



Mayors' Conference on Early Warning, 26.3.2006

Commitments of the participants

City of Bonn, Germany

The City of Bonn, in the framework of its international city-to-city project partnerships, among them La Paz (Bolivia) and Cuddalore (India), will endeavour to identify opportunities, in cooperation with these partners, to make a concrete contribution to improving on the local level the early detection and early warning of natural disasters. In this context, priority will be given to projects of municipal know-how exchange (training, seminars, expert contacts). The City of Bonn is prepared, in cooperation with its partner cities, to identify suitable contact partners and funding to implement such measures.

City of Kabul, Afghanistan

First commitment:

Kabul dwellers have been living constantly under the threat of flooding during the spring when the floodwater crosses the riverbanks and damages houses beside the river. Most of the houses are built by the traditional materials that have no any resistance to water and can be easily damaged. At this stage Kabul Municipality is committing to protect these houses against the threat of flood and proposing a number of measures for this purpose. First measure is placing sand bags on the flood prone locations to protect the houses as a short-term solution. Second, construction of gabion walls for the protection purposes. Third, construction of retaining walls in the flood prone areas that is very expensive but it is a more long term solution.

Second commitment:

Since 2001, Kabul has received large numbers of Afghan returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Most of these vulnerable families have been living either in the tents or houses built in disaster prone locations such as flood planes and steep mountain slopes prone to land slides. In order to respond to this problem, the Afghan government, especially the Kabul Municipality, has decided to provide land in order to relocate these vulnerable families permanently to safer places that are not affected by natural disasters.

Third commitment:

Due to financial problem, more than 80% of the houses in Kabul city have been built by traditional materials, which is not earthquake resistant. Therefore, Kabul Municipality has decided to provide technical training to masons and individuals dealing with construction activities on how to protect the houses against earthquakes while using the traditional materials.

City of Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia

The Government Padang City realizes very much the potential of big earthquake which may causing Tsunami in the future, therefore we are commit to:

1. Educating all the people of Padang to be aware of the potential danger, alert and able to carry out the evacuation process effectively in line with the strategy made by the Government of Padang City.
2. To optimize the Standard Operating Procedures in one command in the effort of disaster mitigation and prevention.
3. To direct the development away from the coastal area so in the future the coastal area will only function as tourism destination and can also act as buffer zone.



City of San Fernando, La Union, Philippines

The City of San Fernando has coordinated with the National level, the provincial level and has formed a disaster coordinating council that covers the 59 villages in its boundaries. We have gained the support of the other non government organizations like the Rotary, Lions, Soroptimist, Zonta, Inner Wheel Clubs and since I (Mary Jane Ortega, Mayor) am the Chairman of the local Red Cross and the Commander of the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary, we have good working relations.

For communications, we have supplied mobile radio units and cellphones to the village chiefs, and when a typhoon or an impending disaster comes, the local radio stations broadcast our updates.

On research, using our limited resources, I commissioned the hydrogeological study of the city and the study of the currents and tides for a proper guide on coastal urban planning.

I commit:

As Mayor of the City of San Fernando to continue research and strengthen our Disaster Management Council and continue our partnership with the Township of Langley, B.C. , Canada on Disaster Management.

As Executive Vice President of the League of Cities of the Philippines to share the commitments passed in the Mayors Council on Early Warning.

As member of the Executive Committee of ICLEI, to support the initiative to be put forward by our Executive Director Konrad Otto Zimmermann on Early Warning.

City of Hilo, Hawaii, USA

The County of Hawai'i is committed to the aim of sustainable catastrophe prevention in the following three critical areas:

Mitigation

- Hazard zones - Volcanic, Tsunami, Flood, Earthquake
- Infrastructure requirements - Building codes Hurricane, Earthquake
- Public Education - Ongoing education programs involving the private and government sectors on information pertaining to hazard and risk awareness to public.

Response

- Development of an "Emergency Operations Plan" that identifies each government and private agency's responsibilities in responding to emergencies.
- Development of a comprehensive warning and evacuation system for the Island of Hawai'i, and exercise of that system on a regular basis.
- Warning system - Emergency Alert System (EAS), Sirens, Exercises

Recovery

- Development of a comprehensive recovery plan as a key component of emergency responses.
- This component for the most part plays a critical role in the prevention of a catastrophic situation. This has been illustrated so tragically in major catastrophes recently in the U.S. as well as elsewhere.
- The priority of this is emphasized in Hawai'i Country as perhaps just as important or more important than other aspects of emergency response. A recovery plan has been developed that identifies the roles and responsibilities of the private and government sector. This includes procedures for assistance and response at all government levels including state and federal.

To be continued