

Report from UNISDR conference, Geneva, 22 May 2013

On the 22 May, Valériane Bernard attended the 2013 conference of “Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction” to be aware of the trend of work of the different agencies, NGOs and Countries.

The main theme of the conference was Resilient People - Resilient Planet.

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was established in 2007 by the United Nations and takes place every two years. The Fourth Session took place 19-23 May 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: "The international community must ‘risk proof’ development because disasters are taking a heavy toll on rich and poor countries as well as outpacing their ability to respond.

One of the main aims of this platform was to develop a post-2015 (the year of the next meeting) framework for disaster risk reduction.

In three side events there was discussion of the depth of the consequences and the costs of disasters. In this light, mitigation of the disasters was seen as important because of the high price where they occurred. The substantial consequences for public health were also discussed.

It was reported that senior government officials from developing small island states and climate change experts have warned of a massive increase in human, economic and material losses in these countries if risk reduction measures are not taken urgently to mitigate the impacts of major hazards due to climate change.

The Global Platform is managed by the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). It is the world's foremost gathering of stakeholders committed to reducing disaster risk and building the resilience of communities and nations. A core function of the Global Platform is to support the implementation of The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) which is the first plan to explain, describe and detail the work that is required from all different sectors and actors to reduce disaster losses. It was developed and agreed on by the many partners needed to reduce disaster risk - governments, international agencies, disaster experts and many others - bringing them into a common system of coordination. The HFA outlines five priorities for action, and offers guiding principles and practical means for achieving disaster resilience. Its goal is to substantially reduce disaster losses by 2015 by building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. This means reducing loss of lives and social, economic, and environmental assets when hazards strike.

Themes addressed at the Platform:

Capacity Development, Civil Society/NGOs, Climate Change, Community-based DRR, Early Warning, Education & School Safety, Environment, Gender, Health & Health Facilities, Information Management, Media, Public-private Partnerships, Recovery, Risk Identification & Assessment, Insurance & Risk Transfer, Space Technology, Urban Risk & Planning, Complex Emergency, Governance, GIS & Mapping, Economics of DRR, Water, Disaster Risk Management, Social Impacts & Resilience, Structural Safety, Critical Infrastructure, Vulnerable Populations, Indigenous Knowledge, Food Security & Agriculture

(Parts of this report were taken from <http://www.unisdr.org>, 27 May 2013)