

**New Zealand Statement**

**Preparatory Committee 2: Third World Conference on DRR: November 2014**

Natural hazards including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms and floods are part of life in New Zealand. Our region, the Pacific, is one of the most disaster-prone in the world. Lessons from our response to, and recovery from, these events provides opportunities to reduce risk and vulnerability and increase resilience. New Zealand wants to share what we have learnt with other countries as part of our ongoing contribution to disaster risk reduction.

We note the draft elements that will comprise the Sendai Declaration. We firmly support UNISDR’s commitment for the Post-2015 Framework for DRR to be simple, practical, action-oriented and far-reaching. New Zealand’s approach to managing risk is focused on community resilience - ensuring that New Zealanders understand and know how to manage the risks they face and are able to respond, recover and adapt. We do this in New Zealand through a range of actions that we call the ‘4 Rs’ (Risk reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery). The 4 R’s inform our international DRR investments, where our focus is mainly to support the **integration** of DRR into development and humanitarian actions *(Element 3).*

Although tuning will be needed, New Zealand considers the zero draft before us is a solid foundation. The following are areas we consider especially important.

One: Strong **partnerships** where knowledge and experience are shared between national and local government, the private sector, scientists, academia and civil society are crucial, if communities are to become more resilient. Engaging local leaders and affected communities, including different ethnic and cultural groups, women, children, the elderly and those with chronic illnesses or disabilities, is essential if the impacts of disasters are to be effectively managed. The private sector’s role in particular is critical in effective response, recovery and ongoing resilience. An **integrated** and **collaborative** approach to reducing risks and building resilience, where governance arrangements and related legal and policy frameworks are strong and transparent, is one we strongly support *(Element 4).*

Two: Investing in **community and household preparedness** builds resilience and saves lives. New Zealand knows from experience the value of disaster preparedness actions which include early warning, public awareness and education programmes. We support a strong emphasis on this in the new document.

Three: Reducing risk is everyone’s business. We endorse UNISDR messages that all sectors have specific roles in doing so. Given the HFA 2005-2015 largely addressed the ‘what’, it is important that the post 2015 framework set the direction for the ‘how’.

Four: Investing up-front in DRR makes **economic sense** and pays dividends when disasters do strike. This investment is urgent and we support efforts in pushing this message *(Element 6).*

Five: Integrating **climate change adaptation** and **disaster risk reduction** is sensible and requires strong coordination across public, private and not-for profit sectors to ensure sound investment, decision making and planning *(Element 7).* We note the important role of our friends and partners in the South Pacific in this respect, via coordination under the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility.

six: **Science and technical research** must underpin all we are doing in this sector. Long-term research in seismology, volcanology, meteorology, engineering and the social sciences contributes to stronger legislative frameworks and informs integrated approaches to risk management. If risks are to be addressed and mitigated, reliable, up to date, relevant and accessible scientific information is needed, with different levels of government, civil society and the private sector working in partnership and drawing on comparative advantages *(Element 8).*

New Zealand supports efforts to reduce risk and to build resilience. We are committed to sharing our lessons and experiences on the global stage. We integrate our own lessons into the development assistance we provide in our own Asia Pacific region.

Disasters do not draw distinctions among countries and regions. We are also here to listen and learn.