

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP  
60th MEETING**

**21-22 March 2005  
WFP Rome**

**Follow up to and implications of the Kobe Conference:**

**Post Kobe Action on Natural Disasters; policy coordination mechanisms**

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## **Introduction**

Preparations for the WCDR (World Conference on Disaster Reduction) and its outcome including the “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters” point to the need for more strategic, integrated and focused action on disaster risk reduction and management (DRR/M) including in terms of existing coordination mechanisms and entities.

A series of initiatives, led by the ISDR Secretariat and others including the ISDR Support Group that is chaired by the Government of Switzerland, are now underway to accelerate efforts to give effect to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). These include the formulation of a Matrix that identifies the roles, responsibilities, and activities of different actors, identification of targets and indicators, and preparations for upcoming IATF and ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment meetings. Steps have also been initiated to undertake an evaluation of the ISDR Secretariat and to assess the findings and recommendations of various studies and proposals that were prepared in the lead-up to Kobe including the Randolph Kent study “Looking to the Future: practical steps to strengthen the UN’s relevance and value-added in Disaster Risk Management.”

## **Hyogo Framework for Action and more effective coordination**

The Hyogo Framework for Action makes several references to the importance of more integrated action on disaster risk reduction.

- The *strategic goals* of the Framework include reference to the need for more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into all assistance activities including in relation to disaster preparedness and vulnerability reduction.
- The *strategic goals* also call for the systematic incorporation of risk reduction into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness and related activities.
- The section on the need for *stronger disaster preparedness* notes that disaster losses can be substantially reduced if a well-functioning disaster preparedness system is in place.
- International organizations, including those of the UN system and the IFIs, are called on to engage fully in the implementation of the Framework and to

“advance integrated approaches to building disaster resilient nations and communities” by encouraging stronger linkages and integration of DRR elements into humanitarian and sustainable development activities.

- The HFA also indicates that action in support of the Framework’s implementation should be integrated “into relevant coordination mechanisms” such as the UNDG and the IASC as well as field level coordination arrangements.

### **IASC and IATF**

The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR)<sup>1</sup> is a critical forum for devising strategies and policies for reducing the impact of natural hazards; it is back-stopped by the ISDR Secretariat that reports to the Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee includes key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. Under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the IASC has a number of subsidiary bodies, such as the Task Force on Natural Disasters and the sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning (that includes critical work on early warning) that are concerned with issues of direct relevance to the larger post-Kobe risk reduction agenda, particularly in terms of disaster preparedness.

#### **Proposed Actions by the IASC WG members:**

- Agrees to establish an IASC Task Force with the participation of key members of the IATF to review the Hyogo Framework for Action and identify different options that would allow for greater integration of, and/or synergy between, their respective work programmes dealing with disaster risk reduction.

Prepared by: OCHA, February 2005

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<sup>1</sup> The IATF is chaired by the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and consists of 26 UN, international, regional and civil society organizations that meet twice a year. These include the African Union (AU), Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Inter-State Council, Council of Europe (CoE), Drought Monitoring Centre (DMC-Nairobi), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), Ibero-American Association of Civil Defence and Civil Protection, Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster Reduction (OAS/IACNDR), International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Munich Reinsurance, South Pacific Applied Geo-Science Commission (SOPAC), World Bank (IBRD/WB), UN Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD-Hyogo Office), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Programme for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat), United Nations University (UNU), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO).