

Meeting Notes of the International Working Group

Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

14 January 2004, 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., State Department

Attendees

NOAA

Dori Akerman, dori@grs-solutions.com

Jim McGuire, james.mcguire@noaa.gov

Rick Ohlemacher, Richard.ohlemacher@noaa.gov

NSF

Larry Weber, lweber@nsf.gov (Co-Chair)

Dennis Wenger, dwenger@nsf.gov

OSTP

Gene Whitney, gwhitney@ostp.eop.gov (OSTP Liaison)

State Department

Larry Roeder, roederla@state.gov (Co-Chair)

Fernando Echavarria, echavarriafr@state.gov (Co-Chair)

Shira Yoffe, yoffesb@state.gov

Handouts

State Department Guidelines on U.S. Delegations

Meeting Notes

GDIN (March 26-29, 2004). Discussion of conference logistics and agenda. Larry Roeder will contact some SDR members directly to bolster support for GDIN2004.

UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe (January 18-22, 2005). Larry Roeder provided a brief on the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction to be held in Kobe, Japan from January 18 through January 22, 2004. The purpose of the conference is to foster ways to reduce the incidents and impacts of disasters. The meeting probably will conclude with a non-binding declaration. Mr. Roeder outlined the strategy for conference management and also described the requirement that the U.S. delegation be established consistent with State Department Circular 175.

U.S. agencies are asked to coordinate their positions through the U.S. ISDR Platform in order to avoid confusion. Similarly, voluntary funding for the conference also will be coordinated through the U.S. ISDR Platform. Any agency is welcome to donate money, but such funds should be identified as U.S. Government (USG) funds instead of being linked to a specific agency. Mr. Roeder reported that the State Department does contribute to ISDR, though not directly to the conference. State/International Organizations contributed \$200,000 in FY2003 funds to ISDR and intends to do so again in FY2004. Those funds are directed to ISDR, not the conference. Meanwhile, Japan suggested that the U.S. make a direct voluntary contribution to the conference. The Department of State asked Japan what the United States would obtain in return for such a contribution, were it to take place. Japan has not responded. The Department of State also invited Japan and ISDR to use the GDIN2004 Conference as a planning platform, which they have agreed to do in the area of disaster information.

Roeder reported that this UN conference is managed like most UN conferences. A Preparatory Committee made up of member nations of the UN makes final decisions on the agenda and rules of procedure. They will meet three times (twice in Geneva and once in Kobe) before the conference begins. A Bureau consisting of five nations selected on a

regional basis manages the true preparatory work and makes recommendations to the Preparatory Committee. They will meet in Geneva on an as-needed basis, sometimes on a daily basis. Both bodies operate on a consensus basis.

One role the SDR can assume is to galvanize the U.S. scientific community so that the U.S. ISDR Platform has influence in the conference planning process and the U.S. delegation to the conference can influence the conference outcomes. The U.S. ISDR Platform needs to quickly decide how it wishes to influence the conference and begin thinking as well about who might be on the delegation. Mr. Roeder indicated that he intended to invite delegates from the Yokohama Conference to discuss what worked and failed the last time. After that meeting, the U.S. ISDR Platform will need to look at potential conference products in the hard and social sciences. Although the conference is not supposed to develop a binding declaration, the nature of the conference predicts that any declaration coming out of the conference will be influential. As a result, Mr. Roeder handed out State Department guidelines on U.S. Delegations. Some of the issues to be discussed are what types of products should the U.S. promulgate? How can the United States advance more effective disaster reduction; new standards; science and technology to advance; early warnings; basic standards; international cooperation; the role of women in disasters?

As previously agreed, the SDR has a specific role in the area of science and technology and Mr. Roeder recommended the body take the lead in those areas. The State Department does have certain policy lead roles in some of those areas (e.g., climate) as it does on the political aspects of risk reduction. Larry Roeder will write a briefing paper on this.

[Note: Larry Roeder will propose a roster of national platform members from both the science and policy communities. In post-meeting action, Larry indicated he will enumerate this list the week of February 3rd. It will include three groups of people, (a) State Department Regional Bureau representatives and representatives of various functional Bureaus and the U.S. Agency for International Development; (b) some significant personalities from the private sector (though they do not clear on U.S. policy decisions); and (c) members of the SDR. This gathering is in keeping with the agreement between State and SDR on the composition of the Platform. IWG co-chairs will use the IWG agenda space in the February SDR meeting to discuss ISDR-related topics.]

U.S.-India Conference on Space Science Applications and Commerce (Bangalore, India, June 22-25, 2004). Fernando Echavarría will send out conference information and requests recommendations for a session co-chair.

Office of Foreign Assets Control: Larry Roeder will ask Rick Newcomb, Director of OFAC, if he is available to speak at the March SDR meeting. If available, Mr. Newcomb will make a presentation on export controls as they impact science and technology controls, especially exchanges with controlled countries. International Working Group members discussed the overall issue of how export controls or travel restrictions and restrictions on the use of U.S.-controlled funds might have an impact on scientific

response to international disasters. Larry Roeder, who used to run export control licensing in the Economic Bureau at State, will explore possibilities with Rick Newcomb and will communicate with SDR Secretariat to arrange time in the March or April SDR meeting agenda.

International Working Group Meeting Minutes. Larry Roeder will compose the International Working Group meeting minutes and will send them to SDR Secretariat Dori Akerman by January 27, 2004. Ms. Akerman will e-mail the International Working Group minutes and the ISDR UN resolution to SDR members by February 3, 2004.

Actions

Item	Lead	Action	Completion Date
1.	Larry Roeder	Larry Roeder will contact some SDR members directly to bolster support for GDIN2004.	February 5, 2004
2.	All	ISDR Platform: Identify SDR actions related to the U.S. ISDR Platform.	February 5, 2004
3.	Larry Roeder	ISDR Platform: Larry Roeder will write a briefing paper on the U.S. ISDR Platform.	TBD
43	Larry Roeder	ISDR Platform: Larry Roeder will propose a roster of national platform members from both the science and policy communities.	February 6, 2004
5.	International Working Group Co-Chairs	ISDR Platform: IWG co-chairs will use the IWG agenda space in the February SDR meeting to discuss the ISDR and the Kobe conference.	February 5, 2004
6.	Fernando Echavarria	U.S.-India Conference: Fernando Echavarria will send out conference information and requests recommendations for a session co-chair.	January 15, 2004
7.	Larry Roeder	Office of Foreign Assets Control: Larry Roeder, who used to run export control licensing in the Economic Bureau at State, will explore possibilities with Rick Newcomb and will communicate with SDR Secretariat to arrange time in the March or April SDR meeting agenda.	February 6, 2004
8.	Larry Roeder	Larry Roeder will compose the International Working Group meeting minutes and will send them to SDR Secretariat Dori Akerman.	January 27, 2004
9.	Dori Akerman	Ms. Akerman will e-mail the International Working Group minutes and the ISDR UN resolution to SDR members.	February 3, 2004

