



**Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction  
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**Statement of the European Union**

**delivered by**

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I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU).

The EU is strongly committed to risk management and vulnerability reduction as critical components of poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies.

Over the years, we have developed substantial experience in disaster risk management and set resilience building as a priority, both domestically and in our development and humanitarian aid work.

The EU has recently revised its civil protection legislation with a very strong focus on preparedness and prevention policy and action. We are committed to the development of risk and risk management capability assessments. We have also integrated risk management measures in a number of key EU policies and financial instruments.

In development and humanitarian aid we have reoriented our support to make resilience a priority in our work in all third countries most vulnerable to natural disasters.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 has been instrumental in supporting global, regional and national efforts for disaster risk reduction. We look forward to an ambitious post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action, placing disaster risk reduction as a key element of sustainable development efforts and agreeing on further steps to reduce risks and foster disaster resilience.

At this stage, we would like to convey the following main observations to be reflected in the zero draft.

**Firstly, improving accountability and transparency should constitute a key principle of the new framework.** We favour action-oriented targets, supported by indicators. They should address the modalities of disaster resilience and encourage countries to put in place and effectively implement the necessary policies and institutions to reduce and to the extent possible avoid disaster risks.

To improve governance and accountability, one very promising initiative that we have been supporting in Europe and which should be part of the new framework is the use of voluntary peer

reviews to enhance the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and improve policy-making in disaster risk management.

**Secondly, all countries are vulnerable to disasters and the EU is not spared.** Risk management policies are essential to ensure sustainable development and economic growth. The new framework should make the case for investment in disaster risk prevention as a strong driver of innovation, growth and job creation. All major infrastructure projects should be climate and disaster resilient. It should ensure that disaster risk reduction measures are systematically incorporated in economic and financial strategies, in both the public and the private sector. The framework should also encourage a more systematic and reinforced science–policy interface, including foresight to address future risks and challenges.

**Thirdly, we should not forget that the poorest and marginalised are often the ones most exposed to disasters. The framework should therefore better target and empower those most in need and most vulnerable,** harness the important potential of civil society and have a specific focus on the local level and on building resilience.

**Fourthly, in many cases, vulnerability is compounded by conflict,** which tends to weaken the coping capacity of a country to provide adequate protection from disasters.

Experience shows that resilience building can and should be pursued in fragile and conflict affected areas: it has positive effects and can help to strengthen coping capacities to address for example food and nutrition insecurity and epidemics.

The new framework should factor in state fragility and conflict and other forms of violence and fragility, as well as technological risks, everyday small local disasters and global shocks and stresses.

**Finally, the various global processes culminating in 2015 provide a unique opportunity to address sustainable development, poverty reduction, climate change and disaster risk reduction in a coherent and mutually supportive way.** Policies, goals and targets that are the subject of discussion in these fora should be coherent, mutually supportive and reinforcing.

The last ten years of the implementation of the HFA have contributed to a shift in our approach, with increased recognition that in order to make our economies more sustainable, we need to invest in disaster resilience. As we look to the future, getting risk management right has never been more urgent and we must factor risks both into our daily lives and long-term decisions.

The EU is determined to play an active role in designing a robust and ambitious post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action in dialogue with partners.