



Statement by H. E. Rhoda M. Jackson
Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas
First PrepCom of the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
Tuesday, 15 July 2014
Geneva

Thank you, Co-Chair.

We congratulate you for the excellent manner in which you are conducting our proceedings.

At the outset, The Bahamas would like to associate itself with the statement made by Costa Rica on behalf of CELAC.

Co-Chair,

The Caribbean is the second most hazard prone region in the world, with regular annual disaster losses estimated at \$3 billion, including significant loss to social and productive sectors. In particular, The Bahamas is vulnerable to a diverse set of hazards, including hurricanes and other tropical storms that often cause extensive flood and wind damage; tornadoes; and droughts.

It is in this context that the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) has been a critically important part of the disaster risk reduction framework in The Bahamas, as well as efforts toward sustainable development in general.

For The Bahamas, the HFA remains relevant, and a number of actions have been taken with respect to its implementation, largely through the work of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). There has been progress in the formulation and implementation of preparedness plans; preparation of hazard maps and the formulation of actions to reduce risks; as well as the development of standard operating procedures regarding warnings and the dissemination of disaster preparedness information. Of particular note is the installation of an early Tsunami warning system throughout strategic locations in March 2014.

There have also been efforts toward reducing the underlying risk factors, through the development of Natural Risk Preventative Management Programmes, including those related to Land Use and Coastal Management.

These efforts at the national level, have been supported by regional mechanisms such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), and it is envisaged that the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy 2014-2024 will be the implementation vehicle for the Hyogo Framework Post 2015 (post 2015 HFA).

It is vitally important for the international agenda on disaster risk reduction continues to support such national and regional efforts, with a clear delineation of responsibilities in this regard.

Co-Chair,

In the development of the post 2015 HFA, we should consider lessons learned thus far, including through the participation of a broad range of stakeholders; and clearly outline the way forward for disaster risk reduction as a key instrument for sustainable development, with a focus on effective and efficient implementation.

In this regard, The Bahamas endorses an integrated risk management approach, which brings together the elements of disaster risk reduction, adaptation to climate change, disaster risk financing and development planning within an overarching context of resilience. The Bahamas supports, therefore, the joint pursuit of the post 2015 HFA, the international Climate Change and Habitat Agendas, and the post 2015 development agenda, of which sustainable development is an integral part.

Additionally, the post 2015 HFA and the outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to be held in Samoa, must be mutually reinforcing. For many Caribbean SIDS in particular, single hazard events can erase decades of development. It is necessary therefore, that the emerging post 2015 development cooperation framework recognise that GDP is, in itself, an insufficient mechanism by which decisions are made on whether SIDS receive development financing, which treat with the building of resilience through disaster risk reduction.

Finally, the post 2015 HFA must have an enhanced monitoring and accountability framework at national, regional and international levels. In this context, the elaboration of an implementation Plan and an Online Monitoring and Evaluation System could be considered, with special emphasis on the need to strengthen national statistical systems in this regard.

Thank you, Co-Chair.