



**INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEODESY AND GEOPHYSICS
UNION GEODESIQUE ET GEOPHYSIQUE INTERNATIONALE**

STATEMENT

**2017 Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction
Cancun, Mexico, 24-26 May 2017**

Excellencies, Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates

Today we would not perhaps have gathered in this wonderful city of Cancun if natural events such as earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, droughts, extreme space weather and others did not impact upon society and in so doing cause disasters. Understanding natural hazards, extreme events, and disaster risks, promoting the research to reduce disaster risk and to mitigate climate change, and contributing to sustainability are societal priorities in the activities of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG). IUGG is the oldest non-governmental, international, Earth and Space science organization, and is composed of eight international scientific associations advancing, promoting, and communicating knowledge of the Earth system, its space environment, and the dynamical processes causing change. IUGG operates through its National Members and about 110 scientific bodies, including those concerned with geophysical risk, sustainability, climatic and environmental change.

For more than 100 years IUGG has been promoting international cooperation in Earth and space sciences, and working together with many international and intergovernmental institutions, including UN agencies such as UNESCO, WMO, and UNISDR on the challenges of improving our understanding of Earth and space processes and dynamics in support of socio-economic development, environmental protection, and disaster risk reduction (DRR). The IUGG's greatest resources, without which it would achieve nothing, are the thousands of scientists from all over the world, who draw on their enthusiasm for geosciences to devote a major part of their professional lives to scientific research, coordinating geodetic and geophysical services, projects and programs, organizing meetings, undertaking capacity building in the developing world, and communicating knowledge to society and policymakers.

IUGG has initiated and undertaken many programs and projects related to natural hazards and disaster risks, including a major transdisciplinary international project "Extreme Natural Hazards and Societal Implications", enthusiastically supported by the International Council for Science (ICSU) and some other international and intergovernmental bodies. The project revealed the existing gaps in scientific knowledge, potentials, and relevant scientific expertise in many parts of the world, and concluded that DRR could be achieved through in-depth scientific research and multidisciplinary risk assessments. IUGG with its Partners has called for negotiations on establishing a process of assessing and synthesizing the policy-relevant research results on the understanding

of the natural phenomena and the social vulnerability associated with disasters; on the capability of predictive systems to disseminate timely and accurate information needed for policy and decision making; on methodologies and approaches for reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of societies; and on the overall ability of societies to reduce risk.

Based on the IUGG and relevant initiatives, the ICSU General Assembly in Auckland (New Zealand) in 2014 decided “(i) to recognize the initiatives on disaster risk assessment so far undertaken by IRDR (the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Programme), ICSU, ISSC (the International Social Science Council), and UNISDR, as well as the International Scientific Unions, and the Council’s Regional Offices; (ii) to request the ICSU Executive Board to work closely with UNISDR and other international and intergovernmental bodies to integrate scientific knowledge and assessment into decision-making and actions related to DRR; and (iii) to invite individual national members to actively encourage their governments to support the proposed intergovernmental disaster risk assessment process”. In 2015, ICSU and ISSC developed synthesized a special report on “Disaster Risks Research and Assessment to Promote Risk Reduction and Management”. A summary for policymakers was distributed to National Delegations of the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, in 2015. The reports called for multidisciplinary unified risk assessment and proposed working together with NGOs, IGOs and DRR national platforms to set up *an intergovernmental panel on disaster risk assessment*. This should be considered an important commitment of the science community to work together with relevant stakeholders toward the implementation of Target E of the Sendai Framework.

IUGG is very pleased to participate in the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and feels very much “at home” in the UNISDR community of nations and like-minded organizations, sharing the basic goal of science-policy integration for DRR and for sustainable development of our planet.