



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1
23 April 2004

ENGLISH ONLY

WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION

Preparatory Committee
First Session
Geneva, 6-7 May 2004

Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Provisional rules of procedure for the preparatory committee
And the World Conference on Disaster Reduction

SUGGESTED ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE
PREPARATORY PROCESS AND IN THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER
REDUCTION OF RELEVANT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER
MAJOR GROUPS

I. Background

1. The General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/58/214, encouraged effective contributions from all major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, and invited them to seek accreditation to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and its preparatory process. In the same resolutions, the General Assembly decided that their accreditation and participation will be in accordance with the rules and procedures of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the rules of procedure of the World Summit of Sustainable Development and the established practices of the Commission on the participation and engagement of major groups.

2. The present report contains proposals on accreditation criteria and procedures for those non-governmental organizations and other major groups currently not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and participation of major groups in the World Conference and its preparatory process. The proposals were drafted using the World Summit on Sustainable Development as a model and the practices of the Commission on Sustainable Development since 1993. Proposals for the rules of procedure at the Conference are presented in a separate document (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/2).

II. Proposed accreditation criteria and procedures

3. Non-governmental participation in the Conference and its preparatory process is subject to the rules of participation of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹ Interested NGOs and other major groups that fall under the following categories and that wish to attend and contribute to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and its preparatory committee meetings need to notify the Conference secretariat and register to participate:

- a) those currently with a consultative status with the Economic and Social Council as non-governmental organizations;
- b) those on the list of the Commission on Sustainable Development;
- c) those which participated in World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (Yokohama Conference) in 1994; and,
- d) those are members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, or one of its working groups.

A registration form will be prepared for this purpose and made available on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) web site.

¹ Economic and Social Council Resolution 1996/31

4. Those non-governmental organizations and other major groups currently not falling under any of the above categories but wishing to attend and contribute to the Conference and its preparatory process may apply to the Conference secretariat for that purpose. The procedures and related forms will be available shortly after the conclusion of the first session of the preparatory committee. Such accreditation will be limited solely to the WCDR process.

5. The application requires the submission of the following information:

- (a) Name of the organization and pertinent contact information, such as address, main contact, etc.;
- (b) Purpose of the organization;
- (c) Programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the subject of the World Conference and indicating in which country, or countries, they are carried out;
- (d) Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels;
- (e) Copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;
- (f) A list of the members of the governing body of the organization and their countries of nationality (for international organizations);
- (g) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of organizations that are members and their geographical distribution;
- (h) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization; and,
- (i) A completed registration form prepared by the World Conference secretariat.

6. The deadline for submitting accreditation applications is six weeks before the start of each preparatory committee session. Applications should be submitted to the Conference secretariat. The secretariat, with support from United Nations Non-governmental Liaison Service and relevant others, as appropriate, will review the relevance of the work of the applicants on the basis of their background and involvement in sustainable development issues, particularly in the areas of disaster reduction. If the evaluation shows, on the basis of the information provided, that the applicant organization is competent and its activities relevant to the work of the World Conference, the secretariat will recommend to the preparatory committee for its decision on the accreditation of those non-governmental organizations and other major groups. In cases where such recommendation is not made, the Conference secretariat will make available to the preparatory committee the reasons for not doing so. The Conference secretariat will submit its recommendations to the preparatory committee two weeks before the start of each committee meeting.

7. A non-governmental or other major group organization that has been granted accreditation to attend a session of the preparatory committee may attend all of its future sessions and the Conference itself.

III. Modalities for participation in the preparatory process and the Conference

A. Participation in sessions of the preparatory committee

8. Representatives of accredited non-governmental organizations and other major groups may address the preparatory committee. Given the short duration of each session of the preparatory committee, however, it is requested that statements be made available in writing for distribution and that sufficient number of copies (250 copies) be reproduced by the respective organizations. Statements can be made in English.

B. Participation modalities at the Conference

9. Accredited non-governmental organizations and other major groups will have direct access to the official Conference venue. For security and safety reasons, on some days of the Conference, a limit on the number of major group participants may need to be established. Once the Conference programme becomes clearer, the Conference secretariat will inform the major groups regarding these arrangements.

10. A small, but representative, number of participants from major groups will be invited to address the plenary. The individual speakers will be identified through the self-organized mechanisms of the major groups, in coordination with the President of the Conference, through the Conference secretariat.

11. A number of stakeholder events and activities are expected to take place such as roundtables, seminars and workshops with major groups and Governments on specific thematic issues, as parallel events. The details and topics of these events will be announced once they are further clarified.
