

**Second Preparatory Committee Meeting**

**Geneva 17-18 November 2014**

**Official Statement by Local Authorities Major Group**

**Delivered by Ms. Luisa Castro, Mayor of Gumar, Canary Islands, Spain**

Mister or Madame Chair,

It gives pleasure in representing the Local Authorities Major Group composed of cities, local and regional authorities at the second session of the preparatory committee for the Post 2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Mister or Madame Chair,

As local governments being the primary interface with citizen, it is my role here to present our group inputs to the zero draft.

At the outset, I would like to extend our appreciation to the co-chairs for incorporating the inputs made by the local authorities major group at the first session of the preparatory committee and the open ended informal consultations.

We now see that the role and need for empowerment of local and sub-national governments is explicitly mentioned under the Guiding Principles. However, the zero draft does not yet clarify this role as it does for other stakeholders.

The use of non-traditional media or communication strategies to increase understanding of risk, adaptation to climate change, community resilience and

promote risk reduction strategies at local level should be taken into account as well.

Rapid urbanization represents both the greatest hope and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We believe this reality should be more visibly reflected in the framework. We note that urban planning is mentioned as a sub-text under land-use planning with a very weak language. We here would like to reiterate that urban planning does not only have necessary tools to reduce risks and prevent risk accumulation, but also has the capacity to build resilience as a political process that should involve different stakeholders. Risk sensitive urban planning contributes to ensuring resilience of critical infrastructure and essential services such as water-treatment and others. Hence, we would strongly recommend urban planning to have a more explicit mention in the new framework.

We also would like to note that adverse impacts of disasters are scaled-up with the poor-resilience of high-risk industrial and energy facilities that are getting more closely to densely populated cities. There is a need to address safety of these systems in this framework.

It is important to emphasize climate change adaptation including eco-system and community based adaptation more than it is done in the zero draft. If local governments need to reduce existing risk and prevent new risk creation, then they have to take measures to adapt to the impacts of changing climate as well

as to address the driving factors of global warming. The post 2015 framework for disaster risk reduction could play an instrumental role by calling for it.

Local governments, who are tasked with managing the risk of smaller scale but recurrent disasters, play a key role in coordinating actions by different sectors, organisations and stakeholders. Therefore, we recommend, that this coordination function is strongly emphasised in Priority TWO and FOUR.

We note that the zero draft duly calls for protection of sites of historical, cultural and religious interest and consideration of cultural requirements, we here recommend to emphasis more on cultural diversity which has the capacities to build resilience.

While the zero-draft touches on the important role of financial risk transfers and risk sharing mechanisms, first it only specifies actions at regional and global context and second it does not explicitly mention insurance schemes which can discourage risky behaviour and promote risk governance.

Last but not least, we would like to reiterate that, local monitoring, such as through the LGSAT or the Local Government Self-Assessment, must be part of the new international monitoring mechanism for the post 2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. This could take benefit and compliment similar other bottom up approaches such as Durban Adaptation Charter, Medellin Collaboration etc.

Working with all stakeholders and partners, we will continue to promote disaster risk reduction and resilience to make communities safer from disasters.

Thank you.

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