

## ITALY

### *Official Statement at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction*

*Sendai (Japan) March 15, 2015*

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Your Excellencies, Mr Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me express my highest appreciation for convening this Conference, which offers a great opportunity for the international community to come together and send a strong message on how to substantially reduce disaster losses in the next years. Moreover, allow me to show all my gratitude to Japan and UNISDR for the tremendous effort undertaken in organizing this event.

I also wish to extend Italy's deepest condolences to the people of Vanuatu who suffered devastating losses as a result of the cyclone that hit their country.

Ten years after the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), we are here to discuss progress made in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and future developments. Even if many countries have made some progress across all HFA Priority Areas, disaster-related economic loss and damage continue to increase. Italy will continue to do its part, committing itself to play a constructive role in favouring a vibrant and effective discussion on these issues, trying to reach a compromise between existing divergent views.

Italy, unfortunately, is a prone-disaster country, uniquely exposed to a wide range of natural hazards. But we succeeded in turning our weaknesses into strengths, developing an efficient and modern Civil Protection System, with effective governance mechanisms, a highly mobile force of volunteers in support of professionals and advanced technological and scientific assets.

Therefore Italy strongly supports DRR activities at all levels: local, national and international. The Local Italian Administrations play an essential role in planning actions of prevention and mitigation of risks. Moreover, Civil protection planning is carried out at all the four main levels of responsibility (national, regional, provincial and municipal) according to the principle of subsidiarity.

Last month Province of Potenza - whose delegation is here today - was praised as a “role model” for inclusive resilience by UNISDR within the network of 100 cities listed in the so called " Making Cities Resilient Campaign". It is one concrete example - out of many others - of the excellencies represented by numerous Italian local Authorities in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction.

Making schools safe from disasters is also one of the priorities of the Italian Government. We made a huge investment for a school building programme in 2014. This enormous effort will continue also in the future despite the current financial constraints.

In 2008 the Italian Government established the National Platform for Disaster risk reduction under the coordination of the National Civil Protection Department. Moreover since 2008 the Italian Development Assistance has been continuously supporting the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) by financing the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and hosting the launch of the Mid-Term Review of HFA in March 2011 and the European Ministerial Meeting in July 2014. To this end, we have disbursed last year 2 Million Euros as Italy’s contribution to GFDRR. The same amount of money has already been allocated for 2015.

Furthermore, Italy considers this issue among the priorities of its humanitarian and civil protection agenda. It participates in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, established at European level by providing its expertise and assets through the National Civil Protection Department. DRR was also one of the priorities of the programme of the Working Parties on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) and on Civil Protection (PROCIV) during the Italian Presidency of the European Union. Thanks to the effective co-operation of the EU Commission and of the EU Member States, we succeeded in advancing the debate on the co-operation between Humanitarian and Civil Protection authorities at EU level, which resulted in the adoption of relevant Council Conclusion in December 2014.

We strongly believe, in fact, that a better targeting and empowerment of vulnerable people and civil society, together with transparency and accountability, are fundamental to advance disaster risk management across the world. We welcome therefore an inclusive and people-centred approach to DRR as well as a critical role of stakeholders in the DRR process, and an holistic risk prospective which pays due attention to all underlying disaster risk drivers, such as conflict and fragility situations and climate change. In addition, it is equally essential to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement between the Post-2015 Framework on DRR and the two other major

international issues that are now under discussion, the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and goals and climate change.

Allow me finally to reiterate Italy's full commitment in supporting the United Nations in the process of implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. I am sure that today's event will represent a powerful encouragement in our path towards a safer world.

Thank you.