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WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION

REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION,
HELD AT GENEVA

FROM 6 TO 7 MAY 2004

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening and duration of the session

Pursuant to resolution A/RES/58/214, the General Assembly decided to convene the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 18-22 January 2005 and decided to establish an Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Conference. It requested the Inter-Agency Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to serve as the Secretariat of the Conference and to coordinate the preparatory activities. The first session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 6 –7 May 2004 to review the organizational and substantive preparations for the Conference, approve the programme of work of the Conference, and propose rules of procedure for adoption by the Conference.

1. The Preparatory Committee held its first session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 6 to 7 May 2004. The Preparatory Committee held three plenary meetings (1st to 3rd).

Opening statements

2. In the first meeting, on 6 May, the Chair of the Bureau, Ambassador Hernán Escudero Martínez (Ecuador), made an opening statement in which he referred to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) as a milestone in raising the international profile of disaster risk reduction as an integral component of sustainable development. The Conference would provide a unique opportunity to reflect on the progress made in disaster reduction since the adoption of the Yokohama Strategy, and would promote a more collaborative and coherent approach to reducing risk and vulnerability to hazards.

3. The host of the conference, the Government of Japan, together with the Hyogo Prefecture, stated that the importance of community work was one of the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake of 1995. Outcomes of the WCDR should include clear objectives and targets, follow-up activities, and a list of techniques and best practices.

4. The Director of the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Sálvano Briceño, noted the advances in science and technology in disaster reduction since Yokohama but also the rapid increase in human vulnerability. Development assistance failed to offset losses caused by disasters. He stressed the importance of the creation of national programmes for disaster reduction and the adoption of an integrated approach. The Committee was informed that a special unit had been created to prepare for the Conference.

5. At the same meeting, statements were made by representatives of Ireland on behalf of the European Union, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the United States of America, Morocco on behalf of African States, and Congo.

6. In the general debate, links were pointed out between early warning, disaster reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as between the impact of HIV/AIDS and the capacity to respond to risk. The importance of integrating a gender perspective in risk reduction strategies was highlighted. The International Meeting on the Ten-Year Review of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and the importance of climate change for disaster reduction and mitigation were mentioned as issues for consideration in the proposed outcome of the WCDR. Setting targets and voluntary timetables should be compatible with existing processes,

including achieving the MDGs. The review process should allow for regional and national ownership.

7. Donor countries were called upon to provide additional financial resources to assure wide participation of developing countries in the preparatory process and in the WCDR. The conference should focus on implementing relevant intergovernmental agreements on natural disaster management and give equal consideration to all types of natural disasters. The importance of establishing regional collaborative centers for natural disaster management was underlined.

8. The WCDR presents an opportunity to review and share lessons learned: the importance of community engagement; the role of women in disaster prevention; the inclusion of vulnerable populations in disaster prevention; environmental degradation; the strengthening of evacuation modeling; and the role of communication, were areas mentioned as requiring attention.

9. The high degree of vulnerability of African countries was specifically stressed, as was the importance of participation by developing countries to the process of WCDR. African governments have to prioritize disaster reduction, integrate disaster policies into national development planning processes, establish partnership mechanisms and foster national ownership in disaster reduction. A call was made for a study of the effects of disasters on human trafficking, as well as for the creation of an international fund to assist developing countries in disaster risk management and response. Drought was mentioned as an area to be included in the discussion.

B. Officers of the Preparatory Committee

10. At the 1st meeting, on 6 May, the Preparatory Committee endorsed the following officers of the Preparatory Committee, who had been nominated on the basis of equitable geographical representation (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.3).

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (GRULAC): ECUADOR - Selected by the Bureau as the Chair of the Bureau

Permanent Mission in Geneva

- H.E. M. Hernán Escudero Martínez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
- Mr. Arturo Cabrera, Counsellor
- Ms. Mireya Muñoz, Counsellor

ASIAN GROUP: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN – Selected by the Bureau as the Rapporteur

Permanent Mission in Geneva

- H.E. M. Ali A. Mojtahed-Shabestari, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative
- Mr. Seyed Mohammad Sadati Nejad, Third Secretary

AFRICAN GROUP: MOROCCO

Permanent Mission in Geneva

- H.E. M. Omar Hilale, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
- Mr. M'hamed Sidi El Khir, Counsellor

EASTERN EUROPE GROUP: RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Permanent Mission in Geneva

- H.E. M. Leonid Skotnikov, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
- Mr. Yuri Boychenko, Senior Counsellor
- Ms. Natalia Zolotova, Second Secretary

WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHERS GROUP: GERMANY

Permanent Mission in Geneva

- H.E. Michael Steiner, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
- Mr. Andreas Pfaffernoschke, Counsellor

EX-OFFICIO member: JAPAN – Selected by the Bureau as the Co-Chair of the Bureau

Permanent Mission in Geneva

- H.E. M. Shigeru Endo, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative
- Mr. Hidenobu Sobashima, Minister
- Mr. Masaaki Nakagawa, First Secretary
- Mr. Kenji Shinoda, First Secretary

C. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

11. At its 1st meeting, on 6 May, the Committee adopted the agenda for the first session of the Preparatory Committee as contained in document A/CONF.206/PC(I)/1. The agenda was as follows:

1. Opening of the Preparatory Committee
2. Officers of the Preparatory Committee
3. Adoption of the Agenda of first session of the Preparatory Committee
4. Provisional rules of procedure for the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction
5. Organisation of work
6. Progress report on the preparatory process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction
7. Draft annotated outline of the review of Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action
8. Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction
9. Arrangements for second session of the Preparatory Committee
10. Other matters
11. Conclusion of the session

D. Attendance

12. In accordance with paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution A/RES/58/214, the Preparatory Committee was open-ended to allow for the full participation of all States.

13. The following States were represented: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

14. The European Community was represented.

15. The following United Nations organs and programmes were represented: United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations University, United Nations Volunteers, World Food Programme, United Nations Institute for Research and Training, United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

16. The following specialized agencies were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, International Telecommunication Union, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Joint United Nations Programme HIV/AIDS, United Nations Centre for Regional Development, United Nations Education and Scientific Organization, World Health Organization, World Meteorological Organization.

17. The following convention secretariat attended the session: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

18. The following intergovernmental organizations and other entities were represented by observers: International Organization for Migration, African Union, Organization of Islamic Conference, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Council of Europe, Council of the European Union; European Commission, Ibero-american Association of Civil Defence and Civil Protection, South Pacific Applied Geo-science Commission.

19. Seventeen non-governmental organizations which fall under accreditation categories to the process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1) tentatively attended the session, pending the endorsement of their participation by the Preparatory Committee.

E. Documentation

20. The documents before the First Session of the Preparatory Committee are listed in Annex I.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION

A. Proposed Rules of procedure and suggested arrangements for accreditation and participation of relevant Non-Governmental Organizations and other Major Groups for the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction

21. At the 1st meeting, on 6 May, the Preparatory Committee considered agenda item 4, entitled “Proposed rules of procedure for the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction”.

22. The preparatory committee had before it two documents, “Provisional rules of procedure for the preparatory committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction” (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/2) and “Suggested arrangement 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” (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1), submitted by the Secretariat. The Co-Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce these two documents.

23. Statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America with regard to the reference to the European Community. Ireland, on behalf of the European Union made proposals to amend Rules 33 and 34 as follows: new alternative proposal on Rule 33: “Every effort shall be made to reach decisions in the Conference by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions shall be taken by a vote”; and new alternative proposal on Rule 34: “Provided for in paragraph 2 of this rule, each State Party shall have one vote”.

24. At the same meeting, the Preparatory Committee decided to defer its consideration to the last meeting to facilitate informal consultations between the representatives of the concerned Member States.

25. At its 3rd and last meeting, on 7 May, the Preparatory Committee provisionally adopted “Provisional rules of procedure for the preparatory committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction” (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/2) on the understanding that the rules under dispute, i.e., relevant parts of Rules 1, 3, 24 paragraph 1, 24 paragraph 3, 47, 62, as well as the full newly proposed paragraphs to Rules 33 and 34, would remain bracketed pending the consultation between the concerned Member States.

26. Before its provisional adoption, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America, the Russian Federation, and Ireland on behalf of the European Union. It was noted by the latter, for the record, that the United Nations General Assembly had decided that the rules of procedure of the WCDR should be based on those applied during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

27. The Chair took note of the observations made.

28. At its 1st meeting, on 6 May, the Co-Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce the document on suggested arrangement 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. The Secretariat introduced its corrigendum (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1/Corr.1).

29. The preparatory committee adopted document A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1 with its corrigendum (see annex V).

B. Organization of Work

30. At its 1st meeting, the Preparatory Committee considered agenda item 5, entitled "Organization of work". The Co-Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce a tentative schedule of work (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/1).

