

Press release

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NEPAL TRAGEDY UNDERLINES NEED FOR GREATER INVESTMENT IN REDUCING RISK

27 April 2015, GENEVA – The Head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, today expressed her condolences to the government and people of Nepal on the loss of life, injuries and devastation caused by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake at the weekend.

Ms. Wahlström said: “This is a major tragedy. Nepal has lost many people and also seen great destruction to its rich cultural heritage, an important part of its national identity. The earthquake is a significant setback for the country’s economic development.

“The search and rescue phase is critically important and it is good to see that neighbouring countries like China, India and Pakistan are providing support.

“This tragedy underlines the importance of the work of the Government and the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium launched on International Day for Disaster Reduction in 2009. There was great awareness throughout the country that a disaster of this magnitude was imminent and retrofitted hospitals have been able to withstand the impact of the earthquake.

“Nepal raised the issue of a major earthquake at last month’s World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan where countries adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which outlines the priorities for reducing disaster risk over the next 15 years. When the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase gets underway it will be an opportunity to build back better and make the country more resilient to disasters.

“Earthquakes claim more lives than any other disaster type and this tragedy underlines the importance of implementing the guidelines on land use and building codes laid out in the Sendai Framework and its predecessor, the Hyogo Framework for Action.”

About UNISDR: UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.”

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