

UNITED KINGDOM STATEMENT
**THIRD UN WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION**

1st Preparatory Committee Meeting

**Geneva
14 - 15 July 2014**

Thank you, we are grateful for this opportunity to make a statement. We congratulate the co-chairs and members of the Bureau on your election. The United Kingdom would like to thank UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) for organising this first meeting of the Preparatory Committee to develop the new post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, and for its work to date facilitating the wider process.

However, we note with some concern, that many of the outcomes of the wider consultation process have not been fully reflected in the most recent suggested elements paper. It is important that these, and subsequent contributions continue to inform the development of the new framework and we would welcome clear reassurance today from the Chairs that the process for drafting the new framework will be inclusive and transparent and that they ensure this is the case.

2015 will be a significant year for global agreements, starting with the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction – followed by the post-2015 sustainable development goals and the UN Framework for the Convention on Climate Change – and then the

World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. It is therefore vital that the final disaster risk reduction agreement is fully aligned with, and has targets and indicators consistent with those other processes. By ensuring there are credible links we will move closer to reducing humanitarian need, building resilience and achieving the global ambition to eradicate poverty.

The Hyogo Framework for Action has had a positive effect, in raising prevention up priority lists, increasing awareness of disaster risk and securing greater investment in disaster risk management. The focus on early warning systems to forecast and communicate potential shocks means that people are better prepared or evacuated before disasters strike. In the UK 1.2million people have signed up to receive flood warnings.

However, globally we have yet to achieve the expected outcome of HFA. And the prognosis for the next 15 years is not good, with the frequency and severity of disasters expected to increase. This could have a profound impact on lives and livelihoods, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable among us who are hit the hardest when disasters occur.

It is therefore right that reducing disaster risk should be a component of efforts to reduce poverty and promote economic growth, as well as ensure that we safeguard our development investments and put a halt to the rise in humanitarian need.

We commissioned research which showed that investing in disaster resilience in advance of shocks or in the early stages of a

crisis is more cost-effective than humanitarian response when a disaster is in full swing. Such investments lessen needless suffering and loss of life and, by protecting livelihoods, help communities recover much more quickly. We are committed to embedding disaster resilience into all of the UK's international development country programmes by 2015. To date, a set of minimum standards have been reached in 12 country programmes, with the remaining programmes on track to meet the target date.

As co-chair of the Political Champions Group for Disaster Resilience, the UK's Secretary of State for International Development, Rt Honourable Justine Greening MP, continues to promote disaster resilience globally. During a recent speech on addressing future challenges in 21st century she highlighted the real need for 'larger, sustained investment in preparedness and resilience' and specifically identified the need to focus on:

- Supporting national and local leadership by supporting countries to manage disasters by themselves, drawing on civil society and private sector support.

Building disaster resilience is also a national priority. In 1953 devastating coastal floods killed over 300 people and cost the UK, at today's prices, £1.2 billion. While in 2013, 10 people lost their lives and the total cost of all flooding in the UK was £400 million, demonstrating how spending by successive UK governments to prevent east coast flooding has saved many lives and prevented heavy financial losses. Between 2010 and 2015 the UK

Government will be spending more than £3.2 billion on flood and erosion risk management.

Last year we held a national dialogue on the post-2015 framework to gather the views of interested parties across the UK.

The UK considers that there are six key issues that a new framework must address:

The first is improving accountability – including through voluntary peer reviews (as the first country to be peer reviewed we recognise the benefits of this approach). It will also be important to set clearer targets and indicators and improve the means to measure them.

Second, ensuring this agenda is both **a humanitarian and development priority**. We need to align closely the new post-2015 DRR framework with the wider post 2015 development process and the World Humanitarian Summit, and promote a broader and more integrated approach to risk management.

Third, we need to focus better on tackling the **root causes of vulnerability**, and address the political and institutional bottlenecks to building resilience.

Fourth, we need to focus on the **most vulnerable**, to reduce the disproportionate impact that disasters have on them - including a strong focus on gender, disability and age. Careful consideration should also be given to how a new framework can be sensitive to

and help address disasters in complex contexts by encouraging a greater focus on strengthening resilience in fragile and conflict affected states.

Fifth, we need to move the focus from the **national to the local and community level** to encourage a more inclusive and participatory approach.

Finally, we should encourage more engagement from the **scientific community, private sector and insurance industry**. They all have a vital role to play in building resilience and contributing to sustainable development. The new framework offers a real opportunity to realise that potential.

We look forward to working closely with you all in developing an ambitious new post 2015 framework.

Thank you