



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
Secretariat, Geneva

For more information
please contact:

Brigitte Leoni
Media Relations
Tel: +41 22 917 8897
leonib@un.org
www.unisdr.org

MEDIA ADVISORY

THIRD SESSION OF THE GLOBAL PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION Geneva, 10-13 May 2011

“Disaster risk is the major challenge for governments and local communities to urgently address if they are to avoid paying a higher price in the future,” according to **Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction.** *“We are in a fast moving car and ahead is a crash waiting to happen. We need to act,”* she cautions, as cities and communities from Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Pakistan and others which have been recently affected by earthquakes, floods and mudslides continue to pay a high price today, in terms of economic losses.

The Third Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction which will be held in Geneva at the International Conference Center Geneva (CICG) from 10 to 13 May is the right venue for leaders from all around the world to meet, discuss and decide on needed commitments and immediate actions. The Platform is the world’s foremost gathering of stakeholders committed to reducing disaster risk and building the resilience of communities and nations.

Under this year’s theme: “Invest today for a safer tomorrow: Increase investment in local action,” the forum expects more than 2,000 representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to discuss how international and national actions can help local communities reduce disaster risks. Participants will have the added dimension of the first ever large-scale global conference focused on disaster recovery and reconstruction—the World Reconstruction Conference, organized by the World Bank and the United Nations, which will be held in the same premises, and constitutes one of the main pillars of the Global Platform.

“Recent experience, for example in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, shows that despite great goodwill and collective efforts, we need to improve how the international system supports national reconstruction and recovery,” says Selina Jackson, World Bank Special Representative to the UN and WTO. *“If done right, a crisis situation can be a window of opportunity. Therefore, it is appropriate and very timely that we are now holding the first ever World Reconstruction Conference, with the theme “Rethinking reconstruction for a safer future.”*

The Global Platform will be opened by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday 10 May. The Secretary-General will launch a major report, the “2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction -- Revealing risks, redefining development.” This flagship publication is under embargo until the official launch on Tuesday 10 May 2011. Journalists accredited to the Palais des Nations in Geneva will have access to the report from 6 May, upon request.

The Global Platform, which will be chaired by United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, will also include four high level panels, two informal plenary sessions, 10 round tables, six featured events, 24 side events and a market place with 32 stalls. The World Reconstruction Conference will comprise one high level policy panel discussion, three round tables, an Innovation Competition and 13 thematic sessions covering a wide range of themes such as protecting and empowering vulnerable groups, reviving local economy, rebuilding life-important infrastructure, providing sustainable health and education services, urban housing reconstruction and land management, and many more.

Participants will discuss a number of immediate actions that will be reflected in the Chair's Summary to be released at the end of the Global Platform during a closing press conference scheduled for 12.30 pm on 13 May 2011.

The Global Platform was established in 2007 as a biennial forum for information exchange and partnership building across sectors to improve implementation of disaster risk reduction through better communication and coordination amongst stakeholders.

For the programme and timetable, please see:

<http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2011/programme/>

Here are main events that should be of interest to you:

1. Tuesday 10 May

Opening Ceremony

14.30-15.15, Room 1

Keynote: United Nations Secretary-General BAN Ki-moon

Welcome address: Managing Director, World Bank, Sri Mulyani Indrawati

Statements

Plenary: Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow – Increase Investment for Local Action

15.15-16.30, Room 1

Chair: United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

Panelists: (TBC)

1. H.E Mr. BAN Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations
2. Mr. John Carter, MP, Minister for Civil Defense and Emergency Management, New Zealand
3. Mr. Luo Pingfei, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Civil Affairs, China
4. Mr. Abdou Sane, Assemblée National du Sénégal, Dakar, Sénégal
5. Ms. Sandra Wu, President and CEO, Kokusai Kogyu
6. Mr. Robert Glasser, Secretary-General, CARE International
7. Mr. Marcelo Luis Ebrard, Mayor of Mexico City
9. Mr. Joey Sarte Salceda, Governor of Albay province, Philippines. /
10. Lawrence Temfwe, Global Network, Zambia.

