



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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## IPU Statement

Hon. Alex Byarugaba  
Member of Parliament, Uganda

Third UN World Conference on  
Disaster Risk Reduction

Sendai, March 2015

It is my pleasure to address you on behalf of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and present to you the outcome of the Parliamentary Meeting at the WCDRR that was organized by the IPU and UNISDR.

We, members of parliament from 22 countries in Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe as well as from regional parliaments, assembled in Sendai on 13 March 2015 on the occasion of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, issue this statement as a contribution to the final outcome of the WCDRR.

We **note the achievements of the Hyogo Framework for Action** in saving lives and reducing disaster impacts and are proud of our contributions to these achievements. The HFA implementation has witnessed a growth of national and regional legislation and the establishment of institutions to manage disasters and disaster risks; increasing budget allocation; and open deliberations on accountability to stop disaster risk to mount.

We **welcome the growth in the number of parliamentary resolutions** on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation over the last decade as a strong indicator of increasing understanding and commitment to disaster risk reduction among parliamentarians.<sup>1</sup>

We **support the proposed focus of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction** on tackling the underlying causes of the current worrisome disaster risk trend. We concur that without preventing risk creation, reducing existing risk and strengthening resilience, sustainable development with '*resilient people, resilient planet*' would not be possible.

We **recognize the necessity of** better understanding of risk, strengthening governance to manage risk, investing in resilience and strengthening post-disaster recovery planning as the ways to translate legislation into local and national actions.

We **reiterate the need** for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction to refer to the important roles of parliaments and parliamentarians in its implementation.

We **pledge our support** to the initiative of the International Law Commission in proposing a draft treaty or convention on disaster risk reduction under the auspices of the United Nations, making it the duty of states to reduce disaster risk from hazards and elevate the right of the people to be free from the effects of disasters to the level of international customary law.

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We call for coherence of the three important post-2015 international frameworks – the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change – as the key frameworks to ensure sustainability, and recognize they need to be inter-locking and mutually reinforcing.

We therefore commit to the following actions in support of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction in our roles as political leaders, legislators and overseers of government action:

1. **Obtain the highest level political support for an ambitious post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction** and create an enabling legal environment for its implementation at all levels.
2. **Strengthen legislative framework** to support a paradigm shift toward risk-sensitive and resilient development. New or amended legislation should include a set of standard essential elements and link with related legal instruments to prevent effectively and reduce risk and strengthen resilience. We commit to developing inclusive and gender-sensitive legislation that responds to the needs of communities and local authorities and is driven by political ownership and will from the top.
3. **Conduct regular reviews and updates of legislation** based on lessons learned to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness. We commit to ensuring that adequate budget allocations accompany implementation of the legal provisions.
4. **Support improved and fit-for-purpose institutional set-ups for governing disaster risk reduction** in order to prevent generation of new risks as our countries develop. We will advocate for and support review of current institutional arrangements and initiate reforms. Institutional improvements should include: clear roles and responsibilities at all levels of the government for disaster risk reduction, strengthened coordination to ensure risk-sensitive investments and promotion of investments for disaster risk reduction.
5. **Promote local and community capacity building.** We will ensure that ongoing delegation of responsibilities for disaster risk reduction to local levels be accompanied by increased resources for capacity building of local authorities and communities.
6. **Establish strong oversight to enhance accountability.** We commit to ensure strong oversight of disaster risk reduction laws, policies and programmes and their full effectiveness. Parliamentary oversight should be supported by independent experts and active involvement of citizens. As people's representatives, we commit to engage with citizens on issues relevant to disaster risk reduction and promote open and transparent access to information.
7. **Enhance parliamentary cooperation for disaster risk reduction.** We will continue implementing the adopted parliamentary resolutions to complement the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction implementation, enhance parliamentary dialogue and sharing of knowledge, and further raise the profile of disaster risk reduction in all parliaments.

8. **Maintain an institutional continuum** through effective pre-disaster recovery planning between preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation and sustainable development measures.
9. As the follow up actions, **we urge IPU and UNISDR** to develop a roadmap to facilitate engagement of parliaments and parliamentarians in the effective implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. We recommend a sequence of interventions and engagement to ensure maximum impact. We request that IPU and UNISDR compile a guidance note on essential components of effective disaster risk reduction policy and legislation and develop a format/protocol for parliaments and parliamentarians to regularly monitor and report back on implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.