

**1999/63. International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 1995/47 B of 27 July 1995 and General Assembly resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989 and 49/22 A of 2 December 1994 on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, as well as Assembly resolutions 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 on early warning capacities of the United Nations system with regard to natural

disasters, 52/12 A of 12 November 1997 and 52/12 B of 19 December 1997 entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform" and 53/185 of 15 December 1998 on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon,

*Recalling also* the programme forum on the Decade, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, and the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction adopted by the forum, together with the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",

*Having considered* the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction<sup>181</sup> and on the recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade,<sup>182</sup>

*Expressing concern* that the world is increasingly being threatened by large-scale natural disasters which will have long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries,

*Reiterating* that the promotion of economic growth and sustainable development cannot be achieved without adequate measures to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters and that there are close linkages between losses owing to natural disasters and environmental degradation, as emphasized in Agenda 21<sup>125</sup> and in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session,<sup>165</sup>

*Emphasizing* the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction, and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to accomplish jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

*Recognizing* the necessity for the international community to demonstrate the strong political determination required to use existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, bearing in mind the particular needs of developing countries,

*Reiterating* in that regard that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries, including the least developed countries, and landlocked and small island developing States, as well as for countries with economies in transition, thus hampering their sustainable development processes,

*Stressing* the importance of developing and strengthening regional approaches dedicated to disaster reduction in order to take into account regional and local specificity and needs,

*Stressing also* that the United Nations has a special role as well as considerable experience in the disaster prevention and reduction fields, in view of its universal character, its

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<sup>181</sup> A/54/132-E/1999/80 and Add. I.

<sup>182</sup> A/54/136-E/1999/89.

broad policy agenda and its vital role as a forum for global dialogue,

*Recalling* the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Yokohama, Japan, from 23 to 27 May 1994, and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,<sup>183</sup>

*Recognizing* the importance of early warning as an integrated process at all levels, including hazard monitoring and impact prediction, technology development and transfer, capacity-building for the detection of hazards, as well as the issuance and communication of early warnings, education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising, and interface between the public and private sectors in order to ensure adequate action to warnings,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction<sup>181</sup> and on the recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade;<sup>182</sup>

2. *Recognizes* the success achieved since 1990 in meeting the goals and objectives of the Decade, as expressed in General Assembly resolution 44/236 and in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action;<sup>183</sup>

3. *Also recognizes* the increased emphasis being given to natural disaster prevention and the need for taking comprehensive measures with regard to natural disaster reduction as an integral part of sustainable development strategies and an essential element of government policy;

4. *Reiterates* the importance of fully integrating natural disaster reduction into the sustainable development strategies of the United Nations and of other international organizations;

5. *Decides*, therefore, that the international cooperative framework for natural disaster reduction, as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>182</sup> should draw on the success of the functional and organizational arrangements that were put in place for the implementation of the Decade;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish, as of January 2000, an inter-agency task force, with representation from all relevant United Nations bodies and members of the scientific and technical community, including regional representation, to serve as the main forum within the United Nations for continued and concerted emphasis on natural disaster reduction, in particular for defining strategies for international cooperation at all levels in this field, while ensuring complementarity of action with other agencies;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in this respect, to maintain the existing inter-agency secretariat function for natural disaster reduction as a distinct focal point for the

coordination of the work of the inter-agency task force, to place the inter-agency task force and inter-agency secretariat under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and to finance it from extrabudgetary resources through a specific trust fund;

8. *Calls upon* all Governments to maintain and strengthen established national and multisectoral platforms for natural disaster reduction in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical means;

9. *Emphasizes*, in this respect, the need for the international community to support appropriate initiatives and mechanisms for strengthening regional, subregional, national and local capabilities for natural disaster prevention and reduction, making early warning a key element within these efforts;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*46th plenary meeting  
30 July 1999*

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<sup>183</sup> A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.