

## UK STATEMENT

The UK has so far pledged £75m for the immediate relief effort to the tsunami, including £40m for the UN, and support for the Red Cross, NGOs, and provision of UK military assets. UK government policy is to look at the scope for spending 10% of this £75m on DRR interventions.

We stress the importance of getting coordination mechanisms fully operational; unblocking logistical bottlenecks; and ensuring the right key personnel are in place.

Careful analysis, reflection and planning is needed to avoid the risks of competition amongst organisations looking for projects; poaching of good local staff by international organisations; rising salaries leading to inflation; difficulty in accounting by organisations not used to handling such large sums of money; superficial planning under pressure to spend quickly; and difficulties in coordinating so large an effort.

The UK is ready to assist with development of an EWS in the Indian Ocean

I have 6 points on this

1 It's important that the process of establishing an EWS is coordinated. Local Governments need to be in the driving seat so they own the process. We are somewhat concerned there seem to be a number of different proposals put forward by different donors and countries in the region for the set up of such a system. These countries have a lot to offer. But without coordination and a unified approach, there is a risk of duplication and waste of resources.

2. In developing an EWS, we must balance a high tech approach with the need to disseminate information to the local level. This requires integration with local structures to ensure early warnings are well communicated, well understood and rapidly acted upon. Civil society has a crucial role.

3. EWS developed in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere must address all hazards, not just tsunamis which occur infrequently, but more common threats such as flooding and typhoons. This would result in a more regular use. As a result, vulnerable people will have a better

understanding of the purpose of warnings and local authorities will be more likely to invest in maintenance.

4. When developing the EWS, we must draw on existing mechanisms, knowledge and materials in the region. This will ensure the system is contextually appropriate and informed by the people it serves. Countries such as India and Bangladesh already have extensive knowledge about disaster management, This knowledge and experience must inform a regional EWS.

5. We would emphasise that early warning is an important but not the only useful intervention to reduce disaster risk. Much can be done to reduce the risk of disasters occurring and to make people more prepared for disasters when they strike. Effective DRR should focus not only on early warning but also on good governance, legislation, diversification of livelihoods and ensuring that needs on the ground are fed into government policy making

6. The extent of human suffering caused by the tsunami is terrible. The speed and size of the local and international response and the volume of resources available is impressive and encouraging. We shld try to extend this new public interest and generosity beyond the tsunami to the many less conspicuous crises in the world today. And in the future. We shld be careful not to forget about other humanitarian crises, but to seek to build on and replicate the generous response to the tsunami elsewhere.