approach that human security proposes is also relevant to support efforts by societies combatting consequences of natural disasters. Human security promotes a bottom-up approach which encourages incorporating the voices of all those affected by natural disasters and emphasizes the needs of the most vulnerable parts of population.

The people-centered Human Security approach also supports empowerment strategies, enabling people and communities to act on their own behalf particularly during a period of rebuilding. Overall the Human Security approach ensures the better passage of critical transition periods to greater normalization, stability and development by encouraging systematic information sharing, common action plans, needs assessment and better coordination of responses and offer assistance.

Disaster risk reduction is a key element in the fight against poverty and the impacts of natural and manmade hazards across the globe. Disaster risk management and reduction is essential to sustainable development. Investing in risk reduction before a disaster takes place, pays huge dividends in comparison to providing humanitarian aids afterwards. While every country is responsible to work towards reducing the risks from disasters, a common approach internationally is more effective than separate national approaches. Collaboration between states and regions has delivered strong results under the Hyogo Framework for Action and it is in the interests of all states to support the development of a robust global successor programme.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All countries are vulnerable to disasters, whether rich or poor, developed or developing. It is a responsibility of the international community to show solidarity and to raise awareness that all sectors should be involved and engaged in disaster preparedness, including civil society and the private sector. There is great potential and enormous capacity when society works together in mitigation strategies.

The Human Security Network recognizes the strong links that exist between disaster risk reduction, the need to continue strengthening human and social resilience and the human security principles.

In that regard, we support the goals and targets related to building better local resilience and strengthening the capacity of local communities and households to reduce disaster risks. These goals and targets highlight the importance of building resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, resilient agriculture practices, sustainable and resilient infrastructure to support economic development and human well-being and resilience and adaptive capacities to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries. In conclusion, we strongly encourage the international community to ensure adequate follow up to this important matter within the Post-2015 development agenda, which will enable us to be sufficiently prepared for the increasing challenges resulting from disasters.

Thank you.