



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Geneva, 4 February 2015

Dear Madam Speaker,
Dear Mr. Speaker,

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) will take place in Sendai (Japan) from 14 to 18 March 2015. An invitation to the event has been extended to your Government by the United Nations. In addition to ministers, the participation of other high-level officials, including parliamentarians, is encouraged. It is expected that the Conference will also bring together other stakeholders involved in global efforts aimed at disaster risk reduction, including representatives of international organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector.

The Conference will review progress made through implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and will adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The overall aim is to further propel change at the country level with the active engagement of all stakeholders. Parliaments in particular are expected to play an important role in future efforts to increase the resilience of societies and minimize the risk of disasters.

We are pleased to announce that IPU and UNISDR will jointly organize a Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the Conference. The meeting will take place on 13 March 2015 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Tachibana Hall of the Sendai International Conference Centre. It will be open to all members of parliament who are attending the Conference as part of their national delegations.

The Parliamentary Meeting will discuss ways and strategies to enhance the role of parliaments in the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction. We are pleased to attach a concept note and draft agenda with further information about the event. This information and updates will be posted on the IPU website at <http://www.ipu.org/strict-futrmets.htm>. The working languages of the Parliamentary Meeting will be English, French, Spanish and Japanese.

We hope that you will take steps for members of your parliament to join your country's delegation to the Conference and attend the Parliamentary Meeting. Please find enclosed the registration form, which we invite the parliament to complete and return to the IPU Secretariat by **6 March 2015 at the latest**. Please note that registration for the Parliamentary Meeting does not grant access to the main Conference. In order to attend the Conference, delegates will have to register through their country's Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York. Detailed information about the Conference is available at <http://www.wcdrr.org/states>, including hotel accommodation and visa requirements. These logistical matters remain the sole responsibility of the participants.

We look forward to welcoming members of your Parliament to Sendai.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Chungong
IPU Secretary General

Margareta Wahlström
Special Representative of the
UN Secretary-General
for Disaster Risk Reduction



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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 IPU and UNISDR
13 March 2015, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Sendai (Japan)
Tachibana hall

Context

1. Since the adoption of the “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: – Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA)” in 2005, there has been gradual progress in reducing disaster risk leading to a decrease in mortality in the case of some hazards. In particular, there has been progress in strengthening institutional, legislative and policy frameworks, early warning, disaster preparedness for response as well as risk assessment, education, research, and fostering public awareness and a common understanding of disaster risk. For example, more than 120 countries report disaster risk management legal or policy reforms, over 100 countries now have dedicated national institutional arrangements for disaster risk management, over 190 countries report the establishment of focal points for disaster risk reduction and 85 report the creation of national multi stakeholder platforms.

2. However, countries have been more challenged to factor disaster risk reduction into public investment, land-use planning, infrastructure projects, environmental management and social policies, with the purpose on reducing the underlying risk drivers and tackling the causes of risk creation. Weak coordination within and across sectors and institutions have challenged the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction. Business and other stakeholders have not been fully engaged in national and local efforts to understand and reduce disaster risk. This has resulted in the continued rise of disasters’ impacts and disaster risks worldwide. The consultations for the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction highlighted the need to further strengthen governance for disaster risk to address the underlying drivers of risk, including the need to clarify systems of norms, institutions and interactions that determine how investment decisions are made, responsibilities across public and private actors and in setting appropriate oversight and accountability mechanisms. The Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will adopt the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

3. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has been working together with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) in promoting global cooperation on disaster risk reduction, the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and mobilizing action to build resilience and reduce disaster risk, by enhancing responsibility, accountability, oversight and public debates and strengthening normative frameworks. Over the years the IPU and UNISDR have jointly succeeded in engaging parliamentarians on a number of specific topics including: promoting the linkage between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, integrating disaster risk reduction into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and strengthening legislation and governance for disaster risk reduction and disaster-resilient development. This cooperation has contributed to increased commitment and leadership by parliamentarians in reducing disaster risks. For example, the 130th IPU Assembly in March 2014 adopted a landmark Resolution *Towards risk-resilient development: Taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints*, which is a call to parliaments to tackle disaster risk through strong action at all levels.

Format of the meeting

The event includes two panel discussions focusing on *Strengthening Governance for Disaster Risk Reduction* and *Improving Legislation for Disaster Risk Reduction*. Panellists and participants from the floor will be invited to share information, knowledge and experience on governance and legislation for disaster risk reduction, reflect on progress made through parliamentary action in different countries and regions, identify challenges and opportunities for improving governance and legislation for disaster-resilient development through preventing and reducing the risk of disasters, and discuss areas of priority for parliamentary action to support implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

The Parliamentary Meeting will be open to the Members of Parliament who will attend the Third UN World Conference on DRR as part of their national delegations.

Expected Results

- Better understanding among parliamentarians of key elements of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the identification of a set of concrete actions that parliamentarians can take to implement the framework.
- Identification of major opportunities for parliamentarians to strengthen governance and improve legislation relevant to disaster risk reduction.

Provisional Programme

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| 9:30 - 10:00 | Registration of participants |
| 10:00 - 10:15 | Opening and welcome |
| 10:15 - 10:30 | Introductory remarks on work of parliamentarians for disaster risk reduction |

Morning Panel: Strengthening Governance for Disaster Risk Reduction

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|----------------------|---|
| 10:30 - 10:50 | Keynote remarks on strengthening governance for disaster risk reduction |
| 10:50 - 12:15 | Moderated Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What does effective governance for disaster-resilient development require?- What can be done to strengthen coordination within and across all sectors relevant to disaster-resilient development?- How to strengthen the prevention of disaster risk?- How to ensure the effective participation and engagement of all stakeholders?- How to enhance the role of local institutions and stakeholders?- What can be done to strengthen legislative oversight for disaster-resilient development?- How parliamentarians can make change happen, and what actions can they undertake? |
| 12:15 – 12:30 | Summary and conclusions |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch Break |

Afternoon Panel: Improving Legislation for Disaster Risk Reduction

13:30 - 13:50 Keynote remarks on strengthening legislation for disaster risk reduction

13:50 - 15:15 Moderated Panel Discussion

- What makes legal and other normative frameworks effective in preventing and reducing disaster risk?
- How can they support a cultural and system shift from managing disasters to managing risk?
- What are key tenants of a legal obligation to reduce disaster risk? And how to support a clear articulation under national laws?
- What are the main challenges to developing and implementing normative frameworks aimed to reduce disaster risk, and how can they be overcome?
- How to ensure that legal framework reflect and are built upon scientific knowledge?
- How parliamentarians can make change happen, and what actions can they undertake?
- Questions and answers

15:15 – 15:30 Summary and conclusions

Closing session

15:30 - 15:50 Adoption of parliamentary commitments to strengthen governance and legislation for disaster risk reduction and support the implementation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction

15:50 – 16:00 Closing remarks



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Special event organized jointly by the IPU and UNISDR

13 March 2015, Sendai (Japan)

One form per participant

Registration Form

Country			
Ms. £ Mr. £ Mrs. £			
First name		Surname	
Parliament / Chamber			
Function	Member of Parliament £	Senator £	Aide or staff £
Full title			
Office e-mail			
Personal e-mail			

Date:

Signature:

Please complete and return this form by **6 March 2015**, by fax or e-mail, to:

Inter-Parliamentary Union
Fax: +41 22 919 41 60
e-mail: postbox@ipu.org

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The IPU is not in a position to provide assistance with entry visas for Japan or hotel accommodation in Sendai. These matters should be dealt with by each participant individually.