

## 22<sup>nd</sup> ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting  
cooperation and security in the OSCE area”

### FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING

Vienna, 27-28 January 2014

## CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY

Conference documents can be retrieved from the Website: [http://www.osce.org/event/22nd\\_eef\\_prep1](http://www.osce.org/event/22nd_eef_prep1)

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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### **“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”**

#### **FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

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#### **Introduction**

The First Preparatory Meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) on “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area” took place in Vienna on 27-28 January 2014. Five thematic areas were addressed during the two-day meeting:

- Impact of natural disasters: Losses and damages
- Behind natural disasters – The human-environment interaction
- Panel debate – Improving environmental security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?
- Co-operation in natural disaster management and prevention
- Panel debate – Role of civil society in disaster-risk management

Around 250 participants, including official representatives of OSCE participating States, Field Operations and Institutions, as well as experts from international, regional and non-governmental organizations, the business community and academia attended the Economic and Environmental Forum and engaged in the discussions. Participants proposed concrete recommendations concerning responses to environmental challenges stemming from disasters in the OSCE area.

#### **Main conclusions and recommendations**

The First Preparatory Meeting focused primarily on the integrated disaster risk management (DRM) approach. This approach was proposed with a view to advance sharing of best practices, promote partnerships and initiatives, raise awareness of and build capacities for DRM, and to encourage political leadership to pursue disaster resilience. During the discussion, it was pointed out that natural disasters are never natural and result from the human-nature interaction and human vulnerabilities.

Throughout the two-day meeting, many participants acknowledged the link between natural disasters and security. Hence, they underscored that this topic should be part of OSCE’s work.

A number of proposals were put forward to reinforce the role of the Organization in the field of responding to environmental challenges in the OSCE area.

One of the key ideas suggested was to **mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR)** in relevant project activities, as an essential component to ensure sustainable development, and to strengthen **co-operation** across all phases of DRM, covering prevention, preparedness and response to disasters; at different governance levels, such as local, regional, national; and among all relevant stakeholders, including NGO's, civil society, research institutions, the private sector.

It was stated that **regional co-operation** within the OSCE is crucial to bringing added value to the Organization's work and building trust among participating States. In this regard, taking into account that neighbouring countries usually face similar problems related to environmental challenges, some participants suggested strengthening **cross-boundary co-operation** on disaster risk reduction, and developing cross-boundary integrated disaster risk management. With this aim in view, certain key mechanisms would need to be improved, namely harmonization of visa regimes, customs clearance for rescue teams, and authorization of overflights over national territories.

Disaster management was also identified as a potential area for the development of **confidence-building** measures among and within OSCE participating States.

Participants also suggested that the OSCE should complement the role and functions of other **international organizations** dealing with disaster management without duplicating their activities. In this regard, it was noted that the OSCE already has some experience in dealing with issues related to disaster preparedness with a risk mitigation component, particularly in the field of water management, climate change, and wildfire management. OSCE's partnership with several UN and non-UN agencies within the framework of the **Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC)** was highlighted by several participants. The **Hyogo Framework for Action** and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction were also pointed out as well-placed platforms for co-operation between the OSCE and UN agencies in the area of disaster risk reduction. The OSCE was also encouraged to contribute to the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 in Japan. Moreover, it was suggested that participating States could enhance their response capabilities by closely collaborating with other regional and sub-regional mechanisms, including NATO, EU and CSTO.

It was outlined by a number of speakers that risk prevention and risk reduction are investments that ultimately limit the potential human, social and economic costs of disasters. Participants suggested that the OSCE could endeavour to find **a role in the context of disaster prevention, risk mitigation** and in making our societies more resilient in particular through **awareness-raising**.

With regard to efforts made at **local level**, it was noted that every community had skills, knowledge, resources and capacities that were often overlooked and that should be capitalized on. In this context, it was highlighted that active engagement of communities in the whole process of DRM, better use of local knowledge and expertise, design of measures adapted to local problems and needs could be translated into reduced vulnerabilities, improved sustainability and strengthened capacities. Therefore it was encouraged to identify

how existing resources could be optimized, local knowledge promoted and indigenous potential unlocked.

The role of the **civil society** in issues related to environmental challenges was generally recognized as being crucial at different levels. Participants pointed out that in order to make it more effective, capacity-building and decision-making processes should be further developed. It was acknowledged that initially **public participation** might be a difficult process, but would eventually produce tangible results because it can significantly contribute to improved local-disaster preparedness and design and implementation of more appropriate policies. In addition, the need to ensure the inclusion of local and regional municipalities in **decision-making processes** as the basis for policy development was highlighted. Further engagement of the **private sector** in discussions on disaster risk prevention and management was also suggested. The OSCE itself was recognized as a relevant actor in support of multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes, in particular because of its strong network.

It was also pointed out that societies must receive timely and relevant **information** on environmental risks and their consequences. This would make them more resilient, enhance their **trust** in governments and ensure successful co-ordination of both human and material resources in responding to natural disasters.

During the discussion it was noted that **Aarhus Centres** play an important role in ensuring access to information, **raising awareness** of environmental problems, including natural hazards, enabling public participation in decision-making processes, and facilitating access to justice. Thus, they were considered to be a well-placed tool for the OSCE to intensify its work on disaster risk reduction.

**Good governance** was also identified as a factor to be strengthened in order to make societies more resistant: proper enforcement of necessary policies, such as compliance with building codes and fight against corruption could contribute substantially to such reinforcement.

During the two-day discussions some participants mentioned the need for a positive, constructive and creative approach to disaster risk reduction and management. This perspective should focus on sustainable development and be mainstreamed across the whole OSCE area in order to build secure, prosperous and resilient societies. In this regard, it was noted that the role of small scale disasters is often neglected and that there is a gap between insured and total loss of natural disasters and importance of risk transfer mechanisms. Participants suggested that the OSCE could facilitate dialogue among key stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, and provide a **platform for exchanging information on best practices** and existing gaps.

Participants also emphasized that a society-wide culture of risk prevention and mitigation should be promoted in order to prioritize risk management in disaster management systems. Additionally, it was suggested that capacity building would benefit from **training activities** with modern technologies and communication facilities. The sharing of these tools/ know-how among participating States was also encouraged. Such activities could be carried out by OSCE field operations in co-operation with key partners.

## REPORTS OF THE RAPPORTEURS

### ***Session I:*** Impact of Natural Disasters: Losses and Damages

**Moderator:** Mr. Jan Kellett, Senior Research Advisor, Climate and Environment Programme, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

**Rapporteur:** Mr. Srdjan Cetkovic, Senior Programme Assistant, OSCE Mission to Montenegro

#### **Speakers:**

- Mr. Michael Thurman, Practice Coordinator/Portfolio Manager a.i., Crisis Prevention and Recovery, ECIS, United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre for Europe and CIS
- Mr. Joaquin Toro, Regional Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management– Europe and Central Asia Region, World Bank
- Mr. Andreas Prystav, Senior Client Manager Global Partnerships, Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd., Switzerland
- Mr. Michael Thurman, Practice Coordinator/Portfolio Manager a.i., Crisis Prevention and Recovery, ECIS, United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre for Europe and CIS
- Mr. Thomas de Lannoy, Policy Officer, DG Humanitarian Aid and civil protection, European Commission

In his introduction *the moderator, Mr. Jan Kellett*, noted that the impact of a natural disaster in a country can be translated in direct or indirect losses and damages beyond its borders. Therefore he emphasized the importance of having a cross-border approach in dealing with disaster risk management. He then analyzed the impact of natural disasters in high-income or upper-middle-income countries. He estimated that 70% of the global losses related to natural disasters happen in high-income or upper-middle-income countries, whereas the global mortal casualties is estimated to be 10%. In this regard, he suggested that because of the *low mortality rate*, often the causes provoking disasters are not properly tackled. The moderator also draw the attention of participating States, as development aid donor countries, to the fact that over the past 20 years, out of the 3 trillion USD that have been devoted to development aid, only 13 billion were invested in disaster risk reduction. Thus, only 13 billion USD were spent on protecting development aid from the impact of disasters. Finally, he stressed the participating States should bear in mind a *big global picture* in terms of the post-2015 development agenda and the successors to the Millennium Development Goals. The moderator closed his statement by bringing participating States' attention to their responsibility ensuring that disaster risks are central in the future development agenda.

*Mr. Joaquin Toro* highlighted the importance of establishing adequate DRMs to minimize economic losses. To illustrate this point, Mr. Toro presented some data showing the economic impact of natural disasters in the period 1975 – 2011. It was noted that whereas the number of people affected by natural risks disasters and the overall costs had constantly increased, the number of fatalities had decreased.

Mr. Toro indicated that in case of natural disasters, national governments tend to prioritise citizens' safety over protection of property. However, it is difficult to calculate the economic consequences that natural disasters will have on the quality of life of the survivors. Mr. Toro pointed out that factors related to natural disaster risks, such as natural hazards, exposure and vulnerability, can be limited by devoting more resources to their study. He continued by presenting a number of examples of natural disasters where increased investment in disaster risk reduction and management proved to be instrumental, not only in mitigating the direct impact of the disaster, but also in obtaining long-term economic benefits.

In conclusion, Mr. Toro emphasized the importance of disaster risk management being an integral part of sustainable economic development, and suggested that the OSCE could, in co-operation with other international organizations, mainstream DRM in development plans and agendas.

*Mr. Andreas Prystav* presented the role that the insurance industry could play in supporting the various institutions dealing with natural disasters and their aftermath. According to Mr. Prystav, financial resilience is a critical component of disaster risk management. However, the insurance industry is still insufficiently engaged in disaster risk management activities.

Mr. Prystav also shared some statistical data to illustrate the enormous gap between the total losses caused by natural disasters in the period 1975 – 2013 and the percentage of the losses covered by insurance companies. In his opinion, this gap explains the lack of financial resilience in countries hit by disasters. He illustrated this idea by using the example of a 2010 earthquake in Chile, when total economic losses amounted to 29.7 billion USD and only 16% were covered by insurance companies.

According to Mr. Prystav, the insurance industry can provide an alternative to borrowing and tax increases usually used to finance the reconstruction of areas affected by natural disasters: the insurance companies could transfer the risk away from the taxpayers who normally end up "paying the bill".

Mr. Prystav concluded his presentation by reiterating that it was the responsibility of the insurance industry to increase financial resilience to disasters by performing its primary duty as that of a risk transfer mechanism. The insurance industry could offer a very pragmatic approach to disaster risk management, in particular through public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements. A variety of PPP schemes could be designed and used to provide a broader insurance coverage, thus transferring the risk from citizens to the insurance industry. The OSCE and the participating States could initiate and promote such initiatives.

*Mr. Michael Thurman* talked about the challenges associated with disaster risk assessments and how to address them. He also focused on regional co-operation related to disaster risk management and reduction.



According to Mr. Thurman, in order to properly evaluate disaster risks and decide how to better mitigate them, it is necessary to have proper and accurate information. He added that it was very important to have a clear understanding that the *risks* could be evaluated and reduced by analysing the *hazards* and *vulnerabilities*. In this regard, Mr. Thurman pointed out that whereas national institutions dealing with risk assessment and reduction generally had the capacity to perform adequate hazard analysis, they experienced difficulties in determining measurable indicators for vulnerability factors. Indeed, disaster impacts such as economic losses, fatalities, etc. are difficult to describe in socioeconomic or environmental terms. Another problem is that the agencies responsible for risk assessments and risk reduction often lack financial resources necessary to keep up with technological advancements in information collection and processing.

Regarding the challenges associated with effective risk assessments, Mr. Thurman identified a number of factors influencing the quality of data used in such analyses. Concerning the *vulnerability factor*, the main problem is the low quality of information used as inputs, due to the unreliability of data collected in emergency-events databases. Unfortunately, these databases collect only data on major disasters and often inaccurately, primarily because the information is fragmented among various institutions; collected, stored and assessed using outdated methods; and because some countries consider it politically sensitive.

According to the speaker, additional challenges to risk assessment are posed by the lack of bottom-line data to be used by national finance ministries and the lack of capacities and tools to deal with cost-benefit analyses. Additionally, there are some challenges largely related to climate unpredictability and migration, as well as weak regional co-operation in addressing trans-boundary hazards.

Closing his presentation, Mr. Thurman briefly described a case of regional co-operation on risk assessment. In Central Asia, under the umbrella of the Centre for Disaster Response and Risk Reduction (CDRRR), a regional information platform was developed with the support of UNDP/OCHA/ISDR. Within the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) some work is being carried out to harmonize co-ordination modalities, inter-agency perspectives and mandates in order to secure holistic and forward-looking approaches; and to strengthen the management of regional and trans-boundary risks.

*Mr. Thomas de Lannoy* presented the current EU disaster risk management framework and outlined forthcoming developments and activities. In December 2013, a new legislation on the EU Civil Protection Mechanism was adopted paving the way for stronger co-operation in responding to disasters as well as promoting better preparedness and prevention. The speaker called this new legislation “cross-sectoral” as it integrates all aspects required for a comprehensive disaster management policy.

Talking about disaster prevention aspects, Mr. de Lannoy informed that EU Member States would share a summary of their national risk assessments and best practices, as well as support each other by assessing their risk management systems in “peer reviews”. He also underscored the EU’s focus on mainstreaming DRM, which means integrating disaster risk management issues in all EU policies, both in terms of financing and policy-making, including climate change adaptation, transport, research and innovation, environmental impact assessments, or food and nutrition security policies.

Regarding disaster preparedness activities, Mr. de Lannoy highlighted the need to increase the civil protection response capacity, including through various trainings, and enhance co-operation between neighbouring countries in this field. The speaker also mentioned in his presentation the development of a single European Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) and the establishment of a European Emergency Response Capacity consisting of a voluntary pool of Member States' assets in order to enable immediate deployment and effective co-ordination of joint interventions.

Mr. de Lannoy emphasized the international perspective of the new EU legislation, supporting all international efforts to increase disaster risk resilience worldwide, including those co-ordinated by the UN. The new legislation also foresees actions related to previously developed policies and programmes, such as the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance and Programme for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Man-made and Natural Disasters (PPDR) in the East and South regions. Equally importantly, the EU is also contributing to the post-2015 Development Agenda, integrating DRM in the sustainable development goals and establishing a common international approach to these goals with a view to ensure an ambitious and robust successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

In conclusion, Mr. de Lannoy reiterated that the objective of the new EU legislation was to mainstream DRM in all humanitarian and development funding pursuant to the existing EU policies. He also underscored the need to link disaster management to economic growth and to sustainable economic management by promoting an integrated approach across different ministries, private sector, insurance industry, etc.; as well as the need to establish a common international post-2015 framework.

Then the floor was opened for *discussion*.

*A representative of Serbia* presented the country's efforts to build institutional and regional capacities and to implement the DRM legal framework, including an integrated system of protection and rescue. He emphasized that implementing HFA, especially by promoting disaster risk reduction, was among Serbia's national priorities. He added that currently a national risk assessment and emergency-management plan and a database on disasters were being developed in the country.

*A representative of Uzbekistan* described Uzbekistan's emergency response management system with a focal point of authority in the Ministry for Emergency Situations.

In response to *the Moderator's* question about possible further actions and recommendations for the OSCE, *Mr. Toro* stated that the only way to ensure further development and economic growth was to draw conclusions from economic impact assessments of particular disasters and to incorporate DRM in all fields of activity of the participating States. In this regard, he pointed out that international organizations had the potential to promote this approach.

In his concluding remarks, *Mr. Thurman* noted that there were many basic recommendations that should have been implemented years ago, such as national climate change adaptation strategies. He emphasized that a lot could be done using moderate financial resources and that the easiest and best approach would be to start the mainstreaming work at the local level instead of focusing on expensive and politically complicated national plans.

Following-up on the role of insurance industry, *Mr. Prystav* focused on the idea of setting up public-private partnerships as the most pragmatic approach to managing disaster risks. Such partnerships could help to overcome the financial gap that resulted in lack of financial resilience to natural disasters. In his opinion, it would be easier to start with concrete examples rather than to create a huge basket of solutions that would cover all possible risks for all regions.

In his final remarks, *Mr. de Lannoy* emphasized the need to mainstream DRM in OSCE's activities, building upon the co-operation framework already in place in the EU and focusing on developing a common international framework for disaster risk reduction.

