

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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REMARKS TO HIGH-LEVEL BRIEFING TO
MEMBER STATES ON THE THIRD UNITED
NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER
RISK REDUCTION

New York, 16 April 2014

16:00

Thank you very much, Ms. Margareta Wahlström,
~~my~~ Special Representative for Disaster Risk
Reduction.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am here to show my strong support for disaster
risk reduction.

I have listened to survivors of Cyclone Nargis
in Myanmar.

I have been inspired by victims of severe
earthquakes in Haiti and China.

I have learned lessons from schoolchildren
in Fukushima, Japan.

I have been moved by the victims of floods across Pakistan.

I have seen rehabilitation work following Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

And I have briefed the General Assembly on the response of the United Nations in New York when Superstorm Sandy flooded this very building.

I commend the Assembly for its recent decisions on the Third United Nations Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Member States have set out an ambitious vision for delegates who will gather in Sendai, Japan next year. I hope this will be a high-level gathering that adopts an action-oriented outcome.

The Sendai Conference should guide our efforts to build resilience everywhere.

I am especially grateful that the Assembly paved the way for a broad coalition of partners to attend. I am pleased that the Conference will include representatives of civil society, local authorities, parliamentarians, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and the private sector. They are all important to our collective response to the threat of disasters.

Excellencies,

We have three major goals for the year 2015.

We are striving to meet the MDGs.

We are shaping a vision for the post-2015 development agenda.

And we are paving the way for the adoption of a universal legal agreement on climate change.

These three objectives are interlinked. They are also closely tied to the global disaster risk reduction framework.

In 2015, we will see the culmination of the Hyogo Framework for Action. This ten-year plan gave the world a common approach. Since then, countries have made great strides in monitoring risks, enhancing preparedness and improving early warning.

Our post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction should be based on evidence, experience and aspirations. The aim is simple: to leave a more resilient world to future generations.

To achieve this, we must factor disaster risk into our broader discussions of the post-2015 agenda for sustainable development.

Disaster risk is also closely tied to climate change.

This September 23rd, I will convene leaders from government, business, finance and civil society at a Climate Summit here in New York.

My goal is to catalyze ambitious action to reduce emissions and strengthen climate resilience.

The summit can also mobilize political will for an ambitious global climate agreement by next year.

This will be an action summit. I hope you will all help contribute to its success.

In the lead-up to the climate summit, we are marking the year of Small Island Developing States. These countries are especially vulnerable to disasters. They suffer high physical and economic risks.

This September in Samoa, we will hold the United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States. I count on senior officials from all countries, large and small, to participate.

When we address the needs of small island developing States, we can drive progress around the world.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Local communities are setting examples of building resilience.

One Mayor in Nicaragua recently described how each family in her city has its own evacuation plan. "They know what to do if a disaster strikes. We have empowered the community," she said.

Let us join forces, follow this wise example, and adopt a plan that will empower our world.

Thank you.

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