

# U.S. NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

## **Executive Summary**

Following the International Decade on Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-99), United Nations (UN) Member States adopted the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and called for inter-disciplinary involvement to coordinate, guide and implement disaster risk reduction with development agents and in close coordination with disaster management institutions. Member States have repeatedly called for appropriate national disaster reduction mechanisms to be established and continually strengthened. In response, the United States formed the U.S. National Platform for Disaster Reduction.

## **Background**

The UN Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1999/63, “called on all Governments to maintain and strengthen established national and multi-sectoral platforms for natural disaster reduction in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical means.”

The “development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards” is a strategic goal of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. The Hyogo Framework further calls on all nations to “support the creation and strengthening of national integrated mechanisms, such as multi-sectoral national platforms” to ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority. It also calls upon all States to designate a national mechanism to coordinate and follow-up on the Hyogo Framework and to communicate information to the ISDR Secretariat (paragraph 30).

## **Structure of the National Platform**

The United States will coordinate and communicate with the ISDR secretariat through the National Science and Technology Council’s Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction. The Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction (SDR) was established to facilitate guidance from and coordination among the Government agencies involved in natural and technological disaster reduction. Specifically, the SDR provides a senior-level interagency forum to establish clear national goals for Federal science and technology investments for disaster reduction, and to prepare R&D strategies that are coordinated across Federal agencies. SDR also leverages expertise, informs policy-makers, promotes technology applications, coordinates activities, and promotes excellence in research related to disaster reduction.

To ensure effectiveness and sustainability, the National Platform must be built through a nationally-owned and --led participatory process that includes different sectors’ perspectives and actions, and it must be comprised of a representative group of stakeholders. The SDR will serve as the primary point of contact for the ISDR, drawing upon the public-private forum of the National Academies’ Disasters Roundtable, along with other mechanisms, and engaging the U.S. Department of State where appropriate. The SDR Chair, in consultation with the National Science and Technology Council Liaison, will designate a Chair for the U.S. National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The SDR Chair will provide the ISDR Secretariat with current contact information for the U.S. National Platform.

The SDR also will maintain its active engagement and partnership with the National Academies’ Disasters Roundtable, which facilitates the exchange of ideas among scientists, practitioners and policymakers from government, academia, and the private sector. These workshops, roundtable discussions, and other fora are all free and open to the public to ensure maximum participation and input.

## **Administration and Logistics**

As requested, and as needed, the SDR will write and distribute white papers to provide the ISDR with information in response to current disaster situations and to summarize relevant resources and work within the SDR, the Disasters Roundtable, and other appropriate U.S. activities. The SDR website (sdr.gov) will

serve as a central, publicly accessible source of information on work within the SDR, as well as a central point for document sharing and archiving related to the U.S. National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

**Additional Information**

The SDR Charter is available online at <http://www.sdr.gov/SDR%20Charter.pdf>. The SDR membership list is available online at <http://www.sdr.gov/members.html>.

The Disasters Roundtable mission and membership list are available online at <http://dels.nas.edu/dr/>.