## **Session II: Behind Natural Disasters – The human-environment interaction: Case Studies 1**

**Moderator: Mr. Jan Dusik**, Acting Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme

**Rapporteur: Ms. Heike Jantsch**, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Germany to the OSCE

### **Speakers:**

- **Prof. Ben Wisner**, Aon-Benfield University Hazard Research Center, University College London (UCL)
- **Mr. Leonid Dedul**, Head of the Department of the State system of prevention and liquidation of emergencies and civil protection, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Belarus
- **Ms. Paola Albrito**, Head of Europe Office, United Nations Office for Disasters Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- **Ms. Andrea James**, Regional Chief of Emergency, UNICEF CEECIS Regional Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

*Mr. Jan Dusik, moderator of the session, emphasized that disaster risks would likely increase in the future in the context of the ongoing global warming and therefore the effects of climate change in particular would continue to be harmful to societies. He stressed that disasters resulted from combined effects of hazards and vulnerable conditions, producing very severe damages and losses.*

*Prof. Wisner emphasized that it should be possible to reduce risks of natural disasters through efforts to reduce vulnerability and build capacity. Entrenched traditional, short-term and primarily technical approaches focusing on immediate responses to disasters should be changed because hazards are not per se disastrous – and disasters are not natural, but determined by human vulnerability. This vulnerability is complex because it is driven by social and economic structures, political ideology, history and culture, and increasing. In addition, analysis of dynamic pressures over time (e.g. development of institutions, rapid urbanization, poor governance, decline in biodiversity), including potentially fragile livelihoods (natural, human, economic etc. resources) and unsafe locations, should help to identify options for building capacities that are key to specific and sustainable risk management.*

*Mr. Dedul elaborated further on this capacity oriented approach. He gave an overview of the National Risk Reduction Platform in Belarus comprising a wide range of institutions at the national as well as local level, including NGOs, civil society and academia. The approach includes exchange and analyses of information about disastrous events (floods, wildfires, and electricity or transport disruptions due to strong snowfalls), research on root causes thereof and feedback on measures undertaken to cope with such events in both the short- and medium-term, as well as on measures not undertaken because some actors considered them not to be necessary.*

*Ms. Albrito also commented on capacity building as a crucial part of risk resilience and disaster management. Approximate annual losses of 13,4 billion USD throughout the last ten*

years, mainly caused by climate change and hydrological phenomena, put Europe in third place globally in terms of losses. She referred to the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action as a mechanism to substantially reduce disaster losses in lives, social, economic and environmental assets and to build resilience to disasters by nations and communities. As an overarching goal, she emphasized efforts to reduce further generation of risks, e.g. improper urban planning and expansion, unmanaged land use, poorly maintained infrastructures etc. Looking back on efforts since 2005, there were some lessons learnt: firstly, that investments in disaster reduction turned out to be cost-effective, particularly in good planning of land use and infrastructure development; secondly, vulnerabilities to disasters in Europe are mostly of an environmental nature (degradation of hydro-geologic conditions); thirdly, disaster risk reduction needs cross-sectoral co-ordination between multiple stakeholders and disciplines. In conclusion, Ms. Albrito expressed hope that the 2015 World Conference would agree on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction with enhanced monitoring and periodic review processes. She urged to promote a positive, constructive and creative approach to build secure, prosperous and resilient societies, thereby containing risk growth in the future.

*Ms. James* dealt specifically with disaster impacts on children who represent approximately 50 to 60% of affected populations. She called for mainstreaming a child-centered approach, including education, health and access to water, in efforts to build more disaster resilient communities with a focus on sub-national levels as the most promising venues. She underscored the importance of engagement with children as agents of change including their participation in the 2015 Sendai Conference and following up on their feedback and cited such examples as Children in a Changing Climate Coalition whose work resulted in creating a Children's Charter on Disaster Risk Reduction which highlights such issues as the need for safe schools and communities. Ms. James also affirmed that increasing resilience and reducing disaster risks were an integral part of UNICEF's new strategic plan. She recommended to the OSCE to become involved in the discussions around the upcoming development of the new Hyogo Framework for Action, to support capacity building and to encourage co-operation between participating States on lessons learnt and global sharing of information and experiences in terms of integrating disaster risk reduction as a core element into the development work.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

*A representative of Bulgaria* presented the process of building a national platform for disaster risk reduction in his country, which brings together the government, academia, industry and civil society. He informed that a national strategy for disaster risk reduction based on the Hyogo Framework for Action had been developed and that adopting a sustainable national policy in this regard was among the country's national priorities.

*A representative of Azerbaijan* referred to an example of a past disaster and described present risks related to the Metsamor nuclear power plant operating in Armenia. She highlighted the risks and threats associated with the location in a mountainous seismically active area, scarce water resources for disaster response, as well as potential radioactive contamination of large territories. She also expressed concern about the construction of a new reactor and lack of co-operation with the neighboring states in terms of environmental impact assessment.

*Ms. Louise Charlotte Baker, representing of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)*, brought to the participants' attention slow moving disasters such

as droughts and asked whether these phenomena were taken into account in disaster risk reduction and preparedness planning.

*Mr. Marcus Oxley, representing the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction*, urged to focus on what makes societies resilient to disasters and suggested that core principles and values that make societies stronger should be taken into account in the resilience development process.

In response to Mr. Oxley, *Ms. James* emphasized that the primary focus should be on working at the local level with the systems already existing in specific regions and building upon them. She also stressed the need to integrate all currently available research and data in order to further develop effective resilience systems. With respect to slow moving disasters, Ms. James recalled UNICEF's work in the Sahel which helped to develop appropriate robust systems such as early warning and monitoring at the community and national levels and engage all relevant stakeholders in preparations for potentially lean seasons.

*Ms. Albrito* addressed three issues that came up in the discussion. In terms of creeping disasters she noted the necessity to improve systematic data gathering in order to inform future choices of appropriate actions. In regard to building resilient societies, she underscored the need to focus on advantages of working at the local level. Finally, Ms. Albrito noted that many participating States had developed national platforms for disaster risk reduction, stressing the value and importance of such work at national levels.

In his closing remarks, *Mr. Dedul* emphasized the need to improve data gathering methodologies, conduct detailed analyses and draw lessons from past disasters, both the ones that had occurred and the ones that had been prevented, because they would be essential for better disaster preparedness and prevention.

In his final comments, *Prof. Wisner* focused on direct overseas or foreign investments, which should require decisions on various local issues. However, the local and even national stakeholders are very often excluded from the decision-making process due to corruption which makes talking about national disaster risk reduction systems with a positive spin extremely difficult. He pointed out that what Mr. Oxley was referring to was focusing on actual resilience building processes at the local level, such as listening to people, empowering them, promoting effective local practices and engaging local residents in decision-making. He also emphasized the need to institutionalize the role of civil society in disaster preparedness by citing the case of Project Impact implemented by FEMA in the USA under President Clinton.

*Ms. Albrito* added that disaster risk management should be regarded as investment rather than as a cost in terms of mainstreaming sustainable development by shifting the focus to positive outcomes and returns from disaster risk reduction and preparedness.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- Disaster risk is not only a function of hazard and vulnerability but also of capacity. Capacity building should be the focus of risk reduction and management.
- Disaster risk reduction platforms should bring together different stakeholders, such as government, businesses, industries, academia and civil society, both at national and local levels.

- Empowering the civil society, institutionalizing its participation, and tapping the potential of indigenous best practices are essential to developing disaster resilience systems.
- The needs of children in the context of disasters should be given special attention.
- Investing in disaster risk reduction, especially in planning of land use and infrastructure, is cost-effective.
- Disaster risk management should be regarded as investment in sustainability rather than a cost and benefits of disaster risk reduction and preparedness should be prioritized.
- The OSCE should become involved in the upcoming development of the new Hyogo Framework for Action and the 2015 World Conference in Sendai.
- The OSCE could provide a platform for knowledge sharing, including improvement of data collection methodologies and sharing of experiences and best practices.
- A positive, constructive and creative approach to disaster risk reduction and management with a view to sustainable development should be mainstreamed within the whole OSCE region in order to build secure, prosperous and resilient societies.

**Session III: Panel Debate – Improving environmental security: How can we reduce natural disaster risks?**

**Moderator: Ms. Emily Hough**, Editor, Crisis Response Journal, United Kingdom

**Rapporteur: Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk**, Environmental Programme Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Speakers:**

- **Mr. Taalaybek Temiraliev**, State Secretary, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Kyrgyzstan
- **Ms. Radhika Murti**, Programme Coordinator, Ecosystem Management Programme, Disaster Risk Reduction, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- **Prof. Johann Goldammer**, Director, Global Fire Monitoring Centre, University of Freiburg, Germany
- **Mr. Marco Keiner**, Director Environment Division, UNECE

*The moderator, Ms. Hough*, welcomed the panelists and posed the main question of the debate: how natural disaster risks can be reduced.

*Mr. Temiraliev* highlighted the growing pressure on ecosystems and provided an overview of challenges Kyrgyzstan is facing in terms of disasters. In Central Asia alone some 2,500 people died as a result of disasters in the past decade while another 5,5 million people suffered serious economic losses. Landslides and floods are a constant threat to people and economy of the region. In Kyrgyzstan, risks of man-made disasters mainly arising from toxic and radioactive waste storage facilities are also acute. An average economic loss caused by natural disasters in Kyrgyzstan is estimated to be 35 million US dollars while the annual budget for disasters does not exceed 7 million US dollars.

Mr. Temiraliev outlined Kyrgyzstan's new legal framework for disaster risk reduction and strategic priorities for the future. Kyrgyzstan's policy on disaster risk reduction is currently guided by two documents: National Strategy for Sustainable Development for 2013-2017 and Strategy for Comprehensive Security of Population and Territory of Kyrgyz Republic in Emergency and Crisis Situations until 2020. He also noted that economic activities within the boundaries of ecosystem resilience require effective planning and transition to sustainable development through green growth. Mr. Temiraliev underlined the need for consolidated efforts of different actors to reduce the risks of disasters in Kyrgyzstan and in Central Asia.

*Ms. Murti* provided a brief background on the IUCN and its engagement in disaster risk reduction. While the role of nature is increasingly recognized as critical to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation efforts, challenges of harmonizing policies across sectors, establishing good practices and collating a scientifically credible knowledge base need to be addressed in order to mobilize commitment and resources for nature-based solutions. In the past decade hurricanes, tsunamis, coastal storms and landslides have demonstrated the role mangroves, coral reefs, coastal vegetation, wetlands and forests can play in protecting people, their properties and livelihoods from effects of natural hazards.



With increasing frequencies and magnitudes of such hazards, there is an urgent need to consider nature as complementary or alternative solutions to engineered infrastructure.

Ms. Murti noted that at the same time the role of nature as a protective infrastructure is not always recognized. Conservation policies often do not encompass disaster reduction elements. There seems to be a lack of people working with early warning and relief in the conservation community while it is also difficult to resource such efforts. Some positive examples, however, exist: Japan announced the expansion of the coastal forests along the tsunami-affected areas while a similar decision was made by the Philippines with regard to mangrove forests.

Ms. Murti went on to highlight Europe's role as a technology hub which can effectively demonstrate the key role of sustainable management and conservation in disaster risk reduction. She also noted that the next Hyogo Framework for Action should include nature-based approaches.

When it comes to the role of the OSCE in disaster risk reduction, Mr. Murti noted that the OSCE can be instrumental in building co-operation partnerships between risks reduction and aid relief sectors of disaster risk management and the OSCE can also be engaged in capacity development for national policy-makers.

*Prof. Goldammer* started with explaining the concept of wildland fires as referring to all types of vegetation fires, not only forest fires. Unlike tsunamis, hurricanes and earthquakes, wildland fires are preventable while parameters determining their severity can also be predicted (e.g. weather patterns).

Prof. Goldammer identified a number of lessons learnt in the context of the South Caucasus region where the OSCE had been engaged in fire management capacity building in the framework of the ENVSEC Initiative since 2009.

Addressing a disaster risk such as wildfire requires a holistic approach, i.e. across natural and cultural landscapes and institutional responsibilities. Accordingly, a cross-sectoral mechanism must be created to initiate a dialogue in society and to identify the underlying reasons of wildfire risks (socio-economic, environmental, climate change, institutional), with emphasis on involvement of civil society. Any solution requiring legal and institutional reforms and investments for capacity building (technical, human resources) requires the formulation of a national policy based on consensus and co-operation with the involvement of all relevant national stakeholders. Donor-supported projects and programmes must have a long-term scope and timeline since efficient, effective and sustainable capacities cannot be realized in short-term projects. Establishment and embedding national measures in an international nexus (e.g. through networks, bilateral and multilateral agreements) will benefit from experiences of other countries and regions and thus are not only economically feasible but also allow the development of interoperable systems for cross-boundary exchange and assistance in wildfire emergency situations, and to jointly achieve the goals of related legally binding international agreements.

He also noted the role of significant socio-economic changes going on in the countries of the South Caucasus for fire management. With the exodus of people from rural areas, including migration of young people to the cities, less and less people are left in the countryside having

good knowledge and capacity to deal with fires. Climate change is likely to aggravate the situation in the future.

*Mr. Keiner* focused his intervention on the so called unnatural disasters, pointing to the interaction and interdependency between natural disasters and man-made disasters. One type of disaster can cause another, and then both can come together at the same time and overlap. Examples include heat wave–fire, the Aral Sea – originally the water was directed away to irrigation, now the situation is aggravated by climate change. There are also potential risks of interaction between floods and hazardous substances like for instance pesticides that can be washed away in the case of flood.

He underlined the importance of recognizing such linkages between natural and man-made disasters particularly in the context of climate change and understanding vulnerabilities of human systems like body, infrastructure, water and other services that can be affected.

Mr. Keiner noted the need to improve the awareness of the government, stakeholders and population. Monitoring systems are a very important tool along with risk registers and early warning arrangements. There is a need for solidarity in addressing disasters. In this regard, cross-boundary level of co-operation and cross-boundary integrated risk management are a must. Mr. Keiner identified one area for co-operation in the OSCE region: exchange of experience between countries in its Eastern part (that largely rely on engineered solutions) and countries in its Western part (that have more comprehensive approaches). Areas and forms of co-operation could include: joint management for transboundary river basins, cross-border emergency response units and cross-border training of fire brigades.

Mr. Keiner went on to amplify on the role of the UN system and international organizations in disaster risk reduction. UN can improve ecosystem management, including also training of trainers. The UNECE has some legal instruments to reduce disaster risks (Industrial Accidents Convention, the Aarhus Convention, the Water Convention, and the Espoo Convention). The ENVSEC Initiative also offers a platform for co-operation between different partner organizations. He underlined the importance of good governance and public participation in the context of disaster risk reduction.

Speaking of the role of the OSCE, Mr. Keiner noted the network of the existing Aarhus Centres as a vehicle for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction to the national level. He also noted the Hyogo Framework for Action and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as natural avenues of co-operation between the OSCE and UN agencies.

In the *discussion*, a representative of the United States of America asked if the panelists could elaborate more on the role of good governance as a positive factor in disaster risk reduction and corruption as an exacerbating factor. It was noted in response that good governance was a key to success. Representatives of civil society and academia have an important role to play in promoting positive changes as they are independent of government changes and election results. It was also mentioned that empowering people and de-politicizing issues had an important role to play in the area of disaster risk reduction. Consistency of legal frameworks and disaster management measures was also emphasized along with the need for a clear understanding of responsibilities across all levels of government and de-centralization of responsibilities. Multilevel approach was mentioned as an important pre-requisite for good governance prompting interaction between local, regional and national levels. Inclusiveness, in particular involvement of women, in the development of disaster risk reduction measures

was also identified as an important element for good governance and identification of vulnerabilities and potential disaster threats.

*A representative of Armenia* touched upon the topic raised in the preceding session commenting on the International Atomic Energy Agency's well-placed position to address technical aspects of Armenia's nuclear power plant. The representative of Armenia also commended the activities of the Global Fire Monitoring Center inquiring which challenges are central to capacity-building in the South Caucasus and how environmental issues could be de-politicized.

In response, Prof. Goldammer noted that issues of technical equipment were not a major challenge. What is important is to have appropriate methodologies and approaches. In the area of fire management, the key issue was felt to be about defining approaches to fire management at the landscape level. Another panelist noted that UNECE has the experience of providing frameworks where issues can be de-politicized (e.g. UNECE Water Convention, UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution). Respective task forces and working groups of experts under these conventions are well placed to provide assistance to convention parties in meeting their obligations. Bringing policy-makers together and presenting them with reliable statistics and hard facts could also be one of the solutions to de-politicize the issues.

*A representative of Uzbekistan* noted that the Hyogo Framework for Action includes goals and objectives and asked for comments on in which ways those goals could be reached.

In response, Ms Murti noted that intensified co-operation at the regional level could be one of the elements in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action. It was also suggested that under the aegis of the OSCE a regional platform for dealing with regional questions on disaster risk reduction could be established. The role of IT-based solutions was also emphasized as a way to inform public and reach out to different branches of authorities in the case of disaster.

*A representative of Azerbaijan* noted that in some cases multilateral regional cooperation is not possible due to existing problems. In such cases political and security environment of the region should be considered and impediments to establish regional cooperation shall be addressed.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- There is a need to support cross-boundary co-operation on disaster risk reduction and development of cross-boundary integrated disaster risk management;
- Donor-supported projects and programmes should have a long-term scope and timeline since efficient, effective and sustainable capacities cannot be realized in short-term projects;
- The existing Aarhus Centres are well placed as a tool to intensify OSCE work on disaster risk reduction;
- Hyogo Framework for Action, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Environment and Security Initiative are well placed as platforms for co-operation between the OSCE and UN agencies in the area of disaster risk reduction;

- The OSCE participating States could exchange expertise on their approaches to disaster risk management by using the OSCE as a platform for this exchange;
- The OSCE could build partnerships between risk reduction and aid relief and could provide capacity-building for national policy makers;
- A regional platform to deal with regional disaster-related issues could be established under the aegis of the OSCE.