31. The Preparatory Committee adopted the work schedule as presented (see annex II).

C. Progress report on the preparatory process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction

32. At its 1st meeting, the Preparatory Committee considered agenda item 6, entitled "Progress report on the preparatory process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction".

33. The Secretariat introduced the report (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/5), reporting on progress of the WCDR preparatory process: the establishment of a Bureau and its first meetings, the creation of a Special Unit in the Secretariat for the preparation for the WCDR, budgetary requirements, including funding by the Host Government, the first preparatory visit to Japan in January 2004, the next planning mission tentatively scheduled for the end of May 2004, the first announcement issued in February, the Website for the WCDR soon to be operational, a communication strategy to be designed, the 9th meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force (4–5 May 2004), the completion of the publication "Living with Risk" to be available for sale in June 2004, and national reports expected to be submitted by 15 June 2004. The Secretariat reminded the Committee of the format of the WCDR, composed of three components: intergovernmental process, thematic segment and public forum. The issuance of a second announcement for the conference is foreseen for mid- June.

D. Draft annotated outline of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action

34. At its 1st meeting, the Preparatory Committee considered the agenda item 7, entitled "Draft annotated outline of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action"(A/CONF.206/PC(I)/3). The Secretariat briefed on the methodology and status of the review of the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action.

35. The Secretariat announced that the review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action would be finalized for the second session of the Preparatory Committee after receiving and incorporating national inputs. Major trends and gaps in disaster reduction efforts as well as emerging issues would be identified in the final document to be adopted at the WCDR. A number of delegations requested more time for the submission of national reports. However,

given the tight time constraints, the deadline of 15 June 2004 was maintained, but would be applied with flexibility, i.e. late submissions would be incorporated as long as the drafting process was open.

36. At the same meeting, the Secretariat also briefed the Preparatory Committee on the discussion held in the 9th Meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF).

37. Statements were made by the representatives of Costa Rica, Norway, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

38. The Secretariat responded to questions raised.

E. Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction

39. At the 2nd meeting, on 6 May, the Preparatory Committee considered agenda item 8, entitled "Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction" (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/4). The Secretariat introduced the document, with a related briefing of the work of the IATF in this respect.

40. At the 3rd meeting, on 7 May, the Preparatory Committee continued consideration of the agenda item 8.

41. Under this item, at those two meetings, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Canada, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mauritius, Morocco, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

42. The observer for the World Meteorological Organization made a statement.

43. The secretariat reported that the IATF had emphasized the need to set priorities, stressed the importance of regional policies, and recognized the necessity of follow-up mechanisms and capacity building. Objectives identified by the IATF from regional and thematic conferences were: incorporate disaster risk reduction into national policies; identify and monitor risks and vulnerability; use education to build a culture of prevention; reduce underlying disaster risk factors; strengthen disaster preparedness and contingency planning; and sustain international support for local and national activities.

44. In the pursuing debate on the subject of the outcome document, it was pointed out that the WCDR should provide useful and practical guidance for policy, planning, programmes and activities in relation to disaster reduction, underscoring the need to empower local communities and share lessons learned. Scepticism was expressed as to the value of adopting global time-bound targets for disaster risk reduction.

45. On a question about the future modalities for consultations including informal consultations before the second session of the Preparatory Committee, the Secretariat referred to the list of regional and thematic meetings (annex II of document A/CONF.206/PC(I)/5), recalling the role of the Bureau in this respect. Some delegations suggested extending the

length of the second Preparatory Committee meeting by one day. It was pointed out, however, that this would mean forfeiting the possibility of a third session of the Preparatory Committee just before the conference, in January 2005.

46. Participation of developing countries prone to disasters (a specific reference was made to the Pacific Island States) had to be ensured. A call was made to assist developing countries in producing national programmes of action, for example through UNDP.

47. Substantive comments were made by many delegations on the elements to guide the objectives and targets for the programme outcome, which the Secretariat would incorporate in the next draft to be issued by end May. Specific language was offered on the core priorities proposed as elements to guide the objectives and targets for the programme outcome, which will be incorporated in a new draft. Contributions by delegations can be summarized as covering the following areas:

