



**Meeting of the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
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**European Union and its Member States - Speaking Points on “Climate Change and Disaster
Risk Reduction”**

delivered by

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I have to honour to speak on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

The EU and its MS are fully committed to eradicating poverty and to ensuring a sustainable future for all. Our global challenge is to put our economies on the path to low emission, climate- and disaster-risk resilient development, and to use climate action as a catalyst for growth and job creation. This is possible and necessary, but will only happen if we integrate considerations on climate change and disasters risk reduction fully into sustainable development planning and implementation at all levels (from local to global).

Climate change

On climate change, we are far from the agreed global goal to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2⁰C above pre-industrial levels. Even if all countries live up to their most ambitious current commitments and pledges, the result may be closer to a global average increase of 4°C. This would have devastating effects for all, but particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable. Climate change is a decisive global challenge which, if not urgently managed, will put at risk not only the environment but also world economic prosperity, development and, more broadly, stability and security.

A transformational shift to a low-emission and climate resilient growth path globally is a precondition for eradicating poverty and ensuring a sustainable future. This also presents economic opportunities and many low-carbon measures more than pay for themselves in broad economic terms.

Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change we have agreed to adopt a new global climate agreement at COP 21 in Paris in late 2015. The post 2015 development framework must be consistent with and supportive of international commitments, goals and targets on climate change.

Efforts to address climate change should be embedded in the post 2015 framework, which should include a strong framing narrative on the need to meet the below two degrees objective. Relevant

areas include sustainable consumption and production, sustainable energy, transport, education, health, urbanisation, disaster risk reduction, food security and sustainable agriculture, land, desertification, water, oceans, mountains, forests and biodiversity, as well as security. Similarly, efforts to tackle climate change, including the future 2015 agreement, are an important contribution to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The EU welcomes that the future climate agreement will ensure the participation of all Parties under the UNFCCC Convention and that it will include mitigation commitments for all Parties and in particular all major economies. The EU recognises the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. However, it stresses that responsibilities and capabilities are differentiated but evolve over time and that the agreement should reflect those evolving realities by including a spectrum of commitments in a dynamic way.

Disaster risk reduction and resilience

Global losses from disasters have increased at an alarming rate over the last 20 years, and are expected to increase further over the next decade due to climate change. By taking action to reduce disasters, we can safeguard threatened development gains and investments, and contribute significantly to sustainable economic development and poverty reduction.

The EU, as one of the world's largest providers of assistance to people affected by disasters, is strongly committed to risk management and vulnerability reduction as critical components of poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies in fragile and disaster prone developing countries, in particular least developed countries.

At the global level, the Hyogo Framework for Action 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. Under this process, we favour action-oriented goals, supported by clear targets and indicators, with strong accountability and transparency. 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.

On this basis, we want to emphasize three key messages:

- First, the poorest and marginalised are the most exposed to disaster risks. We need to tackle all determinants of vulnerability, including conflict, insecurity, weak democratic governance, economic shocks, poor public health and the impact of climate change. We also need to address the root causes of disasters and crises and to take a long-term perspective embedded in local and national policies.
- Second, we must recognise the strong linkages between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Adaptation has to go hand in hand with mitigation measures, including, but not limited to, disaster risk reduction. We must promote technological and ecosystem-based solutions, and focus on reducing the underlying risk drivers in ecosystem management, resource efficiency, land use and urban planning. Strong environmental monitoring and impact assessment is a precondition for ensuring long-term sustainable growth. All major infrastructure projects should be climate and disaster resilient. Disaster risk reduction measures must be systematically incorporated into public development strategies as well as business management strategies – and innovative business opportunities identified and promoted.

- Third, through engagement with all actors (recognizing notably the role of women), governance structures for disaster management need to be enhanced and stakeholders' capacity strengthened at all levels. Strong local structures in particular are essential to mitigate risks and ensure the effectiveness of prevention, preparedness and response operations.

For these reasons, disaster risk reduction needs to be integrated and mainstreamed into the range of priorities of the post 2015 development agenda.

In conclusion, the various global processes culminating in 2015 provide a unique opportunity for the issues of sustainable development, poverty reduction, climate change and disaster risk reduction to be addressed in a coherent and mutually supportive way. The EU agrees that addressing climate change and disaster risk reduction in the discussions on sustainable development goals will help ensure that these goals are truly sustainable in the long term.