#### **Session IV: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 2**

**Moderator:** Ms. Wendy Cue, Chief, Environmental Emergencies Section, Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Alja Brinovec Jureša, Assistant Adviser, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to OSCE

#### **Speakers:**

- **Mr. Guenter Bretschneider**, Head, Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), NATO
- **Ms. Milena Dobnik Jeraj**, Head of International Relations and EU Affairs Department, Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Republic of Slovenia
- **Ms. Ivana Ljubojević**, Head, Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe

*Mr. Bretschneider* presented an example of NATO's involvement in Pakistan Earthquake Relief in 2005. He focused on the political framework of possible NATO's role in humanitarian operations. He stressed that the use of military assets in response to humanitarian situations should be in line with the relevant UN guidelines and unless the magnitude of a disaster exceeds the national response capability, the country itself is responsible for a disaster response. In such cases, there may be a need for international assistance, including, if requested, assistance by or through NATO. Finally, he added that NATO's role and added value is likely to be in respect of short term disaster relief, i.e. improving the conditions for recovery. According to Mr. Bretschneider there are two options of NATO's involvement in humanitarian operations: through the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) when the request comes from a stricken nation or from the United Nations, and/or through the use of military assets and capabilities available in the Alliance's Command and Force Structures which can be provided upon a request of a stricken nation or an appropriate international organization and upon the decision of the North Atlantic Council.

In case of NATO's relief Operation in Kashmir (2005), the North Atlantic Council approved a two-stage Alliance response with offering an air-bridge and other relief activities. In the operation, which finished by February 2006, NATO forces closely co-operated with both the government of Pakistan and the United Nations on a daily basis and were plugged into the UN cluster system. Although the involvement of NATO raised some questions related to the relevance and appropriation of such NATO's activities, he believed that its contribution to the Pakistan relief effort was substantial. When the scale of the disaster is so great that national authorities and first responders become overwhelmed, the military can and should become involved, added the speaker.

Mr. Bretschneider also explained that NATO's primary contribution in speeding up recovery is co-ordinating, liaising and facilitating functions that the EADRCC and the Alliance's military structures provide, with an aim to enable smaller Allies to contribute capabilities that they would not be able to deliver on their own. In conclusion, Mr. Bretschneider expressed

the importance of effective co-ordination in humanitarian operations. Especially when different actors with different mandates are involved, sharing of information in a timely and accurate way is essential.

*Ms. Dobnik Jeraj* presented some of the good practices of Slovenia in bilateral and regional co-operation in disaster management. She introduced some facts about Slovenia from which it was evident that the country is prone to many natural disasters, therefore good preparedness, relief and recovery capabilities are of utmost importance. Concerning bilateral co-operation, the speaker informed about existing bilateral agreement with all four neighbouring countries in areas such as notification and mutual exchange of information on threats, emergency situations and disasters, exchange of knowledge and experiences, organization of joint education and training, as well as bilateral assistance in case of disasters.

The speaker presented some concrete cross-border projects implemented in co-operation of Slovenia and its neighbouring countries. Projects focused on alpine search and rescue, interventions in the case of cross-border disasters, cave rescue, preparedness for evacuation in case of nuclear accident, cross-border co-operation in case of floods and fires were among others resulting in development of communication tools, joint risk assessments, etc. and were aiming to strengthen cross-border co-operation in sense of improving procedures of notification and readiness for self-protection, improving early warning, joint response, ability to respond, and so on.

Furthermore, *Ms. Dobnik Jeraj* outlined Slovenia's active role in capacity sharing through the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE) and a contribution to regional co-operation in Western Balkans through the EU programme on co-operation with candidate and potential candidate countries. She stressed the importance of building and strengthening regional networks, sharing knowledge and experiences, exchanging information and organizing joint activities with these countries. Finally, she concluded that bilateral and regional co-operation in disaster management is crucial and should take place in all phases, as well as include all relevant partners. She stressed the importance of building trust through joint activities of relevant countries.

*Ms. Ljubojević* presented the structure and work of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE). She explained the very practical oriented nature of the initiative, where theory becomes practice. By project planning, facilitation and implementation the initiative fosters regional co-operation in preparedness and prevention, as well as serves as a platform for exchange of information, lessons learnt and best practices in the field of disaster management. The speaker outlined the importance of co-operation with other relevant organizations, e.g. EC/EU, UN ISDR, UNDP, UN OCHA, etc. in planning phase of the activities with an aim to avoid possible duplications.

The speaker informed about some of the projects, such as the Disaster Management Training Programme focusing mainly on the institutional capacity building of disaster management services of the SEE countries and the Project for Support of Establishing the Joint Emergency Response Units in case of floods in SEE aiming to develop operational capabilities. In conclusion, *Ms. Ljubojević* stressed the unique value of the Initiative in ensuring the safety of citizens as well as the environment. She expressed the importance of the fact that the Initiative is being driven by the countries of the region in which successful partnerships between governments and the international community have been established.

During the *discussion*, a *representative of Serbia* informed about the establishment of the Russian – Serbian Humanitarian Centre focusing on preparedness and relief activities. It employs experts from Serbia and the Russian Federation and is open for access of other countries.

A *representative of the Council of the Baltic Sea States* thanked the OSCE and the Swiss Chairmanship for facilitating the dialogue in this important topic and expressed the Council's high interest into regional co-operation.

A *representative of Uzbekistan* underlined the importance of information technology in disaster management.

*Mr. Christian Blondin, representing the World Meteorological Organization*, stressed a great need for having better climate information because of the meteorological origin of most natural hazards.

*The Ambassador of Slovakia* invited the speakers to focus on possible use of presented practices within the OSCE.

A *representative of Romania* informed about the improvement of the functioning of the National Emergency Situations Management System and its co-operation and interaction with relevant structures from other countries and international organizations. The representative also supported the potential of OSCE to be used as an integrated platform for debates on relevant topics related to its concept of comprehensive security, such as disaster prevention, developing specific mechanisms for co-ordination in disaster assistance, raising public awareness and disaster risk management.

*Mr. Marcus Oxley, representing the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction* underlined the way of dealing with existing risks and addressing the causes, as two main challenges, and added that special focus should be given to prevention of risks.

*The Moderator, Ms. Cue*, concluded that presented cases clearly demonstrated the possible benefit from the relevant co-operation, whereby experiences and outcomes from the OSCE can also make a valuable contribution to other relevant processes focusing on natural disaster management.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- The need for strengthening bilateral, regional and international co-operation in disaster management was recognized, especially since neighbouring countries usually face similar problems.
- Co-operation, also within the OSCE, is crucial in bringing added value and building trust among participating States.
- Co-operation is needed in all phases: prevention, preparedness, response.
- Co-operation should be developed at different levels, such as local, regional, national and among all relevant actors, including NGO's, civil society, research institutions, etc.
- The OSCE can facilitate the dialogue and offer a platform for exchanging information on good practices, but also on existing gaps.

- The OSCE can complement the role of other international organizations working in the field without duplicating their activities.



***Session IV continuation: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 3***

**Moderator: Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert**, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) and Chair of the Management Board of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative

**Rapporteur: Ms. Dana Bogdan**, Programme Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Speakers:**

- **Ms. Irma Gurguliani**, Head of the Natural and Technological Hazards Management Service, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia
- **Mr. Gökhan Özkan**, Expert, Disaster and Emergency Management Department, Turkey
- **Mr. Munkhuu Medraa**, Lieutenant Colonel, Head of the Emergency Management and Coordination Division, National Emergency Management Agency, Mongolia

The second part of Session IV provided an overview on co-operation in natural disaster management and prevention, focusing on the co-ordination between governmental and civil society actors in three particular case studies that are related to Georgia, Turkey and Mongolia.

*The Moderator, Ms. Bonifert*, opened the session by mentioning that the focus of the second part of Session IV, the integrated disaster risk management, is analysed in the background of the post 2015 sustainable development goals. She referred also to the efforts of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative in this field, to which the OSCE is a partner, which contribute to building trust among countries and to security and stability.

*Ms. Gurguliani* presented two specific case studies of natural disasters which occurred in Georgia – the Tbilisi earthquake in 2002 and the flooding in 2013, involving arsenic-contaminated waste.

In presenting the case of the earthquake from April 2002, the speaker briefly mentioned general information about the concerned area and about the damages and losses associated with this event. Discussing achievements and next steps, the speaker emphasized the need for enhancing prevention efforts. With regard to the work done so far, the speaker mentioned several high quality seismic maps developed, including on “built environment” inventory, seismic site conditions and amplifications, seismic sources constructed for the Tbilisi area, etc. With regards to next steps, the speaker underlined the importance of external sources of co-funding, using as an example the funding received from the Swiss Development Co-operation Agency for the implementation of further measures and covering different needs, such as the specification of seismic sources, seismic risk mapping, etc.

Concerning the flooding involving arsenic-contaminated waste, the speaker presented the situation on the ground, describing the dangerous ecological situation in the Ambrolauri and

Lentekhi regions of Georgia and stressing the associated health-related impact on the population living in the vicinity of the sites. As follow-up actions, public discussions have been initiated and the issue has been included in the National Environmental Action Plan for 2012-2016. Furthermore, a study of arsenic-containing ashes and sludge has been conducted and an action plan has been developed. Referring to next steps, the speaker mentioned the construction of a sarcophagus, a safe disposal of arsenic containing-waste materials; the development of an on-site detailed study; and the action plan for safe transportation and disposal of arsenic-containing waste materials.

In her concluding remarks, Ms. Gurguliani referred to disaster risk reduction (DRR), adaptation to climate change and agricultural development as priorities identified by the Government. Furthermore, she indicated that the State Strategy for Regional Development for 2010 – 2017 includes provisions on the improvement of disaster risk management in the area of policy formulation. As indicated by the speaker, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2011-2015 identifies DRR as one of the main key areas of assistance. With regard to the activities under the Hyogo Framework for Action, a national platform for DRR is in the course of being established, with support from UNDP.

Mr. Özkan presented the disaster management system in Turkey (AFAD) and the transformation it has gone through. Mr. Özkan focused on several projects, as well as on recent response activities.

Introducing the system, the speaker highlighted its values and principles and how it provides necessary measures to counter identified dangers and risks in all areas of life. Discussing the necessary steps to prioritize risk management in disaster management systems, the speaker mentioned the promotion of a culture of risk prevention and mitigation in society, training activities with modern technologies and communication facilities as well as co-operation at local and regional level as main priorities of the institution.

Describing the transformation of the system, Mr. Özkan presented the situation before and after the establishment of AFAD: while in the past a multi-authorities approach lacked an effective and efficient co-ordination and focused on crisis management rather than on risk reduction, the current situation presents a unified and effective co-ordination authority that makes efficient use of its capacity in disaster management.

With regard to the projects implemented with the aim to achieve the main tasks of the organization, namely co-ordination in all phases of disaster management and mitigation, response and recovery, implementation of legislation and new policies, etc., the speaker presented four projects, including their main objectives, as follows:

- *Turkey Disaster Response Plan* – which ensures the preparedness and capacity building of related institutions by dividing responsibilities and duties;
- *Establishment of Humanitarian Logistics Warehouse Project* – the designated warehouses are being constructed for urgent and effective response;
- *Technological Disasters Hazard and Risk Map* – data is collected to feed into base maps, analyses, etc.; furthermore, a road map is established with regards to next steps;
- *Capacity Building for Effective Risk Management* – disaster risk management through risk assessments is conducted in all provinces. The project foresees

the establishment of the Local Risk Reduction Plans and enhancing the capability of AFAD for Disaster Risk Management.

In his final remarks, the speaker mentioned the rapid response provided by AFAD during the 2011 Van earthquakes, including life rescuing operations and technical support to the area affected. Concluding his intervention, Mr. Özkan mentioned other national projects in the area of DRR and referred to the international response activities of AFAD.

*Mr. Medraa* focused on the Disaster Management in Mongolia. After a brief introduction on the country profile, the speaker focused on the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), highlighting the vision of the agency: to support the Government in providing national safety as well as to enhance the national disaster management and the disaster protection measures focusing mainly on community involvement. Discussing the main duties of the institution, Mr. Medraa underlined the development and monitoring of the legislative environment, strengthening the capacity of national disaster protection and co-operating with foreign countries and international organizations in improving the national framework for DRR.

Presenting the organisational structure of the Agency, the speaker mentioned that under the direct supervision of the Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, the Agency incorporates district, local and national rescue teams. As a legislative framework for action, the speaker mentioned that while recognizing the Hyogo Framework for Action, NEMA is based on four national basic laws: the Law on Disaster Protection, Law on Fire Safety, Law on Forest and Steppe Fire Protection, Law on State Reserve.

In his concluding remarks, the speaker presented the “Earthquake preparedness and response” project which establishes a unified disaster management system and provides rapid responses. He also discussed the challenges associated with the management of a complex disaster, including the lack of co-ordination between NEMA and other stakeholders, the lack of a legal environment on co-ordination of international humanitarian assistance, etc.

Following the presentations, the floor was opened for *discussion*.

*Ms. Bettina Menne, representing the World Health Organization*, mentioned that health issues related to emergencies affected more than 15 million people over the last 22 years; particular reference was made to the heat wave in 2003 and the combined heat and fire event in the Russian Federation in 2010. In this context, the representative presented the obligations of the WHO with regards to the International Health Regulations, and the work of the Organization.

*Prof. Dr. Ben Wisner, representing Aon-Benfield University Hazard Research Center, University College London*, asked how organisations reached down into subnational levels and how citizens were involved in the action planning in the field of disaster risk reduction.

In response to the question, *Ms. Gurguliani* mentioned that in the area of direct action, the emergency response teams established at local and regional level included volunteers as well; she then referred to the Aarhus Convention which provides the legal framework for the citizens to take active part in the decision-making process.

*Mr. Özkan* mentioned that within the Disaster Response Plan of Turkey, roles and responsibilities were distributed among Ministries, institutions, public and private sector, local authorities, NGOs and to the individuals. The division of roles among stakeholders is also valid at the preparation stage of disaster response plans.

*A representative of Switzerland* provided the example of the Swiss Government that has taken the initiative to train local advisors (3 or 4 people per village) on how to implement forecast and warning information, response and recovery after disaster, etc.

In response to the *question of the Moderator* regarding the responsiveness of the authorities in the area of policy formulation, *Ms. Gurguliani* mentioned co-ordination and the participation of local and regional municipalities in the decision-making process as the basis for policy development. *Mr. Özkan* underlined the role of capacity building in this process, while *Mr. Medraa* mentioned a step-by-step approach in the activities of the national authorities.

As a last question of the session, *Mr. Marcus Oxley, representing the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction* raised the issue of governments' response to small scale disasters and the way communities build resilience against these disasters.

*Ms. Gurguliani* responded by mentioning that the Government addresses all disasters the same, regardless their scale; however, she emphasized that the capacity building component needs to be further strengthened.

*Mr. Özkan* explained that small scale disasters are addressed locally, and in case additional support is required, assistance is provided from central authorities.

*Mr. Medraa* mentioned that the Government adopted a national plan which aims at ensuring the participation of local population in DRR related issues.

Raising the issue of civil society involvement in disaster risk management, a *representative of Turkmenistan* mentioned the focus of the Turkmen Government on supporting local communities and the civil society.

## **Session V: Panel Debate – Role of civil society in disaster-risk management**

**Moderator: Mr. Marcus C. Oxley**, Executive Director of Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), United Kingdom

**Rapporteur: Ms. Jenniver Sehring**, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

### **Speakers:**

- **Mr. Andre Krummacher**, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), South/South-East Asia Regional Director, France
- **Dr. Vladimir Sakharov**, Director, Environmental Emergency Preparedness, Green Cross International
- **Ms. Lianna Asoyan**, Project Manager, Gavar Aarhus Centre, Armenia
- **Ms. Natasa Manojlovic**, Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH), Germany

In his introduction, *the Moderator, Mr. Oxley*, stressed that the vast majority of disaster losses are from small scale disasters. These are often uninsured losses, and they are usually not considered in national databases and the EM-DAT database; therefore also national and international attention is limited. This is one reason why the local level should receive more attention in DRR. However, the local level faces in particular a lack of capacity. Therefore, the question arises how we can optimize existing resources and unlock local potential. While local authorities have the main responsibility for DRR, also civil society, which in the understanding of this session includes the private sector, is an important actor. It should be involved as local people know best local needs, capacities, and conditions. Their inclusion will result in policy appropriateness, resource mobilization and sustainability. Mr. Oxley pointed out that this needs a cultural change, since national emergency institutions often have a rigid management structure that is culturally different from approaches to include people and create ownership and commitment.