- the relationship between population size and disaster risk;
- the use of advanced technologies in reducing risk and linkages between natural disasters and technological aspects of risk;
- the specific situation of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the Barbados Programme of Action for 10 years, directly relevant to the objectives of the WCDR (SIDS are exposed to numerous natural and other hazards, including civil unrest and HIV/AIDS);
- making available affordable insurance and re-insurance arrangements for developing countries;
- building on existing resources and commitments, rather than create new ones;
- the interrelation between the impact of disasters and other health or environmental threats;
- the role of communities in disaster reduction;
- the equal importance of discussing disaster relief;
- the necessity for a crosscutting approach, on the assumption that strategies are more efficient if implemented through existing mandates and programmes;
- the economic impact of natural disasters, which justifies putting disaster reduction at the forefront of national agendas;
- the need to strengthen international cooperation in view of developing countries' limited capacity for preparedness, response and mitigation;
- the importance of early warning systems;
- the importance of socio-economic studies to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of investments in natural disaster reduction; assessing the financial costs of achieving objectives in the WCDR's outcomes;

- the need to address legal and legislative aspects of disaster prevention and reduction;
- financial resources, institutional capacity and capacity to predict disasters

48. About the WCDR process, recognizing the short time frame, it was stressed that it should be participatory and transparent, including broad consultations with a comprehensive disaster management approach. Inter-session consultations (between Preparatory Committee meetings) would allow for sufficient time to complete negotiations before the WCDR. On the substance, the second session of the Preparatory Committee should benefit from inputs of experts from capitals, and in that context, developing countries should be assisted to participate.

49. There was support for the decision to convene the WCDR at an expert, rather than political level. An effective follow-up mechanism was called for. Calls were made for donors to respond generously and rapidly to support the WCDR and relevant follow-up activities. Donors were encouraged to contribute to disaster reduction part of their funds earmarked for humanitarian aid.

50. In conclusion to the discussion, it was agreed that the Secretariat, by the end of May, would integrate into a revised outcome document to be circulated to all Member States, comments and recommendations received from the Preparatory Committee as well as from the IATF. Informal consultations would be held during June and July, and a further revised draft would be circulated by 9 August. The Secretariat would also provide an inventory of all documents. Clarification was given as to the three basic documents expected to come out of the WCDR: (i) a review of the Yokohama Strategy, based on inputs of national reporting; (ii) a "Programme of Action" – the outcome document referred to above- to be negotiated in the inter-governmental process (including at the second session of the Preparatory Committee in October 2004); (iii) possibly a "Declaration", for which no draft yet exists.

51. At the same meeting, the Secretariat made available (see Appendix to the annex I) a timetable for further consultations on the elements for the programme outcome of the WCDR, and responded to questions raised.

F. Arrangement for Second Session of the Preparatory Committee

52. At the 3rd meeting, the Preparatory Committee considered the agenda item 9, entitled "Arrangement for Second Session of the Preparatory Committee". The Committee's attention was drawn to the second session of the Preparatory Committee scheduled for 11 – 12 October 2004, following the tenth meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction scheduled for 7 – 8 October 2004.

53. The Co-Chair invited the Secretariat to present the planned activities carried out by the Secretariat during the period of intersession. During the inter-session period, the Secretariat will be seeking additional funds, will undertake a planning mission to Japan, develop a communication strategy and the website, and work on document preparation.

54. At the same meeting, a statement was made by Costa Rica.

G. Other Matters

55. At the 3rd meeting, the Preparatory Committee considered the agenda item 10, entitled "Other matters". The Co-Chair invited the Secretariat to brief the Committee on that item.

56. The Preparatory Committee authorized the Bureau to decide on the logo for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

57. At the same meeting, the representative of Congo made a statement and the Secretariat responded.

H. Closure of the Session

58. At the 3rd meeting, on 7 May, the Co-Chair, Ambassador Shigeru Endo, summarized the discussion of the meeting (see annex III).

59. At the same meeting, the representative of the United States of America made a statement. The Co-Chair took note.

60. At the same meeting, the Co-Chair made a closing statement and declared the First Session of the Preparatory Committee closed.

Annex I

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE FIRST SESSION
OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE**

<u>Document symbol</u>	<u>Title or description of contents</u>
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/1	Annotated provisional agenda
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/2	Provisional rules of procedure for the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/3	Draft annotated outline of the review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/4	Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/5 (English only)	Progress report of on the preparatory process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1 and Corr.1 (English only)	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
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.2 (English only)	Information note for participants
A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.3 (English only)	Designation of the Bureau for the preparatory Committee and the establishment of a special unit for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction within the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

APPENDIX

Timetable for further informal consultations on the elements for the programme outcome of the WCDR (Revised: WCDR/CU/PC2/01)

