

Hosted by the City of Bonn

Mayors' Conference on Early Warning

[Bonn, 26 March 2006]

-First Announcement-

Municipal Leaders Conference on Local and Regional Disaster Management and Prevention

From March 27th - 29th, 2006, Germany will host the Third International Conference on Early Warning. The conference is intended to lend further impetus to the process launched in Bonn at the Second Early Warning Conference in 2003 and in Kobe in January 2005 for the global development of disaster reduction, as expressed in the International Strategy on Disaster Reduction.

For the efficiency of disaster management and early warning systems, the local and regional levels play a crucial role. It is urgently necessary that towns and municipalities as well as rural areas in the North and South are included in early warning activities. In order to make local political decision-makers heard, to benefit from their experience, and to work out a local governments' position towards disaster management with specific proposals, the Service-Agency Communities in One World (Servicestelle Kommunen in der Einen Welt SKEW / InWEnt) in cooperation with the City of Bonn, the German Committee for Disaster Reduction, the German Development Cooperation, the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, and the Institute for Environment and Human Security at the United Nations University, with the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Foundation for International Dialogue are going to organise an international municipal leaders conference (Mayors' Conference on Early Warning) within the framework of the Third International Conference on Early Warning.

The *Mayors' Conference on Early Warning* will take place in Bonn, Germany, at the kind invitation of the Lady Mayor of Bonn, Bärbel Dieckmann, on March 26th, 2006.

As a high policy element, the *Mayors' Conference on Early Warning* is supposed to exchange experience with disaster management among local leaders and invited

Main organiser: Service Agency Communities in One World
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in cooperation with:

the City of Bonn, the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe, BGR), the German Committee for Disaster Reduction (Deutsches Komitee Katastrophenvorsorge e.V., DKKV), the German Development Cooperation (Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit, GTZ) and the Institute for Environment and Human Security at the United Nations University, Bonn (UNU-EHS).

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georisk experts. The results of the *Mayors' Conference* will then be presented as an input from local governments to the Third International Conference on Early Warning. Furthermore, all participants of the *Mayors' Conference on Early Warning* will have the opportunity to participate in the Third International Conference on Early Warning.

The aims of the *Mayors' Conference on Early Warning* are

- to exchange know-how, experience and opinions regarding disaster reduction, prevention and early warning among local decision-makers
- to present successful models that enhance the scope and efficiency of local action to work towards a functioning early warning system
- to agree on a local position towards disaster reduction policies with recommendations and concrete measures of implementation, and to work out strategies to feed this position into the process
- to give recommendations for action to the Third International Conference on Early Warning
- to make national and international decision-makers aware of local governments' role and contributions for disaster reduction.

The target group of this municipal leaders conference are policy-makers at the local level, in particular Lord Mayors and Mayors and high municipal and district decision-makers as well as selected experts on disaster prevention and disaster management. The number of participants will be limited to 25 to maximize the opportunities for in-depth dialogue.

Interested policy-makers who are in the target group and who are faced with disasters and/or have been working in the field of implementation of early warning systems in their towns and municipalities can apply for participation in the conference.

The emphasis of the conference will be on the political discussion between the local decision-makers in terms of achievements, conclusions and recommendations in the field of disaster management and early warning systems. Finally, a declaration will be discussed and passed on by a representative to the Third International Conference on Early Warning.

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For more information please contact: SKEW: Nina Ouan / Anne-Christine Wegener (acwegener@inwent.org)
Fon: +49/228/2434-755, Tulpenfeld 6, 53113 Bonn, Germany.

During the conference, the panels and round tables will focus on the following central questions:

- 1) How can international and national efforts for disaster reduction be integrated with municipal district planning?
- 2) How can communication among levels, agencies and sectors be improved? Which role does the local level have as an initial agency with the responsibility for its citizens?
- 3) How can the capacities of local resources, e.g. universities, be synchronised with national and international resources in order to identify risks and to develop early warning systems?

The conference will be held in English, translation into Spanish and German will be provided. The documentation and the “*Mayors’ Conference on Early Warning Declaration*” will be translated into Spanish and German.

For selected guest from Asia, Africa and Latin America there will be the possibility of reimbursement for their travel costs.

The *Mayors’ Conference on Early Warning* is managed by the Service-Agency Communities in One World/InWEnt, which is responsible for the preparation and realisation of the conference, in cooperation with the City of Bonn, the German Committee for Disaster Reduction (DKKV), the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR), and the German Development Cooperation (GTZ). On behalf of the steering committee, the Institute for Environment and Human Security at the United Nations University (UNU-EHS) coordinates the policy paper.

The conference is supported financially by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Foundation for International Dialogue, and is supported logistically by the City of Bonn.

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