*Mr. Krummacher* presented Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) as a grass root approach for DRR. While there was good progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) priorities 1 and 5 in the OSCE region, these are usually dealt with at national level and in a top-down manner. Nevertheless, CBDRM is now a generally recognised approach. Mr Krummacher highlighted the following reasons for CBDRM: (1) Local communities are in the first line of defence: If a disaster occurs, family and neighbours are the first to help before official rescue teams arrive. This is in particular relevant in small scale disasters that do not receive national attention. (2) Top-down DRR approaches often fail to address specific local vulnerabilities, needs and demands. (3) Every community has skills, knowledge, resources and capacities. These assets are often overlooked or even undermined. The benefits of engaging communities actively in the whole process of DRM are reduced vulnerabilities; better use of local knowledge and expertise; measures tailored at local problems and needs; improved sustainability; and strengthened capacities. However, Mr. Krummacher also admitted that there are some challenges for CBDRM: (1) The bottom-up CBDRM approach needs to be linked with top-down governmental DRR approach to make them complementary, and often it is not easy to identify the appropriate interface. (2) Capacity as well as resources need to be available for ensuring a large scale

roll-out/replication of micro-projects or pilot initiatives. (3) The institutionalization of CBDRM with national line ministries and DRR agencies is often limited, also due to a lack of DRR legislation at sub-national and community level.

*Dr. Sakharov* started his intervention by admitting that working with local NGOs is not easy. But although the dialogue might be difficult, it ultimately brings a huge benefit in increased local disaster preparedness. He pointed to the different challenges regarding man-made disasters: while natural disasters are ‘neutral’ in the sense that nobody is directly responsible and can be blamed, for man-made disasters someone is (also legally) responsible and liable. This makes local disaster preparedness a sensitive process, where co-operation between civil society and the private sector usually does not work. In this field, stronger advocacy is needed.

*Ms. Asoyan* presented a general overview of the activities of the 15 Aarhus Centres in Armenia in order to support the authorities in implementation of the Aarhus Convention, to raise the level of public awareness, and to promote public participation in the decision making processes. Disaster risk management is one priority on the agenda of the Centres. Among the respective activities are public awareness-raising activities, e.g. at the annual International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. Since 2011, the Armenian Aarhus Centres actively participate in the initiative of the National Rescue Service and the Regional Environmental Centre, which serves the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and also provides support and assists local communities in physical risk protection. With support of the OSCE’s CASE (Civic Action for Security and Environment) NGO Small Grants Programme, the Aarhus Centres have established task groups working on strategic documents at the regional and municipal levels in close collaboration with international donors such as UNDP. The Centres interact with local governments, NGOs, independent experts, academia, the media, as well as the relevant government institutions and Parliament. Aarhus Centres are ready to move forward to more preventive action.

*Ms. Manojlovic* focussed her presentation on methods and tools to involve multiple stakeholders in flood risk management. During the last decades, flood defence as an engineering activity developed to flood risk management as a multi-stakeholder process. Working with the public is no longer considered a ‘necessary evil’ but an essential activity. The EU flood directive explicitly demands inclusion of key stakeholders, but it says not how. She stressed that we need to find ways to realise stakeholders’ participation cost-effectively and timely. While there is no blueprint concept for this, there are some tools that can be adapted to local specifics, e.g. Learning and Action Alliances (LAAs). LAAs serve as a framework for institutionalizing stakeholder participation and have been already applied in several OSCE participating States. *Ms. Manojlovic* pointed to the following main lessons learned regarding community based flood risk management: Branding can help people to identify with a concept. Trust is required. Involvement of civil society requires capacity building and decision support methods. Motivation to get people on board needs incentives, e.g. daring to try something new. Local knowledge has to be capitalized. Academic and civil society should join forces to co-ordinate multi-level processes. People have to be addressed both rationally and emotionally. She proposed that OSCE’s strong horizontal and vertical network could be used to link levels bottom-up and top-down to support multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes.

The floor was opened for *discussion*.

*A representative of Switzerland* referred to the good experience Switzerland has made with local hazard advisers. Another Swiss project on local risk and hazard maps included revision of the maps by non-professional local citizens. This ensured the integration of local knowledge and helped the acceptance of result. The representative also reminded yesterday's message that risk management is not a cost, but an investment. Lacking awareness and a certain kind of market restoration might prevent such a view; therefore accountability and reliability are important. He also enquired which part of the population is reached by Aarhus Centres, and if it is growing.

*Ms. Asoyan* explained that the Aarhus Centres reach out by various ways and also evaluate if people receive information. About 9000 people were involved in various events in 2013. The information on the website is accessed by approximately 300,000 users per year and also spread by other NGOs.

*Ms. Manojlovic* said that understanding and assessing risks was crucial for people to also define their acceptable risk. She also pointed to approaches to perceive disasters as an opportunity to revise and change existing habits.

*Dr. Sakharov* pointed to the need to not only invite 'friends' to joint discussions, but also get those with opposing views on board. However, he as well as *Ms Manojlovic* made the experience that the private sector did not follow invitations from civil society and academia.

*A representative of the United States of America delegation* mentioned that civil society participation was not only a burden, but also could open up an additional channel of communication. She referred to the example of the hurricane Katrina: civil society institutions like churches helped to communicate with refugees that could not be reached otherwise. She inquired also about ways to share such good practice.

*A representative of Serbia* was interested in what role the Aarhus Centres' network in Serbia could play in risk reduction.

*Mr. Krummacher* confirmed that church networks or imams played an important role in passing early warning messages and in awareness-raising and that it could be easily replicated on other regions.

*Ms. Asoyan* stressed that Aarhus Centres made governmental statistics understandable for villagers and therewith empowered them to get active.

*Mr. Andreas Prystav, representing Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd.*, stated that the insurance industry was ready to engage, but it was not always clear who were the relevant stakeholders with whom it should engage.

*Ms. Manojlovic* mentioned that it always depended on the society, who was the best facilitator and that Aarhus Centres could champion the process at the local level.

*The Moderator* stressed that DRR was about shared responsibilities. Trust and an enabling environment have to be harnessed in order to unlock the obviously existing willingness and potential for co-operation among different actors.

*The representative of Germany* asked where the OSCE should engage.

*Dr. Sakharov* saw potential for the OSCE to provide inputs without duplicating others. This could be by offering strong political commitment to the HFA2-process and reinforcing the link between DRR, environment and security. Also advocacy and awareness-raising at all levels are still needed. Lastly, the OSCE could support co-operation at different levels by bringing closer together private business, NGOs, and people. Also promotion and knowledge sharing of technical and methodological issues remains a task.

The following conclusions and recommendations can be drawn:

- The vast majority of disaster losses are from small scale disasters that get limited national and international attention and assistance. However, even the most vulnerable communities have local knowledge and capacities; we have to identify how we can optimize existing resources, capitalize local knowledge and unlock local potential.
- Public participation might be a difficult process, but it ultimately pays off in increased local disaster preparedness and more appropriate policies.
- There is no blueprint approach for participation but many lessons to be shared. The OSCE can provide a platform for knowledge sharing of technical and methodological issues and support co-operation by bringing closer together private business and civil society.
- The OSCE could provide political commitment to the HFA2-process, in particular by reinforcing the link between DRR, environment and security.
- The OSCE could further engage advocacy and awareness-raising at all levels.
- Aarhus Centres play an important role in ensuring access to information and raising awareness of environmental problems, including natural hazards, and therewith empower people to become active.
- The OSCE's strong horizontal and vertical network can link levels bottom-up and top-down to support multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes.



## ***Concluding Session: The OSCE's Role in Follow-up to the Forum***

**Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer**, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Rapporteur: Mr. Matthias Matuschek**, Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

### **Speakers:**

- **Ambassador Andrey Kelin**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE
- **Ambassador Daniel Baer**, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OSCE
- **Ambassador Thierry Béchet**, Permanent Representative of the European Union to the OSCE

In her introduction the *Moderator, Ms. Schweitzer*, summarized the discussions undertaken during the two-day Preparatory Meeting. She stressed that it was confirmed that the OSCE, as a platform for enhancing dialogue and co-operation among governments, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector can contribute to raising awareness on the inherent link between disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and security and stability. She underlined that suggestions were also made regarding an enhanced role for the OSCE in ensuring a high-level political engagement in this area. Such an engagement could facilitate the creation of multi-stakeholder coalitions to address the reduction of disaster risks.

*Ambassador Kelin* stressed the great potential of the topic of the Forum to overcome remaining dividing lines within the OSCE area. He draw the attention to the fact that disasters such as extreme temperature peaks, storms, floods and fires, but also tsunamis and earthquakes have become more complex and have occurred more frequently in the recent past. He emphasized the importance of national and international rapid action capabilities, as well as for regional and sub-regional mechanisms to assist neighbouring countries, in particular using civil defense resources.

Ambassador Kelin elaborated on the Russian Federation's system for disaster management and response by explaining the role of the Ministry of Civil Defense and Natural Disaster Management and agencies such as EMERCOM. He also stressed that UN institutions were Russia's key-partners in this area. He emphasized the importance of real time information exchange and informed about successful co-operation in this field between the Russian Federation and partners such as EU and NATO. In addition, he stated that UN institutions should hold the upper hand since the UN has unique facilities to combine efforts of different countries to combat disasters and crises. In his view, the OSCE has gained experience in emergency response capacity building through the OCEEA, field missions and the ENVSEC Initiative, including such successful examples as the fire management project in the South Caucasus, which among other achievements had brought together relevant authorities from South Caucasus as well as South-Eastern Europe in a joint workshop in 2010.

With a view to further action, the Ambassador stressed that participating States need to enhance their response capabilities by closer co-operation with other regional and sub-

regional mechanisms, including specialized agencies of the UN, NATO, EU, CSTO and within ENVSEC. He mentioned some areas of improvement with a view to mechanisms of trans-boundary co-operation, especially the insufficient level of harmonization of internal procedures when it comes to visa issues, customs clearance for rescue teams and the authorization of overflights over national territories.

*Ambassador Baer* emphasized that environmental disasters were a large-scale management challenge. In his view, information and co-ordination of both human and material resources, as well as trust are three fundamental ingredients for a successful strong response to disasters. He very much stressed that disaster management often failed in the past because people did not trust the provided assistance due to misinformation or negative experiences.

Furthermore, he stressed that governments must play a leading role in co-ordinating the planning process; not only within the participating States but also in international co-operation with neighbours. In terms of management, he highlighted that a purely top-down management style would also fail due to its incapacity to guarantee a proper information flow, as well as in terms of trust. Moreover, he was convinced that society resources matter. Governance issues and enforcement of policies, such as compliance with building codes and corruption could make a society more disaster resilient.

With a view to future work, he mentioned some ideas and recommended some OSCE stock taking in order to assess what kind of resources OSCE already has, and what still would be needed. Moreover, he recommended harvesting the potential of innovation, such as technical innovation with a view to communications technologies, which could facilitate co-ordination in disaster management. Finally, he recommended using this topic, which clearly has no political nature, to build trust and confidence within the OSCE participating States, between those who still have political challenges.

*Ambassador Bechet* emphasized that the topic of disaster management could help to use the OSCE, which is normally seen as a platform of political dialogue, also as a platform for policy dialogue. He highlighted that disaster management involves many different stakeholders. Consequently, exchanging experiences and sharing best practices is essential. Furthermore, he stressed that this particular issue was very close to what citizens normally perceived as security, although it had not been in the OSCE's initial sense of security. Hence, this topic cannot be left aside. He joined Ambassador Baer in stressing that disaster management probably was a very good area for further confidence building measures among OSCE participating States, where enhanced governance is most important.

With a view to the OSCE's future engagement in this thematic field, he stressed that there was no need to invent a new mission for the OSCE. The OSCE should start with assessing what is needed and where it can make a difference without duplicating existing structures. Thus, OSCE's added value could be identifying existing gaps, probably by field missions, and bringing responsible actors together. Furthermore, he stressed that the OSCE, especially in the Second Dimension, was dealing with a lot of issues which already had a disaster preparedness or risk mitigation aspect, especially with regard to water management and climate change. Finally, he highlighted the importance of exchanging experiences and best practices, and recommended to mainstream several elements of existing Second Dimension's activities in that regard.

# ANNEX I



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Permanent Council**

PC.DEC/1088  
25 July 2013

Original: ENGLISH

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## **962nd Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 962, Agenda item 2

### **Decision No. 1088:**

#### **Theme, Agenda and Modalities for the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum**

The Permanent Council,

Pursuant to Chapter VII, paragraphs 21 to 32, of the Helsinki Document 1992; Chapter IX, paragraph 20, of the Budapest Document 1994; Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/04 of 7 December 2004; Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/06 of 26 July 2006; Permanent Council Decision No. 743 of 19 October 2006; Permanent Council Decision No. 958 of 11 November 2010; and Permanent Council Decision No. 1011 of 7 December 2011,

Relying on the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension (MC(11).JOUR/2) and Ministerial Council decisions related to the environment, energy and water management,

Building on the outcomes of past Economic and Environmental Forums, as well as on the results of relevant OSCE activities, including follow-up activities,

Decides that:

1. The theme of the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum will be: “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”;
2. The Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum will consist of three meetings, including two preparatory meetings, one of which will take place outside of Vienna. The concluding meeting will be held from 10 to 12 September 2014 in Prague. These arrangements shall not set a precedent for future meetings of the Economic and Environmental Forums. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, under the guidance of the OSCE Chairmanship for 2014, will organize the above-mentioned meetings;
3. The agenda of the Forum will focus on the impact of the following topics on the comprehensive security of the OSCE area

- Addressing preparedness, emergency response and recovery related to environmental challenges;
- Promoting partnerships and initiatives covering environment and security issues for greater preparedness for, resilience and adaptation to environmental challenges;
- Exchanging best practices relating to preparedness, emergency response and recovery regarding environmental challenges;
- Promoting environmental good governance;

4. The agendas of the Forum meetings, including timetables and themes of the working sessions, will be proposed and determined by the OSCE Chairmanship for 2014, after being agreed upon by the participating States in the Economic and Environmental Committee;

5. Moreover, having a view to its tasks, the Economic and Environmental Forum will review the implementation of OSCE commitments in the economic and environmental dimension. The review, to be integrated into the agenda of the Forum, will address OSCE commitments relevant to the theme of the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

6. The discussions at the Forum should benefit from cross-dimensional input provided by other OSCE bodies and relevant meetings organized by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, under the guidance of the OSCE Chairmanship for 2014, and from deliberations in various international organizations;

7. Moreover, having a view to its tasks, the Economic and Environmental Forum will discuss current and future activities for the economic and environmental dimension, in particular the work in implementation of the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension;

8. The participating States are encouraged to be represented at a high level by senior officials responsible for shaping international economic and environmental policy in the OSCE area. Participation in their delegations of representatives from the business and scientific communities and of other relevant actors of civil society would be welcome;

9. As in previous years, the format of the Economic and Environmental Forum should provide for the active involvement of relevant international organizations and encourage open discussions;

10. The following international organizations, international organs, regional groupings and conferences of States are invited to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum: Asian Development Bank; Barents Euro-Arctic Council; Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation; Central European Initiative; Collective Security Treaty Organization; Commonwealth of Independent States; Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia; Council of Europe; Council of the Baltic Sea States; Economic Cooperation Organization; Energy Community; Eurasian Economic Commission; Eurasian Economic Community; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; European Environment Agency; European Investment Bank; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Green Cross International; Global Fire Monitoring

Center; European Investment Bank; International Atomic Energy Agency; International Energy Agency; International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA); International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea; International Maritime Organisation; International Monetary Fund; International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; International Committee of the Red Cross; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM; Organisation of Islamic Cooperation; Regional Cooperation Council; Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; Southeast European Cooperative Initiative; Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Human Settlements Programme; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees; UN Women; United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia; World Bank Group; World Health Organization; World Meteorological Organization; World Trade Organization; Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies; Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit; International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; United Nations Children's Fund; Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI); United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination; International Civil Defense Organization; World Food Programme; Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery; Inter-Parliamentary Union, and other relevant organizations;

11. The OSCE Partners for Co-operation are invited to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

12. Upon request by a delegation of an OSCE participating State, regional groupings or expert academics and business representatives may also be invited, as appropriate, to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

13. Subject to the provisions contained in Chapter IV, paragraphs 15 and 16, of the Helsinki Document 1992, the representatives of non-governmental organizations with relevant experience in the area under discussion are also invited to participate in the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum;

14. In line with the practices established over past years with regard to meetings of the Economic and Environmental Forum and their preparatory process, the Chairperson of the Twenty-Second Economic and Environmental Forum will present summary conclusions and policy recommendations drawn from the preparatory discussions. The Economic and Environmental Committee will further include the conclusions of the Chairperson and the reports of the rapporteurs in its discussions so that the Permanent Council can take the decisions required for appropriate policy translation and follow-up activities.

