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CARIBBEAN
VIII PLATFORM FOR
DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION



URUGUAY
28 FEB,
1-2 MAR
2023



VIII REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN (RP23)

Declaration of Punta del Este

Fifth High-level Meeting of Ministers and Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean.

1. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation gathered at the Fifth High-level Meeting of Ministers and Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean during the 8th Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas (RP23) hosted by the Government of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay from 28 February to 2 March 2023;
2. *Acknowledging* the outcomes of the VII Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place from 1-4 November 2021, hosted by the Government of Jamaica, including the Ministerial Declaration and the revised Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean;
3. *Acknowledging* the outcomes of the 7th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction which took place from 23-28 May 2022, hosted by the Government of Indonesia, including the “Co-Chairs’ Summary: Bali Agenda for Resilience”;
4. *Acknowledging* the importance of the consultation process for the Midterm Review of Implementation of the Sendai Framework (MTR SF), the outcomes of the Special Session of the RP23 and the intergovernmental negotiations towards a political declaration in 2023 that precede the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework;
5. *Acknowledging* the commitment of the region to implement actions to advance the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, initiative proposed by El Salvador, aimed at recovering those ecosystems that have been degraded or destroyed by human and natural intervention, including as a result of factors resulting in disasters, and thus to



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reduce the negative impact of extreme events and improve the health and wellbeing of people, particularly those living in areas prone to climate change and variability, as well as the ecosystems on which people depend;

6. *Taking note* that the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report on Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability recognized disaster risk management activities, including early warning systems, as key cross-cutting adaptation options, that enhance the benefits of other adaptation measures when combined;
7. *Taking note* of the package of decisions delivered at the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27), reiterating countries' commitment to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, establish new funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage, including establishing a fund and the launch of a five-year work program to promote climate technology solutions in developing countries among other important measures;
8. *Taking note* of the Early Warning for All initiative launched by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the Action Plan, presented by WMO at the COP27, seeking to ensure that every person on Earth is protected by early warning systems within five years;
9. *Taking note* of the results of the "Dialogue for the Strengthening of Public-Private Partnerships in Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management in Central America and the Dominican Republic, including Social Protection" organized by CEPREDENAC, SELA and UNDRR, which took place on 6-7 December 2022 in El Salvador, as a sub-regional mechanism and priorities contributing to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;
10. *Taking note* of the results of the 12th Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM), which took place on 7-9 December 2022 in Barbados, delivered under the theme: "CDM Road to Resilience: Checkpoint 2022 - Advancing a Risk-based Multi-hazard Approach during COVID-19 & Beyond", as sub-regional mechanism and priorities contributing to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;



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11. *Taking note* of the results of the Fifteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Buenos Aires, 7–11 November 2022, and the “Buenos Aires Commitment”, which stresses the need to integrate the gender, intersectional and intercultural perspectives and promote women’s participation in environmental decision-making and disaster risk reduction, among other important commitments;
12. *Taking note* of the results of the First Regional Summit between National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and National Disaster Risk Management Offices where the importance to strengthen legislative and policy frameworks that guide the collaboration and exchange of data was highlighted and which agreed to promote this dialogue regularly and within sub-regional groups, involving other national and regional actors that play an important role in the implementation of early warning systems like geological observatories, epidemiological centers, academia, private sector and other civil society actors;
13. *Taking note* of the statements and interventions made in this meeting by representatives of civil society, the youth and the science and technology community, which are annexed to this declaration.
14. *Noting with concern* that natural, socio-natural, and human-induced hazards are manifesting with increasing frequency, intensity and at times unpredictability in the region due to the coupled effects of the structural, social, economic and ecological vulnerabilities of countries and communities, the influence of climate change, socio-economic and socio-political crises;
15. *Noting with concern* that a significant proportion of the population in the region lives in islands and coastal areas, including in areas that are at high or very high risk of being affected by coastal hazards, such as contaminated freshwater aquifers (e.g. through salt water intrusion), eroded wetlands, shorelines, floodplains, storm surges and tsunamis, and that these threats, enhanced by the increasing occurrence of extreme events, are of critical importance in the case of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
16. *Noting with concern* that a significant proportion of the population in the region lives in high mountain areas and are in high or very high risk due to deglaciation, and deterioration and loss of ecosystems, and that these spaces contain important ecosystems, rural livelihoods and ancestral knowledge that are fundamental for food security.



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17. *Noting with concern* that factors of vulnerability, exposure and limited coping and adaptive capacities have worsened the impacts of biological, environmental and technological hazards and have also become more diverse, complex and prevalent;
18. *Noting with concern* that the region of the Americas and the Caribbean has been strongly hit by the global disaster triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of exacerbation of poverty and inequality, and the pace of recovery has been slow;
19. *Noting with concern* the fragile and highly uncertain global socioeconomic outlook, geopolitical tensions and conflicts, and current multiple crises that increase pressure on food, energy and financial systems, which could be further worsened if measures are not taken to curtail dependence on imports and external financing;
20. *Noting with concern* the increased complexity and impact of crises in the region, leading to forced migrations and displacement, and impact on the communities that receive them, which requires integrated actions at the local, sub-national, national and regional levels to address the impacts – including the strengthening of support to host communities – and consolidate the information that can enable an effective action;
21. *Understanding* that disasters are not natural but socially constructed, and that risks and the associated drivers are intrinsic to development pathways and its social, economic and environmental subsystems;
22. *Understanding* that disaster risk reduction has significant economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits and is imperative for sustainable development and climate change adaptation;
23. *Understanding* that disaster risk management should be of transversal and comprehensive nature, in which the different levels of government, as well as all sectors of society, are compelled to act as key actors to outline and execute policies and strategies for DRR aiming at preventing new disaster risks, reducing existing disaster risks, managing residual risks, and permanently control disaster risk factors in society;



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24. *Understanding* that disaster risk can have differentiated impacts based on conditions of vulnerability and exposure, and results in disproportionate impact of disasters on persons most at risk including women and girls, children, the youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant populations, minorities, as well as other marginalized groups requiring focused consideration;
25. *Understanding* that people-centered Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS) are a proven, effective, and feasible measure for mitigating the negative effects of realised risks, including supporting climate adaptation and against other dangers. Further recognizing that MHEWS save lives and provide a positive return on investment when acted upon in a timely manner and with sufficient resources. Finally, acknowledging that the need to strengthen early warning and risk understanding is prominently reflected in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and regional strategic frameworks across the Americas & the Caribbean which are vehicles for its implementation.
26. *Recognizing* that the region has made great strides in the development of structured conceptual approaches to risk management, knowledge generation and management, as well as establishing the foundational institutional and organizational arrangements and normative and regulatory structures that enable the implementation of associated policies and mechanisms. Further recognizing, however, the success in these approaches has been variable;
27. *Recognizing* that the scope, gravity and frequency of disaster losses and damage may continue to increase, further exacerbating people's vulnerabilities. Further recognizing, that expenditures on response and reconstruction are rising in parallel, creating extraordinary costs that directly impact all areas of development and compromise their sustainability;
28. *Recognizing* some advances in anticipatory action, disaster risk financing, disaster risk transfer and disaster recovery frameworks in the region, including the CELAC Fund for Climate Change Adaptation and Comprehensive Disaster Response;
29. *Recognizing* the need to increase access to financial resources, especially for SIDS, to support DRR taking into account simplification, speed and scale;



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30. *Recognizing* that investments in disaster risk reduction are insufficient to address existing needs and challenges, and that it is needed that the existing financing mechanisms are required to move beyond response and recovery to further actions in prevention, mitigation and as part of comprehensive disaster risk reduction approaches;
31. *Recognizing* that State actors, such as governments at national and local levels, and private actors, such as investors, donors and corporates, may need greater incentives to make disaster risk-informed investments;
32. *Recognizing* that cities, local governments and local levels of authority can be drivers in the concerted implementation of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation actions that are timely, socially inclusive, participatory, contextually relevant, and observant of local natural capital and culturally pertinent;
33. *Recognizing* the challenges in data availability, accessibility, collection, disaggregation, processing and reporting. Further recognizing that while countries have made important progress towards achieving the targets, challenges persist in reflecting these advances through monitoring and reporting within the online Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM) system and, in turn, in reporting on the corresponding SDG indicators;
34. *Recognizing* the need to include geo-information science, geospatial data and analysis in decision making before, during and after disasters;
35. *Recognizing* that many of the most vulnerable communities exposed to hazards of diverse origins have the least access to the tools and knowledge needed to quantify and manage their risks. Further recognizing, also that these same communities have their own knowledge of the risks and hazards of their territory and that this knowledge must be integrated into the processes of knowledge, preparation and response to disasters.
36. *Recognizing* that countries of the region, Caribbean SIDS in particular, require redoubled efforts to achieve Global Target G of the Sendai Framework, which calls for the “substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) and disaster risk information and assessments to people by 2030”;



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37. *Recognizing* that while information technology and hand-held mobile devices are enabling the dissemination of information, access to these tools has not been evenly distributed and that advances in science and technology offer opportunities and potential risks that need to be accounted for at the highest possible level;
38. *Emphasizing* that science-based risk analysis provides the foundation for unlocking investments across the spectrum of risk prevention, disaster preparedness preparedness, early action, recovery and resilience;
39. *Emphasizing* the need to minimize protection gaps through investments in social protection and promoting a stronger role of the insurance sector in incentivizing risk reduction and prevention including through making affordable insurance solutions available;
40. *Emphasizing* the role of financing for resilient infrastructure as an essential component for disaster risk reduction and the importance of improving the continuity of critical services provided by economic infrastructure systems – energy, transport, water, wastewater, waste, and communications –, which serve as an essential backbone for the effective functioning of socioeconomic infrastructure services such as health, education, business, food industry, etc.;
41. Particularly *emphasizing* the importance of requiring that educational infrastructure and school facilities be accessible, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable, including by adopting multi-hazard risk reduction mitigation and preparedness approaches and measures that ensure the continuity of their services, including through the Safe Schools Initiative;
42. *Emphasizing* the importance of strengthening the integration of disaster risk reduction approaches into humanitarian action. This includes increasing efforts to simultaneously address emergency life-saving needs and underlying vulnerabilities, as well as enhancing the capacity of governments and humanitarian actors for anticipatory action planning, with the aim to reduce growing humanitarian needs, speed up disaster recovery efforts and reduce vulnerability to future shocks;



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43. *Emphasizing* that the reduction of systemic risk requires the sustained engagement of whole of society and the adaptation of strategies and approaches to the differentiated needs of the population, and highlighting that the inclusion and engagement of women and girls, children, the youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant populations, as well as other marginalized groups in disaster risk reduction actions is fundamental to ensuring that no one is left behind and the understanding that no one is safe until we are all safe;
44. *Highlighting*, in particular, the vital role of young people as agents as well as drivers of change and the positive contribution they can make to creating a culture of safety and prevention and to the resilience of future generations;
45. *Highlighting* the critical role of governments, the media and other partners in the effective communication of science-based risk information and the dissemination of disaster risk reduction knowledge to the public, thus contributing to the strengthening of communities to create a culture of prevention;
46. *Highlighting* the irreplaceable role of science and technology in the understanding and management of disaster risk, considering the diversity of knowledge available in the region and in the world, and reinforcing this in evidence-based and risk informed decision and policy making at all levels;

We, Ministers and Heads of Delegation, highlight the importance to:

47. *Reiterate our commitment* to substantially reduce disaster risk, to protect lives, livelihoods and health, and particularly to reduce mortality and the number of people that are affected by disasters, as well as the resulting economic losses and damages from disasters, including by investing our own domestic resources and international cooperation projects in planning, prevention, mitigation and preparedness;
48. *Reiterate* the validity and *adopt* the adjustments made in this Regional Platform to strengthen the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean, which reflects and addresses the challenges of this region with regards to disaster risk and contributes to building resilient societies and economies in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, and relevant global instruments;



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49. *Make progress in and strengthen* the support for the implementation of the Regional Action Plan as a way to enhance the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the region. Further, create a voluntary commission to propose a mechanism to assess progress of the implementation of the Regional Action Plan and assess this progress again in the 9th Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean;
50. *Promote* political commitment at the highest level, strengthening horizontal and vertical integration among sectors, disciplines and domains, ensuring DRR forms part of the institutional mandate and capacities of all key sectors, fostering transboundary and multicountry collaboration, promoting vertical articulation between the national and local levels, fostering exchange of knowledge and good practices, strengthening partnerships and alliances among the public and private sectors, as well as the role of ministries of planning and finance in promoting the integration of DRR across sectors, budgets and investments;
51. *Promote* science-based articulation and synergies across policies guiding environment and ecosystems management, land-use planning, climate change mitigation and adaptation, health, disaster risk reduction, education and human rights, including strategies that integrate management around water and nature, and commit to the implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative and as fostered in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;
52. *Undertake* comprehensive analyses on the increasing use of technologies aimed at ecosystems-based alternatives for energy, transportation and communications, and on the utilization of green infrastructure, both in terms of the opportunities they present but also to ensure appropriate measures to mitigate potential emerging risks and hazards;
53. *Accelerate* the implementation of science-based disaster risk reduction plans, which require a significant increase in financial contribution from a variety of public and private sources and other innovative financing mechanisms towards prevention, mitigation and resilience-building;
54. *Improve* measurement and tracking of disaster risk reduction financing and *continue working* to ensure public and financial sectors accurately price and account for the real cost of disasters, incentivizing risk reduction;



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55. *Make available* guidance to inform policies and promote necessary regulatory changes that will encourage financial institutions and banks to align their strategies, operations and activities with the Sendai Framework;
56. *Promote* greater involvement of the business and industry sectors (private and public) in development planning and understanding of systemic risk, thus promoting public-private coordination initiatives for the development of resilience and the establishment of standards and regulations that require them to have risk management and business continuity plans;
57. *Ensure* that resilience building and disaster risk reduction measures are mainstreamed as a core component informing the decision-making process in the planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of infrastructure projects, and consider nature based solutions.
58. *Strengthen* mechanisms or measures with respect to corporate responsibility in the provision of critical infrastructure and basic services;
59. *Enhance support* to local governments in integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction and the promotion of a culture of safety and prevention into development initiatives and projects as well as across local services;
60. *Promote* a regulatory environment to incentivize the insurance sector to reduce the protection gap, increase the availability and accessibility of risk transfer mechanisms, and invest in and promote risk prevention and resilience building, contributing to preventing the amassing of debt due to disasters and reducing the costs of insurance;
61. *Redouble efforts* to support local governments to better assess, reduce their risks and build their resilience through concerted action that integrates science-based technical support and disaster risk reduction financing opportunities offered by different cooperation partners, and that is aligned to national plans, policies and priorities;
62. *Generate and/or strengthen* the organizational, technical and financial conditions that promote the active participation and engagement of civil society organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities, mechanisms for the advancement of women in leadership, environmental organizations, organizations of older persons, organizations



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that defend the rights of children and youth, organizations of indigenous and Afro-descendant populations and rural communities, among others, in reducing disaster risk and enhancing inclusivity and resilience;

63. *Strengthen* the development and dissemination of methodologies and science-based national and local tools and the technical assistance that facilitate the timely implementation of prevention and preparedness measures as well as identification, registration and communication of the impacts caused by disasters through online monitoring platforms that are designed for this purpose and adopted for the monitoring of the Sendai Framework;
64. *Develop and strengthen* risk communication strategies aimed at reinforcing scientific, social, political and economic cooperation;
65. *Ensure* risk management and risk communication are based on an understanding of people's perceptions of risk and biases, so that they are more effective in instigating action;
66. *Continue to promote* awareness and knowledge of inclusive disaster risk reduction approaches among women and men, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, children and youth, rural communities, Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant populations, migrants and other historically marginalized groups, as appropriate, related to a culture of disaster prevention and resilience, including by promoting and strengthening a systemic approach to school safety and disaster risk reduction in school curriculum, placing emphasis on the vulnerabilities of the geographic areas where they reside, and enabling the continuation of learning during disasters;
67. *Enhance* the integration of disaster risk reduction into humanitarian action, increasing the capacity of governments and humanitarian actors for predictive analytics, forecasting and anticipatory action planning;
68. *Promote* the implementation of holistic local, national and regional disaster risk reduction policies and strategies that address human displacement, promoting the analysis, understanding and prevention of extreme climate and disaster-induced human mobility;



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69. *Advance* evidence-based tools and innovative technology, in articulation with ancestral and traditional knowledge and practices, to build synergies across different areas of government, with an emphasis on decision-makers, as fundamental elements to prevent and address disaster displacement, considering that disasters, extreme weather events and climate variability already have and will continue to have an impact on human mobility and displacement patterns in the mid to long-term;
70. *Promote* the inclusion and meaningful participation of persons who are displaced or at risk of displacement as well as host communities in disaster risk reduction planning and response, with due attention to age, gender, and diversity considerations;
71. *Continue to strengthen* science-based post disaster recovery planning and approaches, understanding that recovery begins before a disaster or a crisis starts, anticipating governance arrangements and dedicated financing instruments to ensure effective disaster recovery plans and implementation mechanisms are in place, including preparing needs assessment methodologies, and ensuring capacities are in place to plan and implement recovery programs accordingly across different sectors;
72. *Renew and enhance* our efforts towards monitoring and reporting on the indicators for measuring progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework, with the necessary political commitment to ensure multisectoral involvement and harmonization of tools and methodologies as appropriate to our respective countries, institutions and territories;
73. *Guide* international cooperation subject to the needs as defined by the recipient countries, oriented to strengthen the capacities of the local and national institutions responsible for disaster risk reduction, promote the transfer of information, knowledge and technology, on voluntary and mutually agreed terms, and the promotion of science-based innovative practices and approaches;
74. *Encourage* countries and organizations to promote North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation considering their importance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;



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75. *Call* on the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, other development partners and multilateral agencies, to continue providing and mobilizing institutional and financial support for risk analysis, the implementation, monitoring and review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and the Caribbean as well as for its Regional Action Plan, in collaboration with relevant regional and sub-regional organizations;
76. *Commit* our engagement towards the High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework within the framework of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly on 18 and 19 May of 2023 in New York as an opportunity to share lessons learned and adopt the political declaration with recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework, as a prerequisite for the achievement of the outcomes and goals of the global agendas, frameworks and conventions, including in respect of that brings together disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainable development.

Only together can the countries and people of our region be truly resilient.

Adopted on the 2nd of March 2023.