Facilitator: Zeinab Badaoui, BBC journalist (Hard Talk)

This plenary session introduces the overarching theme of the Third Session of the Global Platform and provides an opportunity for leaders to describe the strength and weaknesses of mechanisms designed to ensure that local authorities have better financial and technical resources. Plenary speakers are invited to recommend specific steps that can be taken to align national and local priorities in building resilience.

2. Wednesday 11 May

World Reconstruction Conference High Level Policy Panel: Responding to Natural Disasters - - A Long-Ignored Development Challenge 9:00-10.45, Room 2

Panelists: (TBC)

Ms Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Managing Director, The World Bank

Mr. Ludger Arnoldussen, Member of the Board, Munich Re

Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, European Union Commissioner for International Cooperation,
Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Response

Lt. General Nadeem Ahmad, Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority, Pakistan

Mr. Andrés Iacobelli del Río, Vice Minister for Urban Development, Chile

Facilitator: Tim Sebastian, BBC journalist (former Hard Talk and Doha Debate)

Major public interventions for reconstruction and recovery often follow after disasters, diverting scarce resources originally intended for development programmes. It is vital therefore, to rebuild and recover in a manner that is sustainable, contributing towards the development agendas and programmes of disaster-affected countries. When there is a lack of institutional capacity, coherent planning and coordination among stakeholders, development opportunities are lost and funds are wasted, while the affected population is additionally burdened. This interactive high level session will explore if we have learned the lessons of the past, how to ensure communities receive what they need and challenges in reconstruction financing, leading to recommendations going forward.

Launch of the media handbook on disaster risk reduction by Tim Sebastian, 12:15-13.-00, Espace Incontro, CCV Room, 9-11 Rue de Varembe

Media will be invited to a cocktail party at 12:15 pm at 9-11 Rue de Varembe (opposite the CICG), which is by invitation only. The event will be attended by Kristalina Georgieva, European Union Commissioner for International Cooperation and Margareta Wahlström, UNISDR.

Featured event: Protecting health from disaster risks**12h15-13h45, CICG**

The protection of public health from disasters requires joint action from all sectors at all levels of society. Disasters have immediate and long-term effects on health in terms of significant loss of life, injuries, disease, disability, damage to health facilities and disruption of health services. The overall objective of the session will be to identify actions and initiatives for a global action plan aimed at reducing risks to health and ensuring that health services continue to operate fully in disaster situations with the support of all sectors.

During the session the Joint Statement of Strengthening Community-based Health Workforce Action in Emergencies (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Save the Children) will be launched

Panelists

Speaker: Dr Mudjiharto, Ministry of Health, Indonesia

Speaker: Dr Alistair Humphrey - Medical Officer, Christchurch, New Zealand

Speaker: Jean-Luc Poncelet, PAHO

Facilitator: Health Protection Agency, United Kingdom

Plenary: The Economics of Disaster -- Effective Financial Instruments to Reduce Risk**15.00-16.30, Room 1**

Chair: United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

Panelists: (TBC)

Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Response

Mr. Woonchong Um, Deputy Director General, Asian Development Bank

Mr. Oscar Ortiz, Mayor of Santa Tecla, El Salvador

Mr. Nirankar Saxena, Director, Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, India

Facilitator: Raghida Dergham, political analyst for NBC, MSNBC, and Arab satellite LBC

Economic damage is rapidly on the rise. The value of global GDP, due to exposure to tropical cyclones, for example, has more than tripled from US\$564 billion in 1970 to US\$1.9 trillion in 2010. A panel of senior authorities responsible for managing private and public budgets will address critical gaps in our current tracking of investments in disaster risk reduction.

World Reconstruction Conference Roundtable: Rebuilding and Protecting Critical Infrastructure -- Lessons from Japan and Other Catastrophes**16.45-18.30, Rooms 3+4**

The March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake dramatically illustrates the dependence of modern society on critical infrastructure and the risks faced by individuals and government when critical infrastructures fail. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, damaged and interdependent electrical,

communications and transportation systems can complicate emergency relief efforts. During reconstruction a slow rebuilding of critical infrastructure will delay economic recovery at both the macro and micro levels. This roundtable will explore experiences related to the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami, highlighting the immediate challenges arising from critical infrastructure failures. Discussions will also focus on prioritization and opportunities for integrating risk reduction into the rebuilding of critical facilities.