## **ANNEX II: OPENING REMARKS**

*Check against delivery*

### **22<sup>st</sup> ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”**

#### **FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014**

**Opening address of the OSCE Permanent Council Chairperson,  
Ambassador Thomas Greminger**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Swiss Chairmanship it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22<sup>st</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

I would like to thank the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for their efforts in organizing this Preparatory meeting as well as for their contribution to our common goal – “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”.

I warmly welcome all representatives of the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, high-level officials from ministries and agencies, representatives of international, regional and non-governmental organizations as well as experts from the business sector and academia and last, but not least, the officers from OSCE field Missions in charge of economic and environmental activities.

We are pleased to have you all here and to see that some delegations have integrated representatives of their National Platforms for Natural Hazards or Hyogo Framework for Action Focal Points.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Natural hazards can strike anywhere, at any time, regardless of boundaries, political situations or other circumstances. They can turn into disasters if we are not well prepared. Many participating States, represented in this room, know from their own experience that the scale, frequency, and severity of such events are increasing. 2/3

It is our common responsibility to be ready to respond to environmental challenges. We are convinced that the OSCE participating States should increase cooperation in this field in order to be able to improve the security of their populations.

That is the reason why one priority of the Swiss Chairmanship is dedicated to reinforcing the management of natural disaster risks in the OSCE region. We intend to focus on promoting integrated disaster risk management through awareness building and capacity development using mutual learning opportunities as well as targeted cooperation efforts. We are closely working with the future Serbian Chairmanship to create continuity and consistency. In fact, the theme of this year's Economic and Environmental Forum is part of our joint work plan. This year, the Swiss Chairmanship proposes to focus on the promotion of an integrated disaster risk management approach. What do we mean by "integrated" and what do we understand when speaking about "disaster risk management"?

"Disaster risk management" means the management of risks before, during and after the event. Managing risks means to work on preventing and mitigating risks. "Integrated" relates to different aspects: to a holistic view of disaster risk management that sees prevention, preparedness, response and recovery as interlinked elements; to a multi-stakeholder approach in which a variety of actors - governmental and non-governmental actors, civilians, academics and practitioners - work together for effective disaster risk management; to an outlook that understands managing disaster risks is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development and security.

This topic is not new to the OSCE family, but it has so far received limited attention within this organization. There are a number of OSCE commitments that relate to the need to work together in order to promote security and cooperation in relation to environmental challenges and natural risks. These commitments focus on fostering cooperation on disaster preparedness and response. We believe that the OSCE participating States should also increase cooperation when it comes to prevention and mitigation of existing risks. Effective disaster risk management must happen well before a disaster strikes. The fact that natural disasters such as earthquakes, droughts or floods are often transboundary in nature makes cooperation between OSCE participating States not only desirable, but necessary. The transboundary and global risk factors require cooperative efforts in their assessment and management.

This First Preparatory meeting and the 2nd Preparatory meeting in May, will allow for an exchange between governmental and non-governmental actors, between those who might be affected by a natural disaster and those who are working for effective public policies to prevent vulnerabilities, to manage a disaster situation once it hits a community or to recover and reconstruct. At this 2nd Preparatory meeting that will take place in Montreux, in Switzerland, we would also like to invite you to a field visit and we very much hope that a great number of participants will attend. 3/3

We want to see the two Preparatory Meetings before "Prague" instrumentally contributing to, and culminating in, an outcome in Prague which we will have defined together in a consultative manner. In Prague we shall come to conclusions on what the OSCE can contribute in managing risks, increasing the security of nations and communities, and in which concrete areas enhanced cooperation of participating States is needed. The Swiss Chairmanship will facilitate this process and count on your support to reach consensus on practical and balanced recommendations for the OSCE.

I would like to thank you in advance for actively participating in this year's Prague Cycle, for your willingness to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on disaster risk management, and in that way, hopefully, for contributing to the increased resilience of nations and communities in the OSCE region.

Thank you for your attention.



**22<sup>st</sup> ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”**

**FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014**

**Opening address of the Secretary General, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I warmly welcome all of you to Vienna to the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum devoted to addressing the challenges of managing natural disasters in the OSCE area.

1. As a security organization, the OSCE must acknowledge the fact that natural disasters affect the security of nations and individuals. Disasters injure and kill people, damage homes and infrastructure, and undermine key sectors of the economy. Their consequences can fuel tensions and lead to conflicts within and among societies. This is why trans boundary co-operation on preparedness and response to natural disasters is important not only as a tool to address the immediate consequence of the disaster, but also as a co-operative and a confidence-building measure aimed at avoiding the risk of tension and conflict.

2. In fact, natural disasters know no borders. Since the year 2000, almost half of the world's population has been affected by them. More than one million people have lost their lives. Disasters have proven to be able to wipe out decades of progress – disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable categories: the poor, women, children, the elderly, youth and people with disabilities.

In an interconnected world, even disasters of local nature can have far-reaching consequences. Let me remind you, for instance, of the earthquakes, tsunami and floods that hit the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Japan and Thailand in 2011 and their impact also on the people and economies of faraway countries.

3. Within the OSCE area, natural disasters also pose significant transboundary risks. To mention just a few examples, participating States in Central Asia, South Caucasus, Southern Europe, North America and some regions of the Russian Federation face serious seismic hazards. Wildfires occur frequently in the South Caucasus, the Russian Federation, Belarus and Ukraine as well as in North America and Southern Europe, and at times across borders between states.

The OSCE region is also vulnerable to water-related transboundary risks, including a shortage of water. For instance, the multi-year droughts at the beginning of the last decade in Central and South-west Asia and the Caucasus affected some 60 million people and caused significant economic losses. Too much water can be of equal concern: less than a year ago, in June 2013, heavy rainfall over Europe caused rivers to burst their banks, causing disasters that affected several countries, including our host country, Austria. Tens of thousands of people had to be evacuated and the combined economic loss amounted to the equivalent of 17 billion euros.

In addition, climate change, coupled with rapidly increasing rates of urbanization, makes the impact of disasters much worse. The frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters have been increasing in different parts of the world in the past two decades. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has forecasted that climate-related disasters will increasingly become a global challenge of the twenty-first century, affecting security world-wide.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Responding to natural disasters requires fostering local, national and international capacities for prevention, preparedness, early warning, and response.

With its comprehensive and cross-dimensional approach to security, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is well placed to contribute to the international community's efforts to improve co-operation on disaster risk reduction. The OSCE's broad membership, with its 57 participating States, enables us to support co-operation, and share experiences and best practices within and between OSCE sub-regions.

In the OSCE context, the importance of co-operation on natural and man-made disasters for the security in our region was already recognized in the Helsinki Final Act, which identified meteorology, hydrology and seismological research as important areas of co-operation; a number of subsequent OSCE documents have also highlighted the need for co-operative efforts in dealing with disasters.

Today, as we move towards the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, enhancing the strategic orientation of the economic and environmental dimension is one of the key areas of focus of our discussions, as we seek to enhance the Organization's ability to effectively address contemporary security challenges. The Forum can make a substantial contribution to this process by identifying possible roles for the OSCE in disaster risk reduction that build on the discussions that took place under the Lithuanian Chairmanship on challenges posed by natural and man-made disasters, and on the Decision on the Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-made Disasters adopted at the Kiev Ministerial Council.

As many of you know, I am a firm advocate of strengthening links between the Organization and Track II initiatives to introduce different perspectives and fresh ideas into OSCE debates. Finding solutions to environmental challenges requires participatory processes involving civil society, experts and academia, among others. I also believe that this is an area in which greater co-operation is needed among regional organizations. This is why this year's main Security Days event in May, on Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, will explore the role of regional organizations in addressing climate change and natural disasters, among other security challenges. It is also why we are organizing, together with the Swiss Chairmanship, a

Security Day on Water in July. I am convinced that these discussions will generate fresh ideas and complement the outcomes of both this Forum and the Helsinki +40 process.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Economic and Environmental Forum will help to consolidate a shared view on the possible role of the OSCE, as a regional security organization, in the disaster risk and crisis management cycle. Insights into how the OSCE can create synergies with other actors and mobilize our own tools to address natural disaster risks more effectively could become valuable outcomes of the Forum process. We can also discuss how the OSCE could contribute to the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Agenda, where disaster risk reduction can become a cross-cutting issue. The Forum's discussions are also relevant to the preparation of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction that will replace the current Hyogo Framework for Action.

In particular, it will be important to consider preventive investments in risk reduction and emergency preparedness, as this has proved to be a cost-effective approach to significantly reducing the impact of natural hazards.

In addition, one should also look at ways to reduce the risks of natural disasters. A multiplicity of actors have a role to play in reducing these risks. By taking the right approach, governments, communities and people can make sure that a coming storm or flood will not turn into a disaster.

And finally, throughout the meeting there should be a strong focus on the role that the OSCE can realistically play in disaster risk management and in fostering co-operation in this field, taking into account the activities of other partner institutions..

In concluding, I wish to express my gratitude to the guest speakers and to all participants for joining us here in Vienna to take an active part in our deliberations. I look forward to your discussions over the next two days, and especially to practical suggestions to further develop the OSCE's role in this important area.

Thank you.

**22<sup>st</sup> ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”**

**FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014**

**Opening address of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities,  
Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden**

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants,

It is an honour to address this opening session of the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. This year’s topic focuses on a special aspect of environment and security: the risks of natural disasters and ways of mitigating these risks and strengthening resilience.

I am very pleased to welcome today so many experts that are here to share their knowledge on these issues: government officials from the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, representatives of international and bilateral organisations, of international NGOs, academia and the private sector.

Within the OSCE, challenges posed by natural disasters and the need for co-ordinated response have already been discussed on several occasions, starting with the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, as mentioned by the Secretary General . Since then, participating States have repeatedly recognized the importance of managing disasters in a co-operative way: in the 1999 Istanbul Summit Document, the 2002 Porto Ministerial Declaration and the 2005 Ministerial Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of the Disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant as well as in the 2003 OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension and the 2007 Madrid Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Security.

The cross-dimensional nature of the topic and its links to different aspects of security are also reflected in several policy documents of the Politico-Military Dimension, including the MC Decision 02/09 on Further OSCE Efforts to Address Transnational Threats and Challenges to Stability and Security, and the MC Decision 03/11 on Elements of the Conflict Cycle. The OSCE Border Security and Management Concept adopted at the 2005 Ministerial Council in Ljubljana also referred to facilitation of cross-border co-operation in case of natural disasters or serious accidents in border zones.

Within the Second Dimension, we have taken some concrete steps to put these commitments into action. Let me give you some examples of what my Office has been doing:

Since 2006, we have been actively engaged in wildfire management in the South Caucasus. We started with an OSCE-led Environmental Assessment Mission to fire-affected territories in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Our next engagement was the Joint OSCE/UNEP Environmental Assessment Mission to Georgia in the fall of 2008 following the forest fires that occurred as a consequence of 2008 conflict in Georgia. Based on the needs identified in these assessments, we have since 2009 been supporting a fire management capacity building programme covering all three countries of the South Caucasus. Our leading expert in this project will share his experiences in the panel debate this afternoon.

These activities are taking place in the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative – ENVSEC - where the OSCE co-operates with UNDP, UNEP, UNECE, REC and NATO as an associate partner. ENVSEC offers a unique mechanism to create synergies and jointly address environmental challenges related to natural and cascading disasters. In November last year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of this initiative, and we can discuss during our meeting how we can further facilitate sharing of best practices and their replication, as appropriate.

Let me mention just one other example of our disaster-related work within ENVSEC, one which addresses water: the joint efforts by the OSCE, UNECE and UNEP to support a framework for co-operation in the Dniester River Basin. It resulted in the bilateral Treaty on the Dniester River Basin signed by Ukraine and Moldova in 2012. One major element of our activities was a basin-wide impact and vulnerability assessment, as well as detailed flood-risk modelling in two selected sites.

The Dniester is also a pilot basin for the development of a transboundary climate change adaptation strategy and vulnerability assessment in the framework of an OSCE-led ENVSEC project on climate change and security. This project, financed by the European Union's Instrument for Stability, and implemented together with UNEP, UNDP, UNECE and REC, assesses security implications of climate change in three regions – Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia. The impact of climate change on the frequency and severity of natural disasters will be one of the security concerns we will address.

Apart from the ENVSEC activities, my Office organized in 2012 a workshop on International Responses to Major Natural and Man-made Disasters and the Role of the OSCE. It facilitated the exchange of best practices in the area of national and multilateral civil emergency response to major disasters. It also reviewed the respective activities of multilateral and regional structures, and discussed major challenges in this sphere.

The OSCE Field Operations are also very active in this field. Let me mention just two examples of activities implemented last year:

- The OSCE Centre in Astana co-organized, together with the UN, a regional conference on reducing disaster risks for Central Asia and the Caucasus.
- The OSCE Mission in Serbia held a regional workshop on inclusive flood risk management practices. I am happy to see many of our colleagues from the Field Operations here and we are looking forward to your contributions to the discussions.

Based on the existing experience of my Office and the Field Operations, we will continue to foster dialogue and co-operation between various stakeholders at local, national, and regional levels. In this regard, the OSCE-supported Aarhus Centres are well positioned to reach out to

communities and promote community-based disaster risk reduction activities in close partnership with local administrations and civil society organizations.

Excellencies,

Responding to environmental challenges and promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area are key priorities of the Second Dimension and an integral part of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. The increasing importance of sound environmental governance and co-ordinated action to reduce disaster risks require continuous dialogue.

Our agenda for the next two days will provide an opportunity for this. We will start by discussing the human, social and economic impacts of natural disasters in order to learn how preparedness and prevention can reduce losses. We will hear concrete case study examples of past disasters and of successful co-operation in natural disaster management: co-operation between different states, between the military and civilian actors, between government and civil society, and between local and national levels of government. We will discuss how environmental good governance and sustainable management of natural resources can foster addressing environment and security challenges. And we will also take into account gender aspects. Better education of women has measurable effects on reducing vulnerability through better awareness as well as faster responses to alerts and more reliable social networks. In this respect, civil society and business sectors are important actors and we will have a chance to benefit from their contributions in these two days.

Once again, welcome to all of you here. I am looking forward to fruitful discussions.

Thank you for your attention.

# ANNEX III: KEYNOTE SPEECHES

## Presentation by Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir, Director CRED and Professor at the University of Louvain, School of Public Health, Belgium

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum  
“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”  
FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING  
Vienna, 27-28 January 2014  
Presentation by CRED, Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir

EEF.IO/1/14  
27 January 2014

ENGLISH only

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters  
CRED  
A WHO Collaborating Centre

UCL  
World Health Organization

### Natural disasters 1994-2013 : Trends for OSCE countries

OSCE – Vienna, 27th January 2014

**Debarati Guha-Sapir**

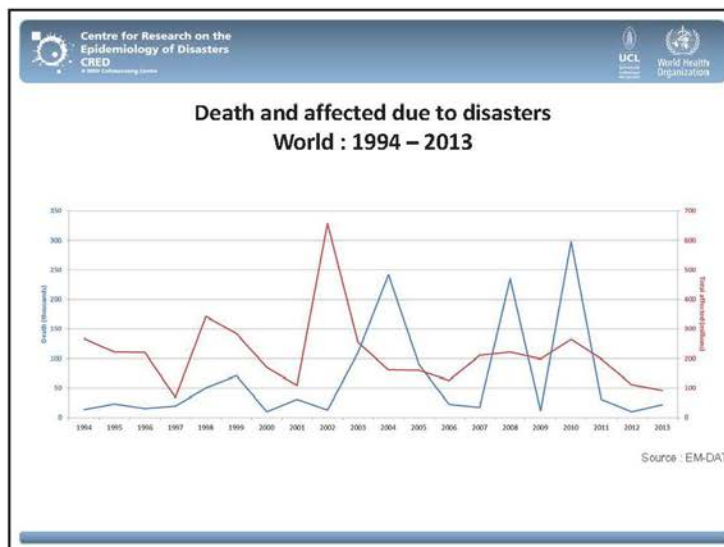
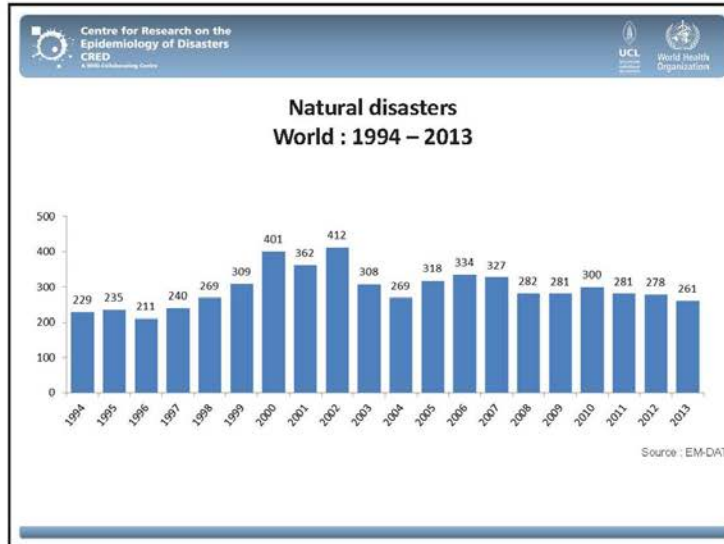
Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters – CRED  
Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels, Belgium  
[www.cred.be](http://www.cred.be)

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters  
CRED  
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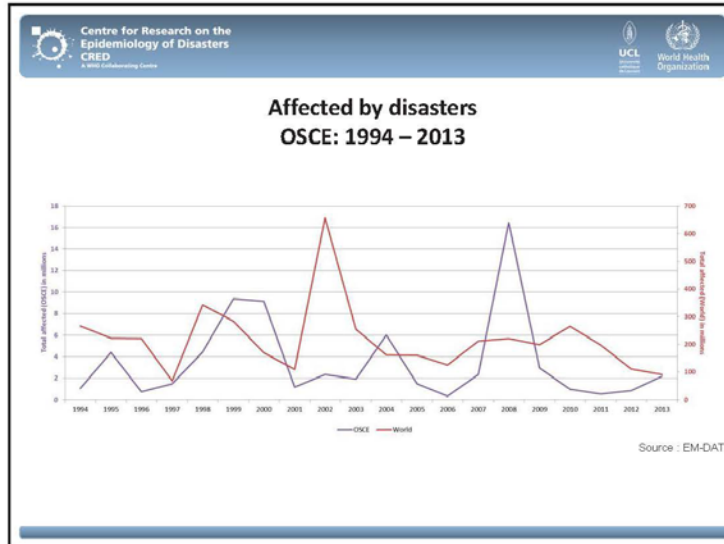
UCL  
World Health Organization

## OVERVIEW

<b>EM-DAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– 1900 – 2014</li><li>– 184 countries</li><li>– All natural and technological disasters</li><li>– Systematic methods and definition</li></ul>	<b>Moving forward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mapping the footprint</li><li>- Using standardise indicators and not absolute numbers</li><li>- Evidence on cross border events</li><li>- Community based risk profiles</li></ul>
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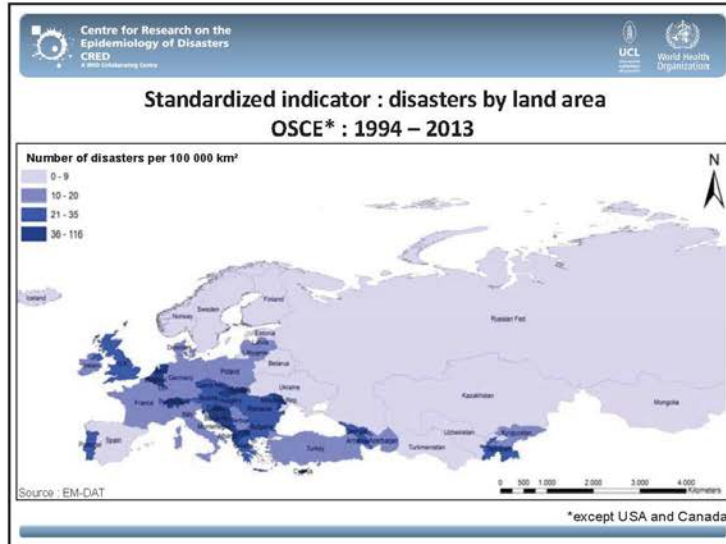
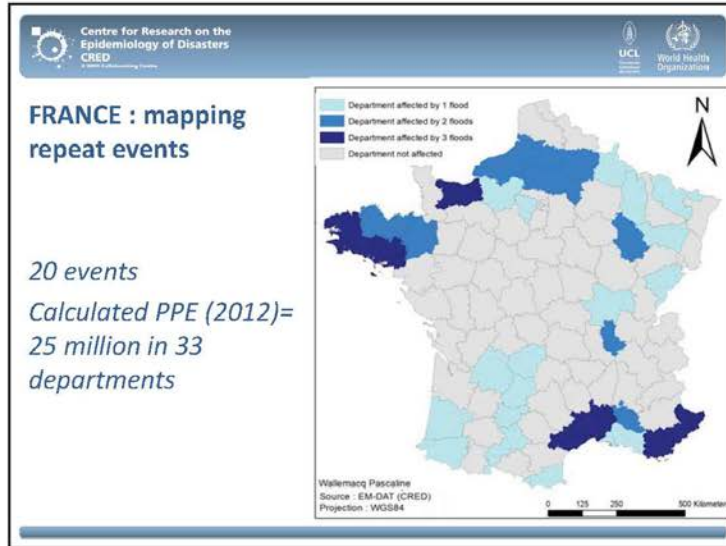
UCL  
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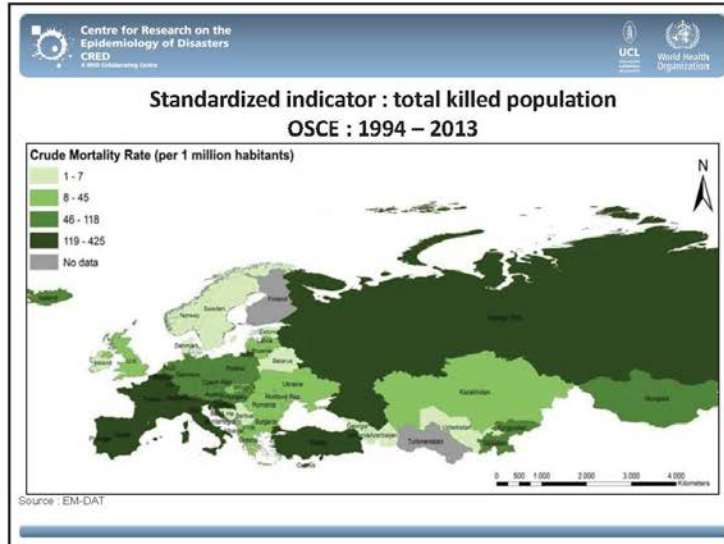
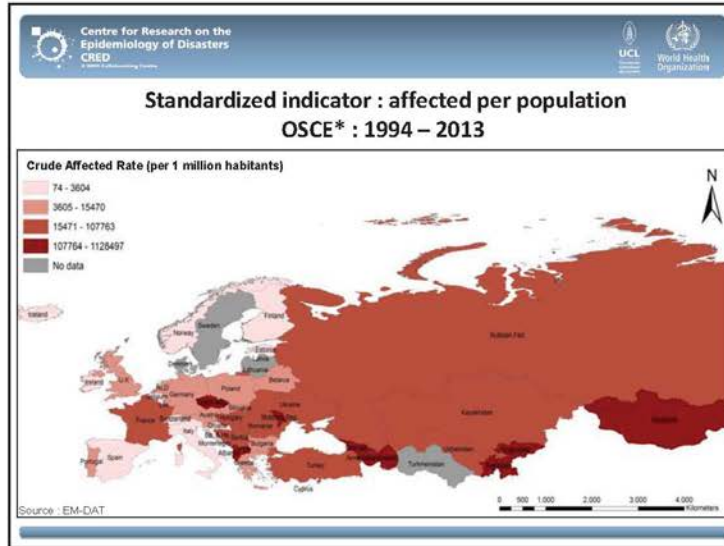
### Georeferencing disaster impact for footprints

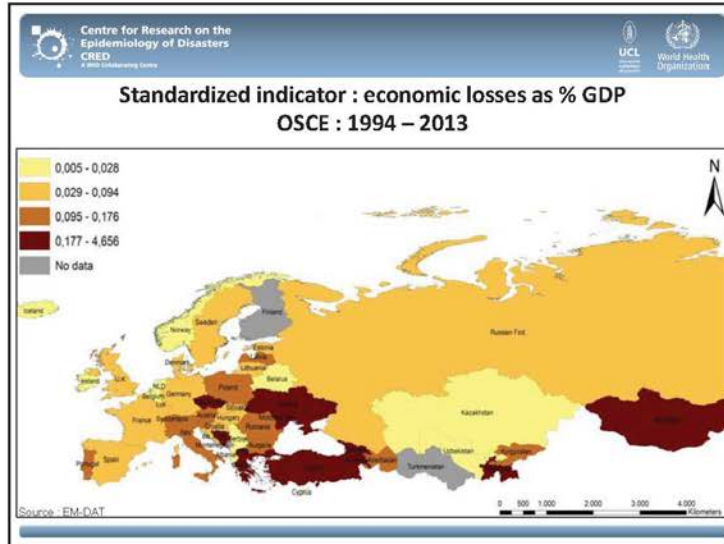
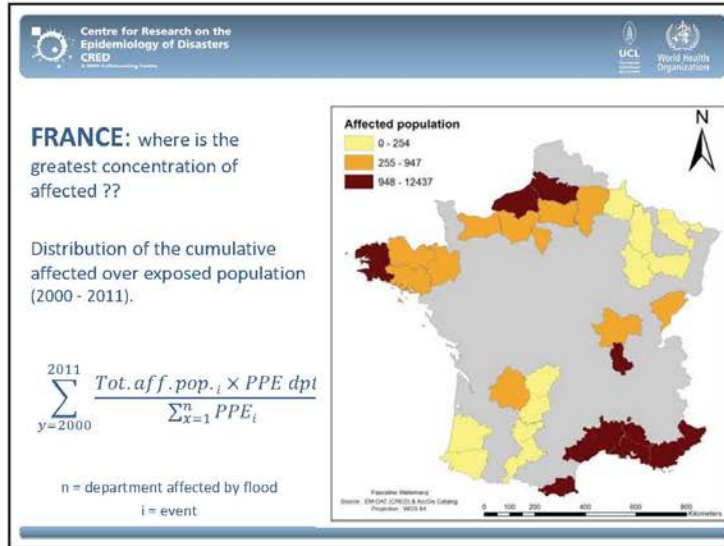
Data added to EM-DAT (Excel):

- admin code
- centroid coordinates
- precision of the georeferencing and details of the location

year	seq	country_name	location	Adm0_code	Adm1_code	Adm2_code	Adm3_code	Data_source_acm	Lat_centroide_1astacdm	Long_centroide_1astacdm	Precision	Details
2000	656	Japan	Tottori, Simane, Okayama, Saihaku (Saihakuyoo-Tottori district), Mizokuchi (Saihakuyoo-Tottori)	126	1691 1686 1680		-	GAUL2013	35,362162  35,078579  34,904057	133,849441  132,564292  133,814475	0	1
2000	743	Tajikistan	Khasanov village (Farkhor region, Khatlon province)	239	2848	37595	-	GAUL2013	37,409766	69,257375	1	1
2000	749	Papua New Guinea	East New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville (Northern Solomons)	192	2292 2302 2304		-	GAUL2013	-5,144009  -3,478884  -6,152706	151,573431  151,927852  155,256827	1	1
2000	761	Indonesia	Pandelang, Lebak, Serang	116	73610	18020  18022  18024	-	GAUL2013	-6,642323  -6,587912  -6,141471	106,21343  105,742202  106,146727	1	0







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## CONCLUSION

<b>Solidarity</b>	Co-operating generally pays dividends
<b>Incidents with cross border impact</b>	Toxic or other forms of pollution; common watersheds planning; migration
<b>Rationalising resources</b>	Identify disaster types that cause most damage
<b>Economic impact</b>	most relevant in OSCE region

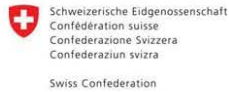
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## Thank you ...

**Debarati Guha-Sapir**  
 E-mail: [debby.sapir@uclouvain.be](mailto:debby.sapir@uclouvain.be)  
[pascaline.wallemacq@cred.be](mailto:pascaline.wallemacq@cred.be)  
[www.emdat.be](http://www.emdat.be)

**Presentation by Mr. Josef Hess, Vice-Director of Federal Office for the Environment,  
Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions**



Federal Department of the Environment,  
Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC  
Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

EEF.DEL/11/14  
29 January 2014

ENGLISH only

22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum  
“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”  
FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING  
Vienna, 27-28 January 2014  
Opening Session

# **Integrated Risk Management to prevent Natural Disasters**

27.1.2014

Josef Hess, Dr. sc. ETH, Vice Director  
Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland



## **Contents**

- Understanding natural disasters
- Approaches to reduce risks
- Principles of integrated risk management
- Situation in Switzerland
- Building capacities
- Conclusion



## Understanding natural disasters

- Disaster:
  - serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread losses
  - exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources
- Result of combination of:
  - exposure to a hazard;
  - conditions of vulnerability that are present;
  - insufficient capacity or measures to cope with the potential negative consequences



## Understanding natural disasters

- Usually risk is expressed by the notation:

risk =  x 

process, frequency, magnitude, location      exposure, value, susceptibility

→ The focus on the notion of risk constitutes a shift from hazard-orientated actions to more risk-based approaches



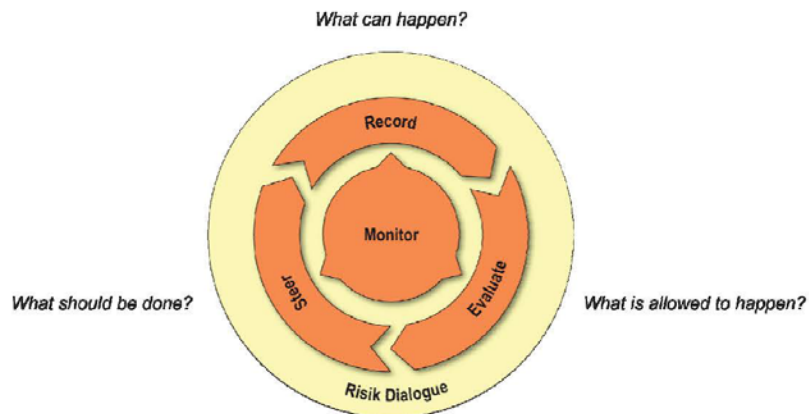
## Understanding natural disasters

- Reducing disaster risks means strengthening resilience by:
  - knowing the risks
  - avoiding exposure
  - reducing vulnerability
  - increasing capacity to manage emergencies
  - addressing recovery capacity to overcome disturbance
  - building adaptive capacity for long-term changes

→ Applying an integrated risk management.



## Approaches to reduce risks

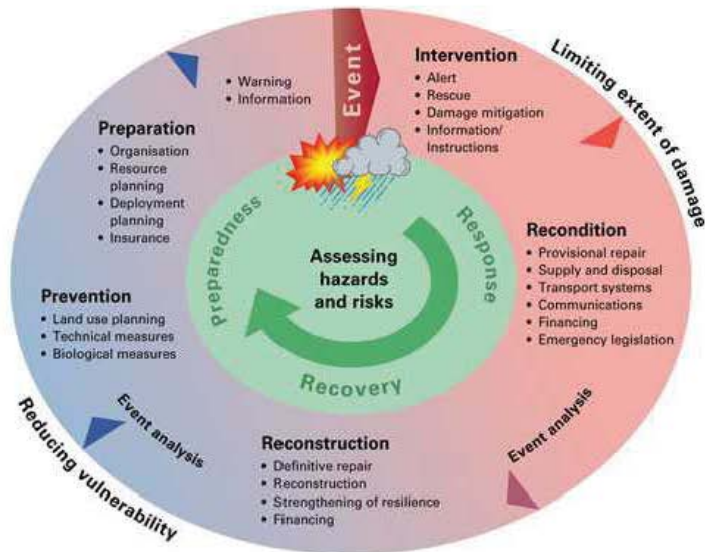


risk management: continuous assessment of risk situation as well as planning and realising protection measures





## Approaches to reduce risks



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## Approaches to reduce risks

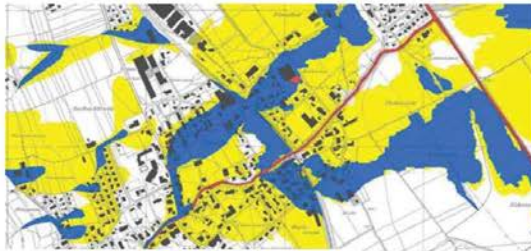
Hazard assessment (hazard and intensity maps) Risk assessment (loss potential, risk, protection objectives and deficits)
Prevention: planning of protection measures (land use planning, biological and technical measures)
Preparedness (organisational measures, monitoring and warning, information dissemination)
Response: Evacuation, short-term damage mitigation
Reconstruction, contingency planning, insurance
Learning from past events (event analysis)

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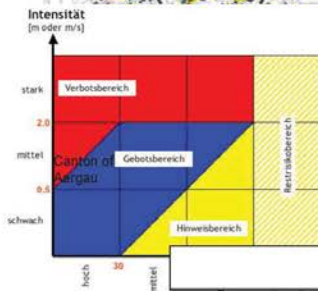
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## Hazard assessment



- Detailed hazard assessment
- Scale 1:5,000 - 1:2,000
- 4 hazard categories
- Basis for land use planning

