



# ADRC Highlights

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## ➤ ISDR 9th Inter-Agency Task Force Meeting held in Geneva on 4-5 May 2004

The 9<sup>th</sup> Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) Meeting was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 4-5 May 2004. The Meeting gathered approximately 30 IATF members and 100 country representatives as observers. From ADRC, Executive Director Mr. Satoru Nishikawa, two Senior Researchers, Ms. Etsuko Tsunozaki, Mr. Masaru Arakida, and Administrative Manager Mr. Kazuyuki Yoshinaga attended the meeting as a member of the IATF. It was the first Task Force Meeting held after the adoption of the resolution (A/RES/58/214, adopted at the 58<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly in December 2003) to discuss issues related to the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) to be convened in Kobe on 18-22 January 2005.

At the opening, Mr. Jan Egeland, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, delivered a keynote speech

encouraging active and productive discussions at the Task Force Meeting, in view of the First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the WCDR to be held back to back on 6-7 May in Geneva. One of the remarks made was those



specific suggestions on disaster risk and vulnerability reduction is expected at the WCDR as it is a critical issue not only for developing countries but also for developed countries. Mr. Egeland's speech was followed by those delivered by Mr. Hong Yan, Assistant Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Dr. Janos Bogardi, Director of the United Nations University, Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU/EHS, Bonn) and Mr. Ibrahim Osman, Director, Policy & Relations Division of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

From the Government of Japan, Mr. Shigeru Endo, Ambassador to the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva and Mr. Tadashi Harada, Deputy Director General for Disaster Management of the Cabinet Office attended the Meeting. Mr. Endo expressed the expectations for the Conference as the host country.

The ISDR Secretariat reported the current situation of the review of the Yokohama Strategy, which is one of the most main objectives of the Conference, as well as the preparatory process and proposed outcome of the WCDR. Task Force members participated in the discussion actively and made positive comments on these important issues. Mr. Nishikawa from ADRC commented as follows: 1) Disaster reduction should be considered as an investment for future safety rather than an expenditure; 2) Recovery and reconstruction process should incorporate a disaster reduction perspective; 3) Disaster reduction activities adapted to the local/regional conditions are vital and, therefore, regional consultations are necessary.

Following the reports from the Task Force working groups and IATF members, ADRC informed the participants of the results of its activities relevant to the review of the Yokohama Strategy (including the session on risk mapping hosted by the government of Japan at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on

Early Warning (EWCII) held in Bonn, International Conference on Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM) held in Kobe, Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2004 held in Cambodia, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Forums held at UNU in Tokyo) as well as the Technical Meeting on GLIDE (GLobal unique disaster IDentifier number) held on 3 May in Geneva.

It was announced that three of the four working groups, which had operated since the beginning of the ISDR (WG1: Climate and Disasters; WG2: Early Warning; WG4: Wildland Fires), were dissolved as they had achieved the expected results, while the WG3 (Risk, Vulnerability and Impact Assessments) will keep its operation until the end of 2004. Instead, four new working groups will be launched as follows: WG1: World Conference on Disaster Reduction; WG2: Reducing Urban Risk and Vulnerability; WG3: Reducing Risk for Adapting to Climate Change; WG4: Disaster Reduction in Africa. ADRC has decided to participate in the activities of the WG 1: WCDR and WG2: Reducing Urban Risk and Vulnerability. For details of the 9<sup>th</sup> Inter-Agency Task Force Meeting, please see the ISDR website (<http://www.unisdr.org>).

## ➤ The First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held on 6-7 May 2004

Following the 9<sup>th</sup> ISDR Inter-Agency Task Force Meeting, the First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (PrepCom1) was held on 6-7 May 2004 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. Following the UNGA resolution, the PrepCom1 had a broad-ranging participation beyond government representatives including IATF members and representatives of various organizations.

A delegation from the Government of Japan including Ambassador Mr. Endo, Mr. Harada, and Mr. Tomio Saito, Vice Governor of Hyogo Prefecture attended



the PrepCom1. At the beginning, Mr. Harada presented the Concept Paper of Japan mentioning the proposals of Japan in regard to the objectives of the WCDR. Vice Governor Mr. Saito went on to express the expectations as the local host of the World Conference.

An active exchange of views and discussions took place on various subjects including the procedure and operation for convening the WCDR, accreditation criteria of participation of NGOs, the progress of the review of the Yokohama Strategy and the proposed outcome of the WCDR. It was confirmed that countries, relevant institutions and organizations will cooperate toward the success of the World Conference. The ISDR Secretariat, as the secretariat of the WCDR, asked countries for cooperation in punctual submission of national information by 15 June, 2004. The Second Meeting will be held on 11-12 October, following the 10<sup>th</sup> ISDR IATF Meeting. For more details, please see the ISDR website (<http://www.unisdr.org>).

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