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For democracy. For everyone.

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Reports on recent IPU specialized meetings

(i) Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Governance and legislation for disaster risk reduction

Special event organized by the IPU and UNISDR

13 March 2015, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Sendai (Japan)

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) took place in Sendai (Japan) from 14 to 18 March 2015. The Conference reviewed progress made through implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and adopted a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The overall aim was to further propel change at the country level with the active engagement of all stakeholders. Parliaments in particular were expected to play an important role in future efforts to increase the resilience of societies and minimize the risk of disasters.

The Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the WCDRR brought together members of national and regional parliaments who attended the WCDRR as part of their national delegations. The meeting aimed to increase understanding among parliamentarians of key elements of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and identify a set of concrete actions that parliamentarians can take to implement the framework. It also sought to identify major opportunities for parliamentarians to strengthen governance and improve legislation relevant to disaster risk reduction.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

We, members of parliament from 22 countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe and from regional parliaments, assembled in Sendai on 13 March 2015 on the occasion of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, issue this statement as a contribution to the final outcome of the Conference.

We **note the achievements of the Hyogo Framework for Action** in saving lives and reducing the impact of disasters and are proud of our contributions to those achievements. Implementation of the Framework has spurred the adoption of national and regional legislation and the establishment of institutions to manage disasters and disaster risks, increased budget allocations, and open deliberations on accountability to stop disaster risks from mounting.

We **welcome the rise in the number of parliamentary resolutions** on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation over the last decade as a strong indicator of the growing understanding of and commitment to disaster risk reduction among parliamentarians.¹

¹ See Annex 1 for the list of resolutions.

We **support the proposal to focus the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction** on tackling the underlying causes of the current worrisome disaster risk trend. We concur that sustainable development for *resilient people and a resilient planet* will not be possible without preventing risk creation, reducing existing risks and strengthening resilience.

We **recognize the need for** better understanding of risk, stronger risk-management governance, investment in resilience and post-disaster recovery planning as means of translating legislation into local and national action.

We **reiterate the need** for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction to refer to the important role played by parliaments and parliamentarians in its implementation.

We **pledge our support** to the International Law Commission proposal to draft a treaty or convention on disaster risk reduction under the auspices of the United Nations, making it the duty of States to reduce disaster risk from hazards and elevate the right of peoples to be free from the effects of disasters to the level of international customary law.

We **call for coherence among the three important post-2015 international frameworks** – the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals and the climate change process – as the key frameworks for ensuring sustainability, and recognize that they need to be interlocking and mutually reinforcing.

We therefore **commit to the following actions in support of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction** in our roles as political leaders, legislators and overseers of government action:

1. **Obtain the highest level of political support for an ambitious post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction** and create an enabling legal environment for its implementation at all levels.
2. **Strengthen the legislative framework** to promote a paradigm shift towards risk-sensitive and resilient development. New or amended legislation should include a set of standard essential elements and link with related legal instruments to prevent and reduce risk effectively and strengthen resilience. We commit to developing inclusive and gender-sensitive legislation that responds to the needs of communities and local authorities and is driven by political ownership and will from the top.
3. **Conduct regular reviews and updates of legislation** based on lessons learned to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness. We commit to ensuring that implementation of legislation is bolstered by adequate budget allocations.
4. **Support improved and fit-for-purpose institutional set-ups for disaster risk reduction** in order to prevent new risks from being generated as our countries develop. We will advocate for and support review of current institutional arrangements and initiate reforms. Institutional improvements should include clear roles and responsibilities at all levels of government for disaster risk reduction, strengthened coordination to ensure risk-sensitive investments and promotion of investment for disaster risk reduction.
5. **Promote local and community capacity-building.** We will ensure that the ongoing delegation of responsibility for disaster risk reduction to the local level is accompanied by increased resources for capacity-building among local authorities and communities.
6. **Establish strong oversight to enhance accountability.** We commit to ensuring strong oversight of disaster risk reduction laws, policies and programmes and their full effectiveness. Parliamentary oversight should be supported by independent experts and the active involvement of citizens. As people's representatives, we commit to engaging with citizens on issues relevant to disaster risk reduction and to promoting open and transparent access to information.

7. **Enhance parliamentary cooperation for disaster risk reduction.** We will continue implementing the parliamentary resolutions adopted to supplement implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, enhance parliamentary dialogue and sharing of knowledge, and further raise the profile of disaster risk reduction in all parliaments.
8. **Maintain an institutional continuum** through effective pre-disaster recovery planning between preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation and sustainable development measures.

With regard to follow-up action, **we urge the IPU and UNISDR** to develop a roadmap/checklist to facilitate the engagement of parliaments and parliamentarians in the effective implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. We recommend a sequence of interventions and engagement to ensure maximum impact. We request the IPU and UNISDR to compile a guidance note on the essential components of effective disaster risk reduction policy and legislation and to develop a format/protocol enabling parliaments and parliamentarians to monitor and report back regularly on the framework's implementation.

**PARLIAMENTARY RESOLUTIONS RELATED
TO DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

20.03.2014	Resolution adopted by IPU Member Parliaments at the 130 th IPU Assembly (Geneva, April 2014), <i>Towards risk resilient development: Taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints</i>
06.06.2014	2nd World Summit of Legislators
2013	Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO) Protocol on Disaster Risk Management, which enables PALATINO member parliaments to incorporate the guiding principles for building resilience into existing or emerging legislation
	The (amended) European Parliament Regulation on the Development Cooperation Instrument, which enables support for vulnerability and risk reduction in developing countries
04.10.2012	The Declaration of the 7th Asia-European Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP7), Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, which affirms the commitment of Asian and European parliamentarians to address critical issues of disaster risk reduction and management for sustainable development
16.03.2012	The Dhaka Parliamentary Declaration, which affirms the commitment to mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in parliaments
09.12.2011	The IPU Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference called on governments to prioritize disaster risk reduction and capacity-building as cross-cutting issues and to give them their utmost attention. It also reiterated parliamentarians' commitment to help their governments implement existing and future climate change and disaster risk reduction agreements.
27.11.2010	The Manila Call for Action of Parliamentarians on Applying Disaster Risk Reduction as an Instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals calls on governments to allocate 1% of national development budgets to disaster risk reduction.
Various dates	Resolutions adopted by the 108 th Inter-Parliamentary Conference and the 112 th , 113 th , 122 nd and 123 rd Inter-Parliamentary Assemblies emphasize that disaster risk management is an important element for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development, stress the importance of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action and urge all parliaments to foster a strong political will and take action.
24.11.2009	The Malta Declaration on the Commitment by Parliamentarians to COP 15 and Beyond
20.02.2009	The Nairobi Action Plan for African Parliamentarians on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation
18.10.2008	The Manila Call for Action of Parliamentarians on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation