

U.S. Statement

**To be delivered via videorecording by Ms. Cynthia Spishak,
Associate Administrator, Office of Policy and Program Analysis,
Federal Emergency Management Agency**

Eighth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas
February 28 – March 2, 2023

- Hi, my name is Cynthia Spishak, Associate Administrator for Policy, Program Analysis, and International Affairs of the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (also known as FEMA).
- On behalf of the U.S. Government, I want to thank the Government of Uruguay and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for hosting the Eighth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean.
- The United States expresses its condolences to all those affected by the wildfires in Chile, the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, the cyclone in New Zealand, and other disasters worldwide.
- We also applaud the efforts of all participants in this platform and others around the world toward implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Our Regional Action Plan is a critical guide to reducing the impact of disasters and building resilience across the Western hemisphere.
- The theme of this Regional Platform—**Science and Technology** for Integrated Disaster Risk Management—is important for our future and is a cornerstone of U.S. policy.
- The United States is proud to build capacity through our partnerships by integrating scientific expertise into technical assistance.

For example, the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Agency for International Development have recently collaborated with Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic on programs related to reducing disaster risk from volcanoes, earthquakes, and landslides.

- Another critical role of science and technology the U.S. leverages is deploying **more multi-hazard early warning systems** throughout our region and the world. Early warning saves lives and saves money, making it one of the best disaster risk reduction investments we can make.
- **The United States has responded to the UN Secretary General’s call for Early Warning for All** as part of PREPARE – the President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience. We have committed more than 40 million dollars to help close the early warning gap, including 2 and a half million dollars for the Caribbean.
- Over the next five years, we **plan to invest up to 75 million dollars** towards this initiative. These efforts will support countries to establish and advance early warning systems on floods, droughts, cyclones, and heat waves.
- We are committed to providing this support to Small Island Developing States and other Least Developed Countries—places that are underserved—yet are most at risk.
- The United States also believes that **data-sharing will help us all more effectively understand, prevent, and respond to disasters**. The U.S. Geological Survey and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration disseminate information on earthquake monitoring and tsunami forecasting to other countries and agencies, scientists, critical facilities, and the general public. This information helps issue warnings and improves situational awareness in times of crisis.
- **We are also looking ahead to accelerate scientific research, sharing our findings to inform decision-making on climate and global change.**

- The U.S. Global Change Research Program combines the efforts of over a dozen U.S. agencies working together to understand the processes that are reshaping the Earth's environment and capacity to support the world's people.
- U.S. government reports and research findings are publicly available at globalchange.gov.
- Finally, we are using science to improve policy at home in the United States. My agency—FEMA—recently published a new Building Codes Strategy to advance the adoption and enforcement of hazard-resistant building codes and standards. Communities across the United States can be more resilient by setting and upholding new standards for building construction to better safeguard against disasters. We look forward to collaborating with partners in the Western Hemisphere to share best practices and lessons learned from these and other domestic efforts.
- These are just a few examples that show the United States Government's commitment to reducing disaster risk and promoting climate change adaptation and resilience through science and technology. **By using and investing in science and technology, we will continue working together to further reduce disaster risk in the region.**