



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Pre-announcement

First Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 5, 6 and 7 June 2007

International Conference Centre (ICCG), Geneva, Switzerland

The *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building Resilience to Disasters of Nations and Communities* was adopted by 168 Governments at the World Conference for Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Japan, in January 2005. Since its adoption, there has been a growing recognition that disaster risk reduction is the most effective approach to address the increasing impacts due to natural hazards. This has resulted in considerable growth in the number of actors at global, regional and sub-regional and country levels engaging in disaster risk reduction. A number of countries have created National Platforms to advocate for and promote disaster risk reduction, while the ISDR system also needs to be empowered at the regional and sub-regional levels to convene and co-ordinate disaster risk reduction initiatives. Meeting the coordination needs, at all levels, have become increasingly urgent and demanding if we are to achieve together the goals of the Hyogo Framework.

Following the last Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) session in November 2005, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs launched a consultative process to consider practical ways of strengthening the ISDR system, building on existing mandates, institutions, partnerships and mechanisms. Details can be found in a document entitled 'Strengthening the ISDR system: Background and Discussion Paper', available on www.unisdr.org.

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction: main forum for continued and concerted emphasis on disaster risk reduction

The Global Platform will build on and expand the membership of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. Participation in the Global Platform will be open to States; hence the proposed change of name from Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction to Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Global Platform will also include United Nations and other international agencies, regional organizations, civil society organizations and technical and scientific bodies covering the social, economic, humanitarian, political, environmental and scientific fields and committed to disaster risk reduction.

The Global Platform will focus primarily on the need for reducing risk at national and sub-national levels. It will provide a forum for devising strategies and policies to reduce disaster risk, monitoring progress and identifying gaps in policies and programmes and recommending remedial action. It will also aim to ensure complementarity of action at all levels of implementation through increased coordination and cooperation. Finally, the Global Platform will also facilitate sharing knowledge and lessons among ISDR system partners. The first session will therefore be structured around:

- A *Plenary Meeting* to monitor progress, identify gaps and develop guidance for ISDR system partners.
- Two *High Level Panels* engaging Ministers and high-level experts to raise the profile of the subject and address key issues of interest to policy makers.
- Four *session workshops*, focussing on national and local implementation, to exchange experience and lessons learnt and advance the development of technical guidelines in specific priority areas that need attention.
- *Parallel meetings and side events*, independently arranged by ISDR system partners addressing a range of issues of relevance to disaster risk reduction.

The themes to be addressed during the Session will be announced in January 2007.

Procedures for participation

Representatives of United Nations Member States and members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) will be invited to the first session of the Global Platform. Member States are encouraged to engage through their national focal points and/or national platforms for disaster risk reduction as requested by the Hyogo Framework for Action¹. A limited number of additional inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations that are engaged actively with ISDR will be invited to the first session. Invitations will be sent mid-January 2007. The 2007 Session of the Global Platform is also open to a limited number of registered observers, particularly drawing from the existing networks, thematic platforms and working groups associated to ISDR and the implementation of the Hyogo Framework.

Preparations and organizational aspects

The organization of the 2007 Session of the Global Platform is being carried out by the ISDR secretariat with inputs and guidance from existing support mechanisms to the ISDR system² through regular planning meetings and briefings.

A webpage for the Global Platform 2007 session will be made available on-line by **15 January 2007** (www.unisdr.org). It will include information on the background, logistics, and procedures for participation and will provide a portal to compile and disseminate documents, inputs and contributions during the preparation phase.

The first session of the Global Platform will take place 5, 6 and 7 June 2007. The venue also be available for selected preparatory meetings and side events on 4 and 8 June.

For additional information please contact:

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¹ The Hyogo Framework requested States to “[d]esignate an appropriate national coordination mechanism for the implementation and follow up of this Framework for Action and communicate the information to the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.”

² The ISDR Support Group, the Management Oversight Board (MOB) and the interim ISDR Reference Group. Consultations are also underway through regional and sub-regional meetings planned by regional and sub-regional inter-governmental partners, as well as discussions with other stakeholders including NGOs and partners in the academic, scientific, technical and the private sectors.