3. Thursday 12 May

Plenary session: Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction alliances for resilience

9:00-10.30, Room 1

Chair: United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

Panelists: (TBC)

Ms. Socorro Flores Liera, Minister and Special Advisor for Climate Change, Mexico

Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Parliamentarian, Bangladesh

Mr. Mamadou M. Traore, Secretary General, Mali Red Cross

Mr. Cheikh Mamadou Abidoulaye Dieye, Mayor of Saint Louis, Senegal

Mr. Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization

Dr. Jack Dangermond, Founder, Environmental Research Institute, United States of America

Mr. Jan Egeland, Director, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Norway

Facilitator: Raghida Dergham, political analyst for Al-Hayat, NBC, MSNBC, and Arab Satellite

The latest round of negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun established clear commitments on financing and implementing climate change adaptation. Disaster risk reduction was identified as central to this work. This plenary points to what is available for supporting implementation of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, and signals high-level commitment to harmonize disaster risk and adaptation in national policies and in the design and implementation of resilience-building programmes.

United Nations 2011 Sasakawa Award Ceremony

18.30-19.30, Room 3

Master of ceremonies: Michel Cerutti, Swiss Television

The United Nations Sasakawa Award recognizes excellence in reducing disaster risk for a safer, more sustainable world. The candidates have carried out outstanding and internationally recognized actions that contribute to the strategic goals and priorities of the HFA 2005-2015. Winners will be announced at the event.

4. Friday 13 May

11.30-12.30, Room 1

Chair's Summary and Closing Ceremony

Media are invited to cover all the main events and to attend all sessions.
All sessions will be webcast and accessible in the video section of the Global platform website on:
<http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2011/photo-gallery/>
The final confirmed names of the panelists for the sessions above will be released to the press a week before the event.

For more information about the programme and timetable please see:
<http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2011/programme/>

Press conferences

Media are invited to consult the media section of the Global Platform to verify the time and venue of the scheduled press conferences.

6 May 2011

Time: 12.00

Room 3

Venue: Palais des Nations

Eve of Platform press conference

10 May 2011

Time: Around 15.30.

Venue: International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG)

Room 15

Opening press conference with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

11 May 2011

Time: 11.30

Venue: CICG

Room 15

Press conference after the World Bank Reconstruction Conference

12 May 2011

Time: 14.00.

Venue: CICG

Room 15

Press conference about the Sasakawa Award, with Sasakawa winners

Time: (TBC)

WMO press conference

Global Framework for Climate change

Time: 12.00

Venue: CICG

Room 15

UNICEF press conference

Time: 12.30 p.m.

Venue: CICG

Room 15

13 May 2011

Closing press conference

Time: Around 12.30 p.m.

Venue: CICG

Room 15

Press conferences

Press conferences can be arranged upon request. Please send your request a day before the event to Dizery Salim, Communications Officer, UNISDR: + 41 229178918

Interview requests

One-on-one interviews with main speakers and high level representatives can be arranged upon request. You can send your request to leonib@un.org

UNISDR: +41 229178897 or +41 794445262

Registration

The United Nations Press Corps will be automatically accredited on presentation of their United Nations identification badge. Other journalist must provide proof of credentials to receive a badge to attend the meeting.

Badges are essential in order for participants to gain access to the premises

For practical information:

Please consult: <http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2011/information/>

Media contacts

Brigitte Leoni, Head of Communications (Ag), UNISDR: +41 229178897 or +41 794445262
David Singh, Communications Officer, UNISDR: +41 79 444 4148
Dizery Salim, Communications Officer, UNISDR: + 41 229178918
Vincent Fung, Information officer. UNISDR: +41 22917 8656. Email: Fungv@un.org
Anita Gordon, Communications officer, World Bank: Email: agordon@worldbank.org, Phone:
(Washington) 202-473-1799, (Cell) 202-436-4791
Tarik Jasarevic, Media and Advocacy Officer, WHO, +41 793 676 214, jasarevict@who.int