

Official Statement of the Government of Georgia
Preparatory Committee Meeting for the Third UN World Conference on
Disaster Risk Reduction
14-15 July 2014, Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Government of Georgia, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) for convocation on the Preparatory Committee meeting of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR). Engagement of Georgia in preparation of the WCDRR is highly important.

Distinguished Delegates,

Due to the complex geographical location and climate change, Georgia is characterized by high frequency of natural hazards that pose significant threat to population, infrastructure, environment and, as well as different sectors of economy. During recent decades, a significant increase of hydrological, meteorological and geological hazards were recorded and over the last 40 years, economic losses exceeded 14 billion USD.

In order to ensure protection and safety of Georgian population and the loss reduction, the whole of Georgian Government has a complex approach. In this context, the newly established State Security and Crisis Management Council is updating the existing Threat Assessment document, which includes the list of identified threats of natural hazards. According to the list, the DRR Policy and the 4 year plan of implementation will be elaborated and adopted. The DRR Policy is meant to be the main document for DRR management in Georgia. Moreover, to strengthen the DRR system and improve preparedness, the draft of the DRR Capacity Assessment Report was conducted in March 2014, under the leadership of the Georgian Government and the UN Country team.

In June 2014 Georgia signed "EU-Georgia Association Agreement" and "Association Agenda" was adopted, which stipulate the need for dialogue and gradual approximation of the national legislation towards a number of EU policies and legislation, including in particular civil protection, floods management and industrial accident prevention. Georgia participated in the second pilot peer review of disaster risk management policies in Europe in the context of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) through a delegated expert (peer review of HFA implementation of Finland) and regards peer reviews as an excellent technical assistance tool where policy recommendations also could be greatly beneficial for the EU neighboring countries. HFA Peer Review would indubitably assist in improving accountability, transparency and governance for DRR. As such, Georgia also expresses its clear interest to be reviewed in and participate in the exchange of practices with the EU Member States.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fact that the post-Hyogo Framework for Action, the successor to the Millennium Development Goals and a new climate agreement are expected in 2015 gives us an exceptional opportunity to strengthen disaster risk reduction through new international instruments. DRR needs to be further integrated assured across development strategies, plans and frameworks. We deem the links between relevant international and regional agreements, environmental conventions and post-Hyogo Framework for Action should be further supported. It is notable we furthermore need to ensure stronger emphasis on trans-boundary risks and cooperation.

Kindly let me conclude by expressing my hope that the Preparatory Committee meeting for the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will go a long way in fostering closer relationships amongst the nations with a renewed commitment to disaster risk reduction and our efforts would be a significant step forward in identification of practical ways for effective implementation of disaster risk reduction activities at all levels.

Thank you!