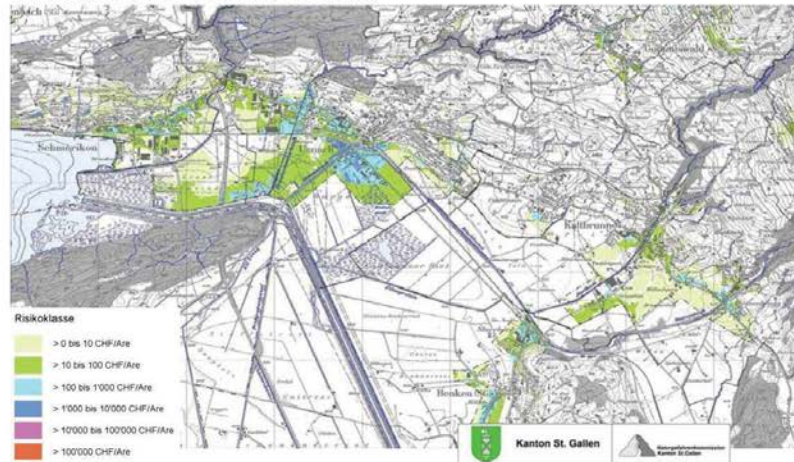


Hazard maps



## Risk assessment

Risk categories (in CHF per 100 square metres)

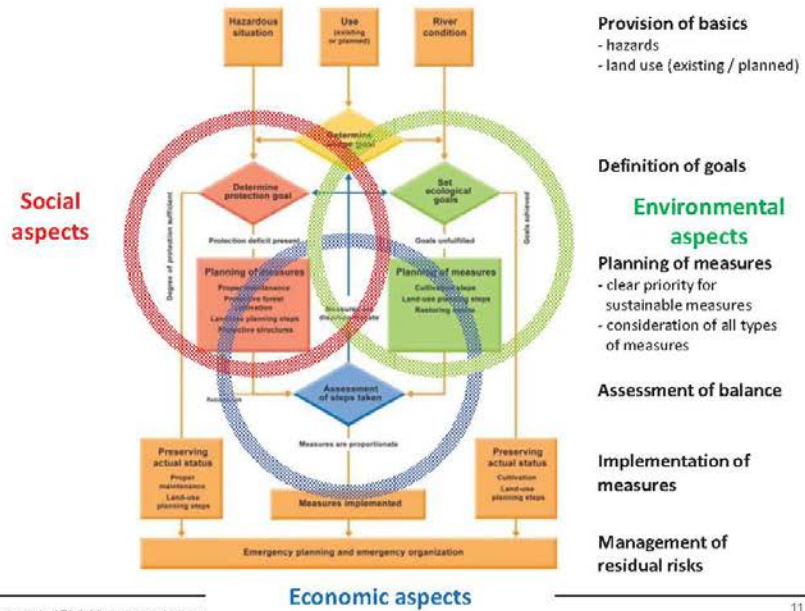


Risk maps

Linth 2000 project



# Prevention: Holistic planning



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# Preparedness







## Response

### Short-term damage mitigation



### Evacuation



## Recovery and reconstruction

- Get back to normal as soon as possible
- Better construction of buildings
- Reserve space for nature





## Learning from past events

### Event analysis

Learning lessons from previous events, corresponding adjustment of strategies.

### Monitoring and evaluation

of the current hazard and risk situation. Corresponding adaptation of protection measures.

### Risk dialogue

Active participation of municipalities in planning of protection measures.

### Adapt objectives to new situations

Protection, utilisation, ecological objectives



## Principles of integrated risk management

An integrated risk management:

- considers all natural hazards
- respects spatial and process-related conditions
- involves all actors and affected people
- considers all possible means for action
- accounts for future trends
- bases on principles of a sustainable development



## Situation in Switzerland

→ Goal: Guarantee equal safety for everyone in Switzerland



Jura  
→ Main problems:  
rockfalls, landslides



Central plateau  
→ Main problems:  
floods, storms,  
some landslides



Mountain regions  
→ Main problems:  
avalanches, rockfalls, debris  
flows, landslides

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Integrated Risk Management in Switzerland



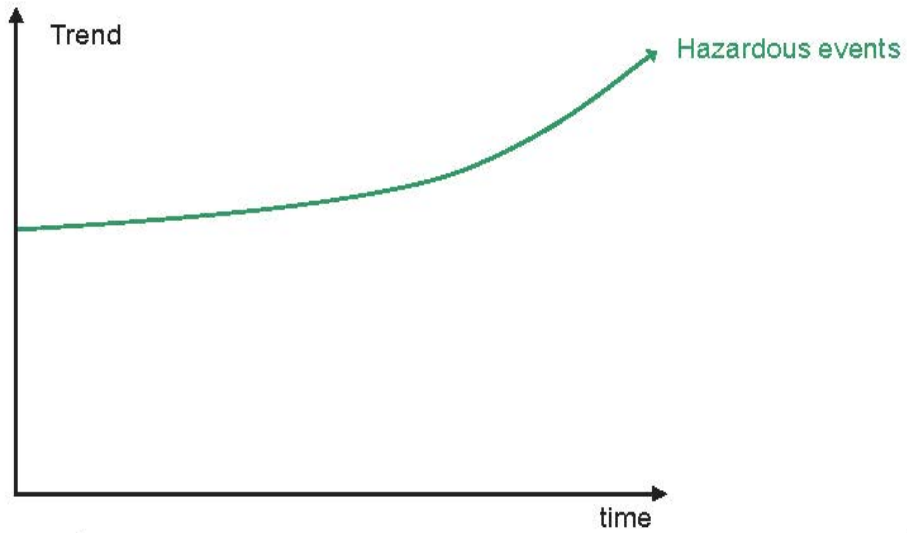
## Situation in Switzerland

- Increase of damage potential (settlements, industry infrastructure etc.) and vulnerability
- Frequent natural events in the past years with major damage (floods 1999, 2005, 2007, avalanches 1999)
- Major natural disasters in the last 150 years led to a review and new formulation of the protection policy
  - 1868 floods → Law on the Forests resp. Flood Control
  - 1951 avalanches → First hazard maps
  - 1987 floods → Paradigm shift, integrated risk management

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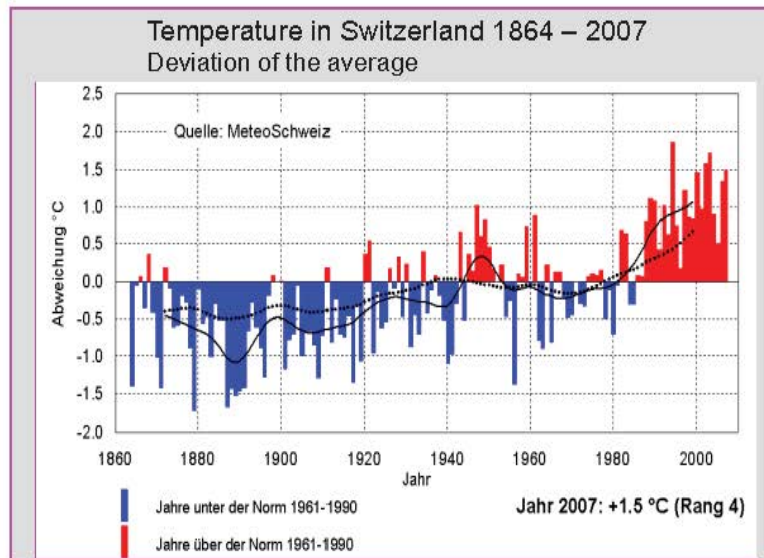
## Management of natural risks



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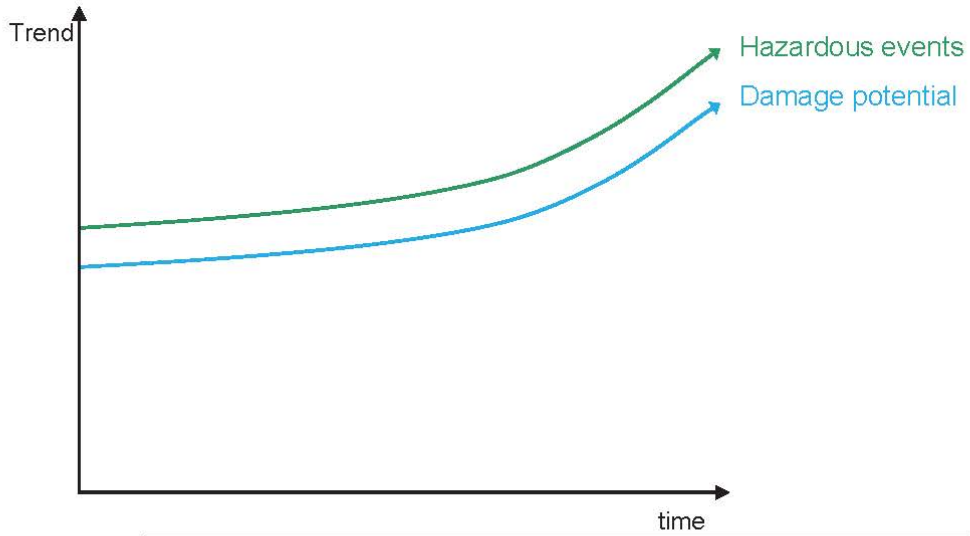
## Management of natural risks



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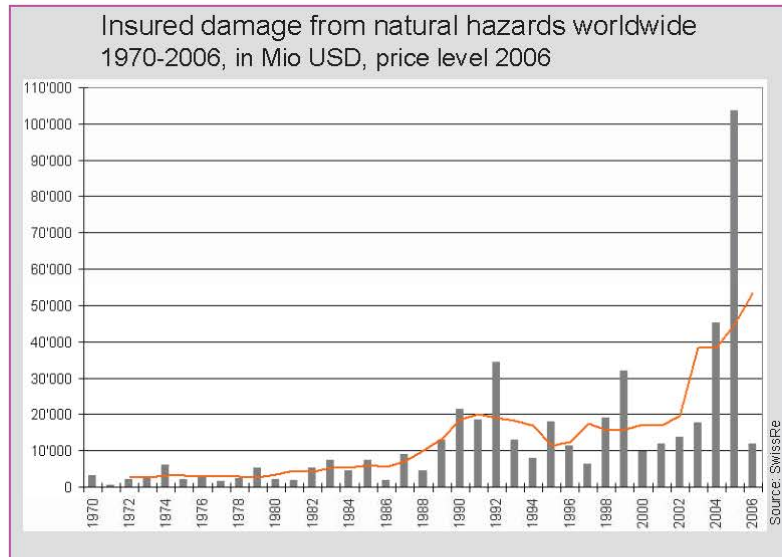
## Management of natural risks



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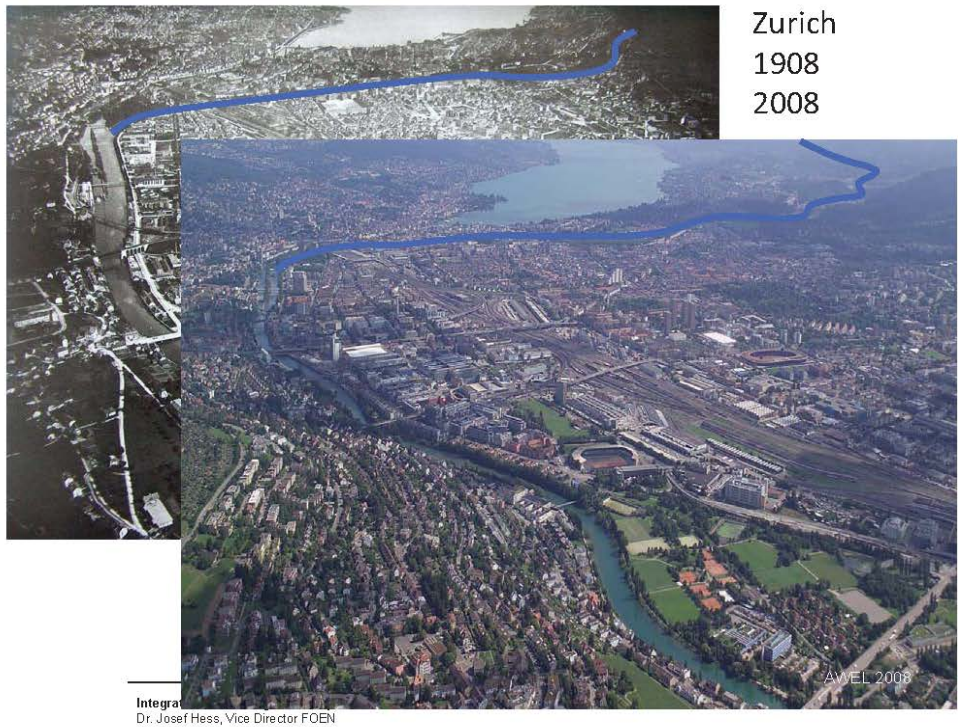
## Management of natural risks



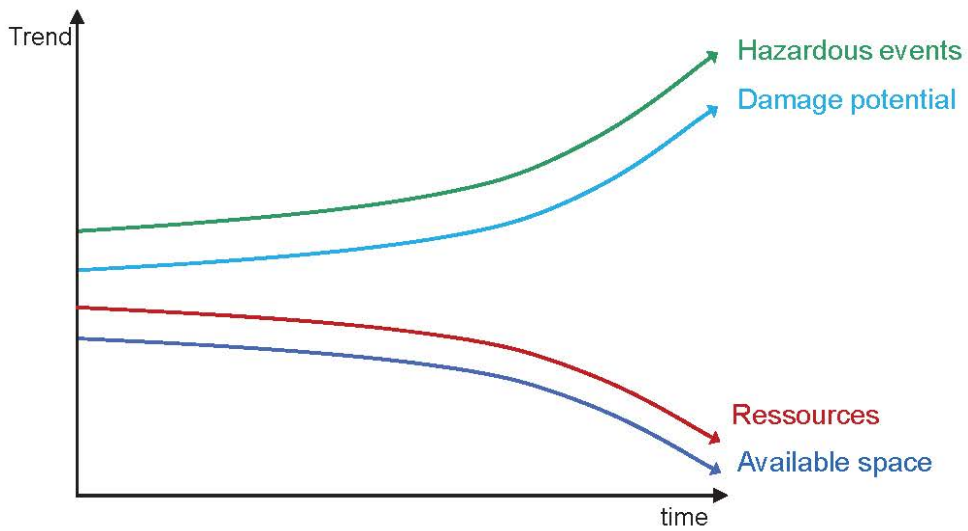
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## Management of natural risks



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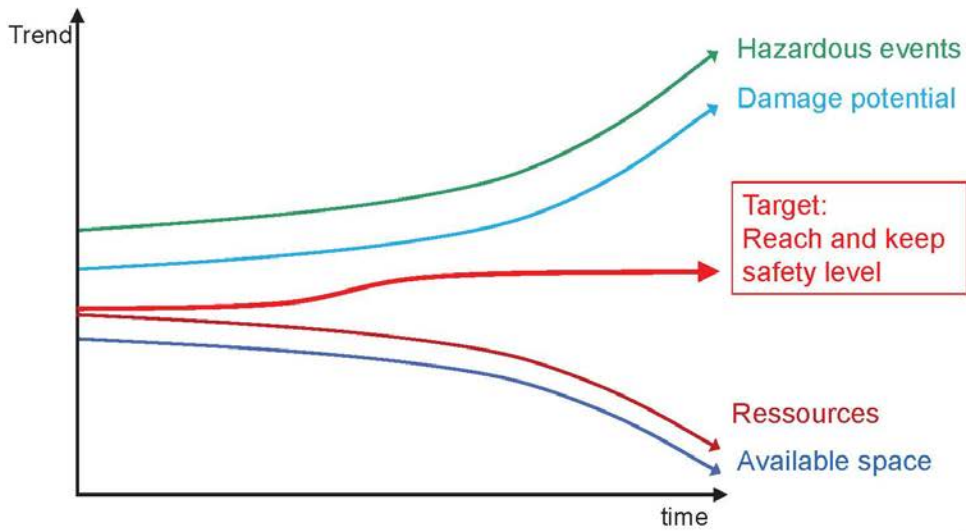
## Management of natural risks



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## Management of natural risks



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## Task sharing in natural risk management

- Federal authorities: Legislation; policy; guidelines; financial support; support of research, education; warning and alerting
- Cantons (26): enforcement of laws; cantonal structure planning; hazard mapping; cantonal emergency management
- Municipalities (2408): communal land use planning; building permissions, local emergency management
- Insurance: mandatory insurance (all buildings), covering the remaining risk
- Property owner: local protection; precautionary measures



## Building capacities

- Study courses at technical colleges and universities on natural hazard understanding and assessment as well as on engineering
- Education and training of emergency management units
- Formation of local hazard advisors
- Advanced training and experience exchange among practitioners
- Establishment of monitoring equipments and forecast models
- Cooperation between authorities, stakeholders etc.
- Optimisation of Early Warning and Alerting and improvement of interdepartmental cooperation through the "Steering Committee Intervention against Natural Hazards"



## Conclusion

- We have to live with natural hazards, however we can reduce their adverse effects.
- New risks should be avoided by adaptation of land use and reduction of the damage potential.
- Necessary funding and resources for prevention at all levels should be provided.
- Past disasters offer important lessons to develop adapted strategies.
- All involved players have to be sensitised and trained.
- Close co-operation between the involved actors is a key factor.



