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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

**STATEMENT
GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
GENEVA, 10-13 MAY 2011**

Distinguished participants and dear colleagues,

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is very pleased to be back to the Global Platform for an update on the initiatives we have launched to contribute to our common efforts to realise disaster risk reduction across nations and societies everywhere. This year we have increased our involvement in the Global Platform also by partnering with the World Bank and ISDR in the organisation of the World Reconstruction Conference.

Since the time of our participation in the elaboration of the Hyogo Framework for Action we have worked to help beneficiaries worldwide translate principles into action. Our policy is to mobilise collective will around the Hyogo vision and aim for tangible deliverables that help make a difference. Because Disaster Risk Reduction is a global and collective endeavour, we use an open and collaborative approach based on inter-agency cooperation and continuous dialogue with beneficiaries.

To begin with we strive to apply these principles to our own actions: since 2009 UNITAR has been successful in offsetting its entire carbon footprint including emissions originating from all participants' travel. Secondly, we concentrate on working with countries and we partner with content-based organisations in a range of disciplines, some of which have a strong connect with disaster risk reduction.

In the area of Climate Change, we work on the link between adaptation to climate change and disaster reduction. UNITAR is the secretariat of the UN CC:LEARN, the *"One UN Training Service Platform for Climate Change"*, which is about country-driven and results-oriented learning and skills development and it is based on the one-UN approach. We have now begun working with the UN Development Group to provide integrated training to UN country teams on disaster risk reduction, environmental sustainability and climate change.

Our partnership with the European Commission Joint Research Centre and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), launched during the aftermath of the

Haiti earthquake, has set useful standards for damage assessment and recovery that can be used in other similar situations.

With the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre we have begun joint training and capacity development work in South East Asia with a focus on satellite derived solutions for preparedness and risk reduction.

With Google and the World Bank we have embarked on involving civil society in on-line mapping initiatives that result in more accurate and publicly available knowledge of territories and their socio-economic fabric.

With our NGO partner ACTED we are using on-line web mapping solutions in various countries to assess the impact of disasters and other crises. This also creates high-value databases for modern and more efficient disaster risk reduction action.

UNOSAT, the Institute's Operational Satellite Applications Programme, has evolved since 2009 into a centre of excellence delivering not only geospatial information and analysis to UN humanitarian and human security operations, but also territorial planning, training and tools in Africa, Central and South East Asia, and the Americas. These tools are also integrated in UNITAR's governance and local development training to make sure communities at risk can access integrated resources for better planning, better development and better monitoring.

With constant emphasis placed on expanding technology-enhanced learning and capacity development, and by moving operations closer to beneficiaries, UNITAR takes very seriously its response to the disaster risk reduction imperatives.

Thank you.

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