

## Report on Regional Meetings

### Central Asia

At the Second Global Platform meeting, Central Asia was represented by delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and partly Uzbekistan (representation by Permanent Mission).

The key events attended by CA delegations took place on **June 15**.

#### **Third High level Consultation on Regional Preparedness for Central Asia**

This pre-events was jointly organized by OCHA, UNISDR, and IFRC. The key questions discussed during this meeting were as follows:

1. Discussion of concrete follow-up to the Kuala Lumpur protocol on the establishment of the *Central Asian Coordination Center for Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction*.
2. Presentation on IDRL and other normative frameworks for international cooperation on disaster response (Ms. Yasemin Aysan, Under Secretary General on Disaster Response and Early Recovery).
3. Discussion of a possible amendment to the 1998 Agreement to ensure compliance to current normative standards such as IDRL and to facilitate incorporation of other interested member states

All issues discussed were of importance for the participants who came out with the following recommendations:

1. (i) Have all major documents on the establishment of the *Coordination Center* signed before the end of this calendar year (*Vice Minister Sabdalin / Kazakhstan*) (ii) Under the framework of the Coordination Center, joint use of existing facilities in Kyrgyzstan, including the use of a training center; use of ware houses in Kyrgyzstan, etc. (*Deputy Minister Kasymaliev/Kyrgyzstan*); (iii) UNISDR wishes to provide its full support to the establishment of the Coordination Center as it can serve a basis of a Regional Platform owned by governments of the CA region; this support will include consultative and experts support which will be combined with logistical and material assistance promised by donor community during Almaty meeting in April 2009; similar desire to the support the Center was expressed by ADRC..
2. To amend the agreement of 1998 taking into consideration the changing environment.
3. To sign the SOM Protocol on cooperation as a result of the meeting.

#### **Meeting between ASG Margareta Wahlstrom and Vice Minister Ablai Sabdalin, Ministry for Emergency Situations, Kazakhstan**

Date: **June 18, 2009**

Present were:

Mr. Praveen Pardeshi (UNISDR), Ms. Goulsara Pulatova (UNISDR), Ms. Zhibek Karagulova (Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan in Geneva), Col. Alexander Fedorenko, Head of Department, MoES, Kazakhstan.

The purpose of the meeting was to reaffirm the support of the UNISDR and its Regional Office for Central Asia to the Government of Kazakhstan for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action; to complement the Government of Kazakhstan for the initiative on the establishment of the Central Asian Coordination Center on Disaster Preparedness and Disaster

Risk Reduction in Almaty; to discuss relocation of UNISDR Secretariat Regional Office to Almaty; to cover participation and support of Kazakhstan in the events organized by the ISDR Regional office in Central Asia, including: the Regional Conference on Seismic Safety in Dushanbe, July 9-11, 2009; National Platform workshop in Astana, July 24-25; and the ECO International DRM Conference in Dushanbe on October 7-8, 2009.

UNISDR thanked Vice Minister Sabdalın and Kazakhstan delegation for the participation in the Global Platform and commended the country commitment to disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. Besides, Margareta appreciated the Government of Kazakhstan invitation and support in opening a regional office of UNISDR Secretariat in Almaty. This last issue was discussed at length based on the formal letter of invitation to UNISDR Secretariat to open an office in Almaty.

While UNISDR is successfully implementing its activity from Dushanbe, Tajikistan, relocation to Almaty opens new perspectives of regional cooperation and coordination of activities with other ISDR partners, including OCHA, UNDP/DCPR, UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO, the World Bank, IFRC and others, not to mention logistical benefits. The only barrier on the way of the soonest relocation is the lack of funds required for running a fully functional office (at least two program staff, admin/finance office, and driver). While Secretariat might be able to allocate some funds, the Government of Kazakhstan volunteered to support the office through the allocation of approximately annual \$150,000 contribution.

It was decided that the best way to allocate this amount will be through direct contribution to the UNISDR Secretariat in Geneva. An MOU will be signed to reflect this arrangement that will be valid for at least the next three years with the possibility of extension/amendment.

However, the Ministry of Emergencies needs to further discuss this issue with the Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan to make sure of the budget procedures and to follow the budget cycle. Concrete timing will be defined and ISDR will be duly notified.

#### **Meeting with Ms. Angela Ravin-Roberts and Mr. Asim Rehman from UNICEF Regional Office in Geneva**

The meeting was devoted to the on-going cooperation between UNISDR and UNICEF in Central Asia under DIPECHO V project. Both organizations have activities planned under the project on DRR and Education. It was decided to join forces, as well as resources to achieve integration in education at all levels. While UNICEF is more focused on schools, UNISDR also pays attention to the establishment of knowledge networks among universities and academic institutions in five countries of CA.

At a later point in discussion, Ms. Sasha Bootsma (Netherlands Red Cross regional office in CA) joined the meeting to discuss joint activities on DRR and Education under DIPECHO VI for 2010-2011.

**Meeting with the Secretary General Of Economic Cooperation Organization Mr. Taheri** attended also by Mohammad Sadatinejad (UNISDR Teheran). This meeting was mostly devoted to the planned Fourth International ECO Conference on Disaster Management scheduled for October 7-8, 2009 in Dushanbe. A special meeting on the subject was also held between ECO and Chairman of the Emergency Committee of Tajikistan Mr. Khaibullo Latipov.

**Meeting with the World Bank** attended by Paola Albrito, Demetrio Innochetti, and Goulsara Pulatova from UNISDR, and Alison Cave and Vladimir Tsirkunov from the WB. The meeting was devoted to the current status of the CACDMI (supported by GFDRR) and the next steps which include, among other, holding a donor workshop in October-November 2009 in Central Asia (Almaty?) to present the key priority issues under the Hydromet, Disaster Mitigation, and Risk Financing components of CACDRMI.

A number of bilateral meetings also took place with ISDR partners active in Central Asia and the Caucasus.