

Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction  
14-18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan

**MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE “Governing Disaster Risk – Overcoming Challenges” –  
SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE PLENARY MEETING ON 16 MARCH**

Session: Ministerial Round Table “Governing Disaster Risk – Overcoming  
Challenges”  
Chair: H.E.Maria del Pilar Cornejo, Minister, National Secretariat for Disaster  
Risk Reduction  
Time and Date: 16 March 2015, 10:00-13:00

President of the Conference,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

Governing disaster risk at the national and local levels has become a priority in view of the escalating impact of disasters linked to the exacerbating impact of climate change, increased urbanization and accelerated demographic population growth. A lot of efforts have been placed by Governments in establishing or strengthening relevant institutional mechanisms, including national platforms for disaster risk reduction in conjunction with the development or review of national legislation and policy reforms in support of disaster risk governance.

Strong emphasis was placed on integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change to bring coherence and harmonize the post-2015 frameworks for disaster risk reduction, sustainable development goals and climate change agenda. This integration process is even more required to consolidate the outcomes in view of the Sustainable Development Goals in September this year, Ocean 21 and COP21 discussions in Paris end of 2015 and should take place at national and global levels (UN system).

There was concern about corruption in procurement during disaster. In relationship with this, the importance of transparency within governing disaster risk was stressed to be relevant.

The following elements were highlighted as means to improve governing of disaster risk:

- Decentralization of disaster risk reduction down to district or village level was felt crucial for building effective self-protection and resilient

communities. Empowering local authorities and communities through capacity building, including training and peer reviews should be a core element of this new approach. A specific focus on families was made as one principal sources of resilience and behavioural change, taking care of the needs of people with disabilities; and remembering that at the local level, the people themselves is the first responder and afterwards the first one to work on the recovery.

- A strong political will and budget allocation is required to improve disaster risk governance. Addressing the root causes of disasters, in particular through poverty alleviation, urban development, effective land-use planning with appropriate slums risk reduction, environmental degradation and natural resources management should be the starting point of any disaster risk governance strategy.
- Promoting a multi-stakeholder approach, in particular the involvement of the private sector and the civil society, children and youth, local authorities. Governing disaster risk is everybody's business. Nobody should be left behind. Women's empowerment is indispensable. A stronger involvement of the private sector in disaster risk reduction is required as well as climate change adaptation strategies.
- Trans-boundary cooperation is crucial for the reduction of risk of hydro-meteorological nature, in particular floods and climate change impacts. Nuclear disasters and the development of early-warning systems and review of vulnerability maps and building codes are also areas requiring enhanced trans-boundary cooperation efforts. Disaggregated data collection, an easy access to information and the development of databases across countries remains a priority in this context.
- Education and building a global culture of resilience was felt as core elements to understand risk and achieve behavioural change in support of disaster risk governance, starting at school level with the integration of disaster risk reduction as part of school curriculum, the recognition of traditional knowledge and solidarity, and general public awareness-raising campaign. Also relevant is the capacity building of public servants in disaster risk reduction not only for prevention but for recovery period, too.

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