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International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly,

Considering that natural disasters, particularly in the past two decades, have adversely affected the lives of at least 800 million people and caused considerable damage to infrastructure and property worldwide, especially in developing countries,

Recalling that in 1988 many countries suffered severe natural disasters, such as the extensive floods in the Sudan and Bangladesh, typhoons in the Philippines, hurricanes in countries of Latin America and the Caribaran, locust infestations, mainly in Africa, and other natural disasters in several regions of the developing world, and recognizing the pressing need for reducing the impact of natural disasters for all people, in particular those in developing countries,

Recognizing the important responsibility of the United Nations system as a whole for promoting international co-operation in the study of natural disasters and in the development of techniques to mitigate risks arising

therefrom, as well as for providing assistance and co-ordinating disaster relief, preparedness and prevention,

Recalling its resolution 42/169 of 11 December 1987, in which it decided to designate the 1990s as a decade in which the international community, under the auspices of the United Nations, would pay special attention to fostering international co-operation in the field of natural disaster reduction,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/51 of 26 July 1988 on assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations,

Noting with appreciation the progress that has been made in the preparations for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, within the United Nations system as well as by Member States, since the adoption of resolution 42/169,

Welcoming the establishment by the Secretary-General of the international ad hoc group of experts on the Decade,

Convinced that concerted international action for the reduction of natural disasters over the course of the 1990s would give genuine impetus to a series of concrete measures at the national, regional and international levels,

Welcoming the fact that national committees on natural disaster reduction have been established in some countries and that preparations for establishing such committees are under way in other countries,

1. Takes note with interest of the progress report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

2. Notes with satisfaction the progress made by the international ad hoc group of experts on the Decade in the preparations for the Decade;

3. Reiterates its request to the Secretary-General, made in paragraph 5 of resolution 42/169, to develop an appropriate framework of action at all levels for attaining the objective and goals referred to in paragraphs

3 and 4
of that resolution;

4. Requests the Secretary-General further to strengthen co-ordination within the United Nations system in order to ensure better preparation of the Decade;

5. Calls upon all Governments further to prepare for participation during the Decade in concerted international action for the reduction of natural disasters by, as appropriate, establishing national committees in co-operation with the relevant scientific and technological communities;

6. Also calls upon Governments to keep the Secretary-General informed of their countries' plans and of assistance that can be provided so that the United Nations may become an international centre for the exchange of information and the co-ordination of international efforts concerning activities in support of the objective and goals of the Decade, thus enabling each Member State to benefit from the experience of other countries;

7. Emphasizes the importance of technical co-operation among developing countries and mutual assistance in the transfer of technology, and encourages the international community to play a prominent role as promoter and catalyst of technical and scientific co-operation among developing countries in the field of natural disaster reduction;

8. Expresses its appreciation to those countries which have provided or pledged voluntary contributions for the preparation of the report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 42/169, and calls upon other countries, international organizations and other organizations to provide voluntary contributions for that purpose;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the international ad hoc group of experts on the Decade in its future work the increasingly serious problems of locust infestation and floods;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to incorporate in the report to be

submitted pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 42/169 a definition of the catalytic and facilitating role of the United Nations system, including that described in paragraph 6 above, and to submit that report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session through the Economic and Social Council, as requested in resolution 42/169.