Deadlines	Action by the WCDR Conference Unit	WCDR PrepCom Bureau periodical meetings IATF WG on the WCDR Other regional and thematic meetings conclusions (see list of regional meetings below)	
<i>25 May</i>	Integrate comments and recommendations from IATF9, the first PrepCom session and additional feedback and comments		
<i>31 May</i>	Revised document made available by Secretariat		
<i>Dates tbc.</i>	Update the ISDR Support Group at its next meeting.		
15 JUNE	Deadline for the reception of national reports (flexible to accommodate late submissions)		
<i>15 June to 16 July</i>	On-line conference on the conclusions of the review of the Yokohama Strategy and future objectives		
<i>Between June and August (dates tbc)</i>	Briefings (Geneva and New York) with Permanent Missions to the UN - Meeting on the side of ECOSOC, as appropriate.		
<i>19 July to 6 August</i>	Drafting of revised text, circulation within Bureau /Regional Groups, finalization of draft.		
<i>9 August</i>	REVISED DRAFT incorporating inputs from the first PrepCom, consultations, Review of Yokohama Strategy		
<i>7-8 October</i>	10 th session of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF-10)		
<i>11-12 October</i>	<u>Next formal meeting</u> : Second session of the Preparatory Committee		

- Major forthcoming regional events towards WCDR:
 - International Conference on Disaster Reduction in Central Asia, Beijing, China, 25-27 May 2004
 - African consultation, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2-3 June 2004
 - Latin America consultations, July-August 2004
 - Caribbean consultations, Kingston, August 2004

- Thematic meetings towards WCDR (see full list on www.unisdr.org)

Annex II

**SCHEDULE OF WORK
THURSDAY, 6 MAY 2004
(SALLE XIX, PALAIS DES NATIONS)**

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Opening of the Preparatory Committee- Officers of the Preparatory Committee- Adoption of the Agenda of first session of the Preparatory Committee (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/1)- Provisional rules of procedure for the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/2) (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/INF.1)- Organisation of work- Progress report on the preparatory process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Draft annotated outline of the review of Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/3)- Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/4)

Friday, 7 May 2004

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (continued) (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Proposed elements for the programme outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (continued) (A/CONF.206/PC(I)/4)- Arrangements for second session of the Preparatory Committee- Other matters- Conclusion of the session

Annex III

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee summarized the key points the first session of the Preparatory Committee has discussed:

1. The first session of the Preparatory Committee agreed upon the proposed officers.
2. Concerning the provisional rules of procedure for the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, pending the consultation between the USA and the European Community, the provisional rules of procedure will be provisionally adopted, while the rules under dispute will remain bracketed. The secretariat also takes note of the statements made by the USA, the Russian federation and Ireland on behalf of the European Community.
3. With regard to the 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, the meeting adopted the arrangements as presented by the secretariat.
4. The meeting also took note of the progress report on the preparatory process of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, presented by the secretariat.
5. Concerning the draft annotated outline of the review of Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action, the meeting was informed of the various documents presented to the Inter-Agency Task Force, including the information note on this subject. Delegates expressed their view that this review was important to establish the baseline for taking action on risk reduction and several suggestions were made to enhance the review process. Governments were reminded by the Secretariat that the deadline to submit national information to be taken into consideration is 15 June. The Secretariat indicated, however, that in the event of delays, a later date for the reception of this information would still be acceptable and useful.
6. The discussion on the Elements for the Programme Outcome of the World Conference was particularly useful. The committee reached a preliminary agreement on the format of the proposed outcome document. Including the identification of priorities, the proposed target setting, and follow-up mechanisms.
7. While a few reservations and specific suggestions were made, the Chair was delighted to note that many of these - such as voluntary targets - are in fact already incorporated in the advanced working draft considered earlier this week at the Inter Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, and made available to the delegates yesterday.
8. Delegates also made a number of useful suggestions on elements that would need to be considered in the programme outcome of the Conference, of which the Secretariat took note. The secretariat presented the proposed timetable on the consultation process between now and the second session of the Preparatory Committee in October.

9. The Preparatory Committee set out an ambitious programme of work to enhance the programme outcome documents. The Chair encourage all delegations contribute actively in the coming months to the consultations, as set out in the proposed timetable in order to have a second Preparatory Committee as effective as the first.

10. In this context, the Chair noted the important role of the Bureau and the WCDR Working Group of the Inter-Agency Task Force on disaster reduction in supporting this work.

11. The Chair was particularly satisfied with these steps forward, noting the pressure on all from the short timetable we face between now and January 2005. There were many expressions of commitment to support the conference and its preparation processes and to ensure tangible results.

Annex IV

ADOPTED 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 roster 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.

¹ Economic and Social Council Resolution 1996/31.

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

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.
