## New Zealand official statement: May 16th, 1015

**THEME “Resilience Dividend: Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Societies”**

Natural hazards including earthquakes, storms, volcanic eruptions, drought, fire, floods and landslips are part of life in New Zealand, some of which impact on our main cities. Increasingly, we also face a range of hazards and risks from other sources, from plant and animal diseases, to human health, to technological disruptions and security threats. Many of these have the potential to be exacerbated with the increased risks posed by climate change. Other trends in our society and the broader international context means that – like all of you – our risk landscape is increasingly complex and uncertain.

In February this year we experienced forest fires that led to one of our largest ever evacuations of several rural communities. Then in March, the horrific terrorist event targeting two mosques in Christchurch, leaving 51 people dead and many more injured. The devastating earthquakes we experienced in Christchurch in 2011 and Kaikōura in 2016 are still fresh in our minds.

Not surprisingly, we are very serious about how we prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters, and we have developed a broad range of skills and experience that we are keen to share with others.

Last month we released our new National Disaster Resilience Strategy. The Strategy incorporates more than 10 years’ worth of lessons from emergencies and disasters. It also enshrines our commitment to the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Strategy has been in development since the Sendai Framework came into effect, and incorporates many of the Framework’s principles, goals, and actions. In particular, it has been developed collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders from across central government, local government, the private sector, and community organisations, and seeks to build an inclusive, whole-of-society approach to managing risk and building resilience in New Zealand.

We are seeking to take a smart, proactive, and deliberate approach to building the resilience of our nation, understanding that our effort and investment now, will save costs – and lives, livelihoods, and wellbeing – if a disaster strikes in the future.

We are now working on a range of initiatives to give effect to the Strategy’s goals and priorities and to manage better our national disaster risk. We are developing a Roadmap of Actions for implementing the Strategy, and a measuring and monitoring regime that builds on our Sendai Framework monitoring requirements.

We are also working tirelessly on a significant reform of our emergency management system. The changes result from a Ministerial Review into Better Responses to Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies, which found that improvements could be made to our capability, capacity, our data and information gathering, public communications, and our partnership approach with indigenous groups and communities. We are now working to address these areas, including updating our main legislation for managing emergencies, the CDEM Act. Our aim is to ensure seamless response to emergencies, and enable greater resilience.

New Zealand is committed to international collaboration and coordination on disaster risk management. We are deeply aware that our strength as a nation relies on the friendship and technical expertise of others, and seek to build this in partnership with governments and agencies. Through our Aid Programme, we work with partner governments to support resilient development to all hazards and all risks, and contribute and lead humanitarian responses when disasters do occur.

As a Pacific Island country, we are particularly concerned about the impacts of climate change on disaster risks. As such, we strongly support regional mechanisms like the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, and we seek to integrate support for climate change adaptation with disaster risk reduction to ensure long term and systemic resilience to natural hazards. We are looking to increase this support over coming years – we have announced an increase in our Paris Commitment to $300m over four years, at least half of which will be spent on climate change adaptation that will, amongst other aims, seek to reduce risk from disasters. We are looking to strengthen our partnerships with other Pacific countries and regional agencies, and will also continue to invest in risk informed investments elsewhere in the world.

International collaboration around disasters is very much about partnerships. We are constantly learning from each other’s experiences; be they from developed or developing countries. New Zealand will always remember the international response following the Christchurch and Kaikōura earthquakes, including from many participants in this Conference.

So while New Zealand is pleased to share our own experiences, we are also here to listen and to learn. We welcome the opportunity to review progress on implementing of the Sendai Framework. We have high expectations that this Conference will lead to greater collaboration and coordination among participants and that it will lead to practical, effective, outcomes.

Thank you.

**Hon Kris Faafoi**

Minister of Civil Defence

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