**Thank you very much for  
your attention**

## **ANNEX IV: CLOSING REMARKS**

*Check against delivery*

### **22<sup>st</sup> ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”**

#### **FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014**

**Closing Statement of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitguden**

Dear Ambassadors,  
Dear Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum on “Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting co-operation and security in the OSCE area”, please allow me to express my gratitude for the constructive discussions, the comprehensive presentations, the competent moderations as well as the ideas put forward over the last two days.

The theme of this year’s Forum proves to be of major importance for all 57 participating States of the Organization, by placing a particular focus on risks related to natural disasters and on how we, as a part of the international community, could contribute to finding solutions for reducing these risks.

We in the OSCE will spare no efforts to enhance the results achieved at this First Preparatory Meeting, also by complementing the efforts and activities of government agencies, UN organisations, the business sector and non-governmental organisations in this area of debate. We have seen that disaster prevention is not just a technical matter, but that it is closely linked with environmental good governance and sustainable management of natural resources. This represents also one of our core activities in the Second Dimension.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The two excellent keynote speeches by Ms. Guha-Sapir and Mr. Hess as well as the presentations in the first session showed clearly the urgency of addressing this topic and the devastating impact on human, social and economic life which disasters can have if we fail to invest in prevention, preparedness and management.



We have learned about global statistics and trends, but we have also got familiar with the concrete impacts of past disasters in the OSCE sub-regions, like the earthquakes in Turkey and Central Asia, or the recent floodings that affected various OSCE participating States. In this respect, the presentation on the flooding in Georgia which caused leakage of arsenic waste, showed the particular management challenge when natural disasters cause secondary technological accidents.

Other practical case studies showed us successful approaches of co-ordination and co-operation among different actors and levels in disaster management – for example the co-operation of public entities with insurance companies, the cross-border co-operation within the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe or the manifold bilateral co-operation of Slovenia with its neighbouring countries.

Furthermore, over the last two days we have addressed the topic of disasters from various perspectives, including the role of human interactions with environment, such as: unsustainable development practices, inadequate land management, poor spatial planning or infrastructure failures. And once again the role of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation was stressed.

Aware of the fact that a successful approach towards an integrated disaster risk management requires a multi-stakeholder approach, we have dedicated one session of this meeting to the role of civil society. It showed that co-operation with local communities, civil society and the business sector provides concrete added value in strengthening resilience. Also the work of the Aarhus Centres has been and continues to be of high value in this respect. We will continue to further expand the capacities of Aarhus Centres on disaster risk reduction in order to further enable them to strengthen in particular the awareness and capacities of communities.

There were suggestions and recommendations from the experts and the participants about the possible areas where the OSCE could provide its support and where it could play an important role in the field of reduction of disaster risks.

It is our responsibility to closely consider these recommendations and to look at possible follow-up activities. At the same time, we will continue to promote ratification and implementation of the UNECE multilateral environmental agreements to support efforts in the field of disaster risk reduction.

Moreover, my Office, with the support of the participating States, will continue to promote training and capacity development on relevant topics for national, regional and local administrations, as well as for the business community and civil society. Our Organization has engaged itself over the last decade, together with our ENVSEC partners, in disaster risks reduction - including on fire management related activities and we will further advance our engagement in this framework in close partnership with Global Fire Monitoring Centre and other specialized partners.

At the political level, as laid down in several Ministerial Council decisions, we will continue our efforts to promote dialogue and co-operation both among the participating States, as well as among non-governmental organizations, civil society, and the private sector on issues related to environment and security including disaster risk reduction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the last two days, we have received answers to many of our questions. However, there is still room for debate. The Second Preparatory Meeting, which will take place in Montreux on 20- 21 May, will provide opportunity for this and will bring us closer to achieving the main objective of this year's Forum process: to renew, deepen and better define the OSCE's political commitments and engagement in addressing preparedness, emergency response and recovery related to environmental challenges.

Thanks to the rapporteurs, a Consolidated Summary including the main key suggestions and recommendations made by participants during the deliberations will be compiled by my Office and made available to all of you within the next weeks.

Before passing the floor to Ambassador Greminger for the closure of this session, I would like to thank the Swiss Chairmanship, the Moderators, Speakers and Rapporteurs, the interpreters, the conference service staff, as well as the colleagues from my Office for their joint contribution to the success of this event.

I also want to thank all of you, dear participants, for your active contribution, and to wish you a safe trip back home.

**22<sup>st</sup> ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

**“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”**

**FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING**

**Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014**

**Closing Statement of the OSCE Permanent Council Chairperson,  
Ambassador Thomas Greminger**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are now concluding the First Preparatory Meeting of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. I would like to express our satisfaction for the dynamic and constructive discussions we have had. In a couple of sessions during the past two days, we have indeed seen the kind of interaction between speakers and the audience that we are aiming at. I truly hope that together we can continue on this path.

I was equally encouraged to note the willingness, expressed by many of you during the debates, to deepen our co-operation to address together - and in a spirit of solidarity - environmental challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Integrated Disaster Risk Management is an investment”. That is a sentence that came up during one of yesterday’s sessions and that I would like to elaborate on for these concluding remarks.

Managing disaster risks is not only about managing disasters, but first and foremost about managing risks. We have heard that risk prevention and risk reduction are investments that ultimately limit the potential human, social and economic costs of disasters.

The trans-boundary and global characteristics of risks require cooperative efforts in their assessment and management. In our view, the OSCE, as the largest regional security organization, is very well placed to address these risks and enhance co-operation between participating States. Cross-border cooperation in disaster risk management might moreover serve as a confidence-building measure to be further explored in the context of the OSCE.

Another point that was raised several times and that is fundamental when it comes to disaster risk management is the collaboration between all involved actors, starting with children. Effective risks management requires action from a variety of stakeholders of local, sub-national, national, regional, and global levels as well as those of a public and private nature. For instance, activities on the level of local communities and of small-scale disasters are



often neglected. Let me also recall the previous session that clearly showed that civil society has a crucial role to play. In this context we should take duly into account that women are essential actors.

Let me also come back to the international framework of disaster risk management. Within the UN family, a couple of important global review processes related to this topic are ongoing as it was pointed out several times. The work of OSCE participating States, also being part of the UN family, should not be disconnected from ongoing global UN processes. The debates we are having under the umbrella of the 22nd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum should feed into the reflections leading to the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and the post-2015 development agenda and goals (MDGs) as it has been suggested by several speakers.

In the current frameworks and national platforms, the emphasis has so far been put on disaster preparedness and response. We have heard repeatedly, that we have to go beyond this stage and look more systematically into vulnerabilities, underlying causes of disasters, and disaster prevention.

Within the OSCE we see the same pattern. Current OSCE commitments are dealing with disaster preparedness and response, but not with disaster prevention. The OSCE could endeavor to find a role in the context of disaster prevention, risk mitigation and in making our societies more resilient. For instance, the OSCE could support, e.g. through the network of Arhus centers, activities that increase awareness on disaster risks.

During this two-day meeting we have received some answers to some of the key questions that have been raised; for some questions we have received only partial answers and there are many questions which require further attention and that we will address during the upcoming meetings in Montreux and Prague.

Let me therefore turn now to the second preparatory meeting, taking place in Montreux, Switzerland. In one of the sessions in Montreux the Swiss Chairmanship would like to further deepen the understanding on how to deal with the underlying causes of disasters, be it Unplanned Urbanization or Environmental Degradation. These have been mentioned several times during the past two days and the issue of “un-action” was raised by the representative of UNISDR. Another session could address the topic of Disaster-Induced Cross-Border Displacements and the potential implications of natural disasters on conflicts. Finally, we would also like to focus on Cooperation with International Organisations and concrete Capacity Building in the OSCE region. We understand from several interventions that capacity building is an important component where participating States can profit from each other’s know-how and where we could exchange good practices and lessons learned. That could be the programme of the first day.

On the second day of the Preparatory Meeting in Montreux we will go on a field trip. As you can see from the pictures, it will be a very different experience than sitting in a conference room. So don’t forget to pack your boots when coming to Switzerland in May!

We will break out of the conference premises and look into applied disaster risk management in the field. In two groups we will go on a field trip to the canton of Valais in order to have a deeper look into possible ways of managing disaster risks in a mountainous region. On the one hand we will look into the transnational Italian-Swiss cooperation in applied risk

management along the transnational route of the Grand-Saint-Bernard. On the other hand we will look into the risk management of natural hazard triggered disasters that could have a spillover effect causing industrial accidents.

The Concluding Meeting in September in Prague 2014 will be dedicated to conclusions on what the OSCE can contribute in managing risks, increasing the security of nations and communities, and in which concrete areas enhanced cooperation of participating States is needed. The Swiss Chairmanship will facilitate this process and count on your support to reach consensus on practical and balanced recommendations for the OSCE.

Let us try to increase the political and economic imperative for managing disaster risks, changing the perception of investment in risk management as an additional cost to one of an opportunity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I cannot conclude without thanking the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for the excellent collaboration with our Chairmanship in the preparation of this event. As in past years, the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities will compile a Consolidated Summary of this meeting which will serve as a background for further discussions. Thank you for that.

Last but not least, let me thank all those of you who contributed to this successful 1st Preparatory Meeting: the Moderators, Speakers, Rapporteurs, representatives of International Organizations and of NGOs, the conference service staff and interpreters as well as my colleagues involved in the preparation of this event at the Swiss mission and in Bern.

My thanks go also to you, dear participants, for your active participation, in particular those of you coming from the capitals. I wish you a safe trip back home and see you all in Montreux!

## ANNEX V: ANNOTATED AGENDA



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
The Secretariat

Vienna, 23 January 2014

### 22<sup>nd</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

“Responding to environmental challenges with a view to promoting cooperation and security in the OSCE area”

#### FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING

Vienna, 27 - 28 January 2014  
OSCE Congress Centre, Hofburg, Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna

## DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

**Monday, 27 January 2014**

09.30 – 11.00      **Opening Session** (*open to Press*)

#### **Welcoming remarks**

- **Ambassador Thomas Greminger**, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship
- **Ambassador Lamberto Zannier**, OSCE Secretary General
- **Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

#### **Keynote speeches**

- **Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir**, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) and Professor at the University of Louvain, School of Public Health, Belgium
- **Mr. Josef Hess**, Vice-Director of Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Head of Forest and Hazard Prevention Divisions, Switzerland

### **Statements by Delegations / Discussion**

11.00 – 11.30            Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00            **Session I: Impact of Natural Disasters: Losses and Damages**

#### **Selected topics:**

- Human and social losses from natural and cascading disasters
- Economic losses, gap between economic and insured losses
- Effects of Disaster Risk Management on economic damage: Costs of poorly managed disasters vs. savings by prevention and preparedness

**Moderator:** **Mr. Jan Kellett**, Senior Research Advisor, Climate and Environment Programme, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

**Rapporteur:** **Mr. Srdjan Cetkovic**, Senior Programme Assistant, OSCE Mission to Montenegro

#### **Speakers:**

- **Mr. Michael Thurman**, Practice Coordinator/Portfolio Manager a.i., Crisis Prevention and Recovery, ECIS, United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre for Europe and CIS
- **Mr. Joaquin Toro**, Regional Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management– Europe and Central Asia Region, World Bank
- **Mr. Thomas de Lannoy**, Policy Officer, DG Humanitarian Aid and civil protection, European Commission
- **Mr. Andreas Prystav**, Senior Client Manager Global Partnerships, Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd., Switzerland

### **Discussion**

13.00 – 14.30            **Buffet lunch hosted by the 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship**

14.30 – 16.00            **Session II: Behind Natural Disasters - The human-environment interaction: Case studies 1**

#### **Selected topics:**

- Concrete examples of past disasters in the OSCE region
- Disasters as symptoms of human interaction with the physical environment
- Role of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation

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**Moderator: Mr. Jan Dusik**, Acting Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme

**Rapporteur: Ms. Heike Jantsch**, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Germany to the OSCE

**Speakers:**

- **Prof. Dr. Ben Wisner**, Aon-Benfield University Hazard Research Center, University College London (UCL)
- **Mr. Leonid Dedul**, Head of the Department of the State system of prevention and liquidation of emergencies and civil protection, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Belarus
- **Ms. Paola Albrito**, Head of Europe Office, United Nations Office for Disasters Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
- **Ms. Andrea James**, Regional Chief of Emergency, UNICEF CEECIS Regional Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

**Discussion**

16.00 – 16.30          Coffee Break

16.30 – 18.00          **Session III: Panel Debate – Improving environmental security:  
How can we reduce natural disaster risks?**

**Selected topics:**

- Lessons learned from the past
- Role of Good Governance
- Managing vulnerabilities, sustainable management of natural resources

**Moderator: Ms. Emily Hough**, Editor, Crisis Response Journal, United Kingdom

**Rapporteur: Mr. Leonid Kalashnyk**, Environmental Programme Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Speakers:**

- **Mr. Taalaybek Temiraliev**, State Secretary, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Republic of Kyrgyzstan
- **Ms. Radhika Murti**, Programme Coordinator, Ecosystem Management Programme, Disaster Risk Reduction, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- **Prof. Johann Goldammer**, Director, Global Fire Monitoring Centre, University of Freiburg, Germany
- **Mr. Marco Keiner**, Director Environment Division, UNECE
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- **Discussion**

18.15            **Cocktail hosted by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

## **Tuesday, 28 January 2014**

09.30 – 11.00            **Session IV: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 2**

– **Selected topics:**

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- Cases of national and transboundary disasters
- Co-ordination between States and between military and civilian actors
- Promoting partnerships at local, regional and international level

**Moderator: Ms. Wendy Cue**, Chief, Environmental Emergencies Section, Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

**Rapporteur: Ms. Alja Brinovec Jureša**, Assistant Adviser, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to OSCE

**Speakers:**

- **Mr. Guenter Bretschneider**, Head, Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Co-ordination Centre (EADRCC), NATO
- **Ms. Milena Dobnik Jeraj**, Head of International Relations and EU Affairs Department, Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Republic of Slovenia
- **Ms. Ivana Ljubojević**, Head, Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe

**Discussion**

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00 **Session IV cont.: Co-operation in Natural Disaster Management and Prevention: Case studies 3**

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– **Selected topics:**

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- Cases of small-scale and cascading (NaTech) disasters. Impact on non-nuclear critical infrastructure
- Co-ordination between national and local response units
- Co-ordination between governmental and civil society actors

**Moderator: Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert**, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) and Chair of the Management Board of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative

**Rapporteur: Ms. Dana Bogdan**, Project Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Speakers:**

- **Ms. Irma Gurguliani**, Head of the Natural and Technological Hazards Management Service, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia
- **Mr. Gökhan Özkan**, Expert, Disaster and Emergency Management Department, Turkey
- **Mr. Munkhuu Medraa**, Lieutenant Colonel, Head of the Emergency Management and Coordination Division, National Emergency Management Agency, Mongolia

**Discussion**

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch Break

14.30 – 16.00 **Session V: Panel Debate – Role of civil society in disaster-risk management**

– **Selected topics:**

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- Community-based disaster risk management
- Role of civil society, including business community, and social networks in crisis mapping
- Role of Aarhus Centres in increasing awareness on multi-hazard risks in the OSCE region

**Moderator: Mr. Marcus C. Oxley**, Executive Director of Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), United Kingdom

**Rapporteur: Ms. Jenniver Sehring**, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Speakers:**

- **Dr. Vladimir Sakharov**, Director, Environmental Emergency Preparedness, Green Cross International
- **Ms. Lianna Asoyan**, Project Manager, Gavar Aarhus Centre, Armenia
- **Ms. Natasa Manojlovic**, Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH), Germany
- **Mr. Andre Krummacher**, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), South/South-East Asia Regional Director, France

**Discussion**

16.00 – 16.30            Coffee/Tea break

16.30 – 18.00            **Concluding Session: The OSCE's Role in Follow-up to the Forum**

– **Concluding debate**

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- Wrap-up of the discussions, lessons learned and identifying priority areas for future discussion and increased co-operation.
- Outlook to the 2nd Preparatory Meeting in Switzerland

**Moderator: Ms. Desiree Schweitzer**, Deputy Co-ordinator/Head, Environmental Activities, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Rapporteur: Mr. Matthias Matuschek**, Assistant, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

**Speakers:**

- **Ambassador Andrey Kelin**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the OSCE
- **Ambassador Daniel Baer**, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OSCE
- **Ambassador Thierry Béchet**, Permanent Representative of the European Union to the OSCE

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**Closing Statements**



- **Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
- **Ambassador Thomas Greninger**, Chairperson of the Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the OSCE, 2014 OSCE Swiss Chairmanship