

2ND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HABITAT III)

STATEMENT BY UNISDR¹

16 April 2015

Madam Co-Chair

Distinguished Heads of Delegations and International Organisations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of UNISDR, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, I wish to thank UNHABITAT for inviting us to attend the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

This session assumes significance as it is being convened less than a month after Member States adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 at the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan. The conference was attended by over 25 Heads of State, Vice Presidents, and Heads of Government, and around 100 participants at ministerial level. Over 6,500 participants attended the official sessions at the conference, while over 50,000 people are estimated to have attended the public forum.

The outcome document builds on the knowledge and experience of all stakeholders across public and private sectors. It builds on 10 years of work with the Hyogo Framework for Action and nearly three years of consultations. Overall, the Sendai Framework carries a clear expected outcome - the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses-, a clear goal, seven global targets to measure progress and four priorities, and

¹ Delivered by Mr. Animesh Kumar, UNISDR, on behalf of Ms Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction

defines the scope. The Sendai Framework also includes a clear set of principles to guide implementation and a section that outlines the much needed role and contribution of stakeholders.

The Sendai Framework marks the adoption of the first of a series of post-2015 agreements including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Climate Change Agreement and HABITAT-III, besides the Financing for Development Summit and the World Humanitarian Summit.

Ladies and Gentlemen

It has been increasingly realized that while urbanization and development go hand-in-hand, urbanization is also often a driver of risk. This assumes higher relevance in the least developed and low-income countries, where urbanization often results in the growth of informal and unplanned settlements. The Sendai Framework recognizes the significance of a rapidly urbanizing planet, and highlights the need to enhance urban resilience, for instance in its:

Priority 2. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk

Encourage the establishment of necessary mechanisms and incentives to ensure high levels of compliance with existing safety-enhancing provisions of sectoral laws and regulations, including those addressing land use and urban planning, building codes, ... and update them, where needed, to ensure an adequate focus on disaster risk management;

Priority 3. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience

Promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk assessments into land-use policy development and implementation, including urban planning, land degradation assessments and informal and non-permanent housing, and the use of guidelines and follow-up tools informed by anticipated demographic and environmental changes.

We believe that with conjoined support and collaboration with partners, including UN-HABITAT and others, we can draw lessons from the experiences of the disaster risk management community and apply them for urban resilience. We need to understand that development that does not take risks into account, is not sustainable, urban areas notwithstanding.

I thank you.