

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION  
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC AND  
THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT OF THE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR  
DISASTER REDUCTION**

This Memorandum of Understanding is made by and between the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as "ESCAP"), and the United Nations Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (hereinafter referred to as "UN/ISDR").

**WHEREAS** ESCAP and UN/ISDR have entered into the memorandum of understanding dated 21 June 2005 defining the administrative support to be rendered to the UN/ISDR Regional Office in Bangkok and to set clear the lines of responsibility and accountability between ESCAP and UN/ISDR and with reference to the memorandum of understanding dated 27 June 2006 signed between ESCAP and UN/ISDR regarding the lease of office space within ESCAP premises;

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. ESCAP and UN/ISDR reaffirm their commitment to work together in areas of mutual interest in the service of the developing countries in Asia and the Pacific through this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

**II. PURPOSE OF ESCAP AND UN/ISDR COOPERATION**

2. As both ESCAP and UN/ISDR have been established with a mandate to promote regional cooperation in the broader area of sustainable development and support government policies on disaster risk reduction, ESCAP and UN/ISDR plan to work together on further promoting awareness of the importance of disaster risk reduction as an integral component of sustainable development, with the goal of reducing human, social, economic and environmental losses resulting from natural disasters. This cooperation will also aim to further strengthen and support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005-2015: *Building Resilience of Communities and Nations to Disasters* adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe in January 2005.

**III. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR ESCAP-UN/ISDR COOPERATION**

3. ESCAP and UN/ISDR will be guided by the following general principles:

- (a) Sustainable development, poverty reduction, good governance and disaster risk reduction are mutually supportive objectives. In order to meet the challenges ahead, accelerated efforts must be made to build the necessary capacities at the community and national levels to manage and reduce disaster risk;
- (b) Country and, where relevant, regional ownership of sound development policies and programmes is essential for effective integration of disaster risk reduction into socio-economic development to ensure sustainable development;



- (c) Disaster-prone developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States, warrant particular attention in view of their higher vulnerability and risk to disasters, which often greatly exceed their capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters;
- (d) Multi-stakeholder participation in disaster risk reduction measures, processes and policy development should be encouraged through national mechanisms (national platforms for disaster risk reduction) and regional intergovernmental and coordination mechanisms, consistent with available resources; and
- (e) Development policies and programmes should be encouraged and supported to be more results-oriented, disasters-resilient and built on transparent relationships among partners as well as with beneficiary countries.

4. ESCAP and UN/ISDR plan to:

- (a) Focus on the shared strategic and operational priorities of the two organizations, especially on the promotion of disaster risk reduction;
- (b) Use the comparative strengths and advantages of each organization, to enhance regional partnerships and effectiveness of regional cooperation in the area of disaster risk reduction;
- (c) Share knowledge and information on lessons learned, good practices, research and national or regional studies with respect to disaster risk reduction and management in Asia and the Pacific; and
- (d) Support each other in the implementation of common areas of the respective work programmes and in regional efforts to mainstream disaster risk reduction in sustainable development.

**IV. FOCUS OF ESCAP-UN/ISDR JOINT ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTING MODALITIES**

5. It is envisaged that the focus areas for joint priority activities may include those detailed in the Appendix to this MOU, which may be amended from time to time with the mutual written consent of the two organizations.

6. ESCAP and UN/ISDR recognize that effective cooperation depends on open, comprehensive and regular exchange of information at the institutional level related to disaster risk reduction and management.

7. ESCAP and UN/ISDR recognize that appropriate representation is important to emphasize their common interests, purpose and intentions as well as in substantive terms. They agree that information on meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops relevant to cooperation in the priority areas set out in the Appendix to this MOU will be shared between the two organizations when and where appropriate.

**V. MANAGEMENT OF THE MOU**

8. ESCAP and UN/ISDR recognize that it is important to convene periodic consultations organized by the designated persons as specified in paragraph 9 below to review what is being planned, what is being implemented, and what is being achieved in terms of results as

well as to discuss any challenges, opportunities and problems. They agree to hold such consultations periodically as required and not less than once every two years.

9. ESCAP and UN/ISDR agree to designate responsible units for the activities under this MOU:

- (a) for UN/ISDR: Senior Regional Coordinator, UN/ISDR secretariat, Asia and the Pacific
- (b) for ESCAP: Chief, Environment and Sustainable Development Division

## VI. PREPARATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF JOINT WORK ACTIVITIES

10. ESCAP and UN/ISDR will prepare:

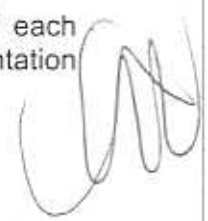
- (a) A joint report of the status of implementation of all joint operational activities related to disaster risk reduction and management;
- (b) A list with a brief description of all planned cooperation activities for the next budget year; and
- (c) An indicative list of planned cooperation activities for two subsequent years.

11. ESCAP and UN/ISDR agree that:

- (a) The appropriate programme managers in ESCAP and UN/ISDR will be responsible for the implementation of cooperation activities within their areas of responsibility;
- (b) The appropriate programme managers will provide brief reports as necessary to ESCAP and UN/ISDR on the status of implementation of all cooperation activities listed within their areas of responsibility;
- (c) ESCAP and UN/ISDR will prepare a joint report periodically and as necessary on the status of implementation of the cooperation activities;
- (d) The responsible programme managers will complete annual assessments of results achieved with the cooperation activities;
- (e) These results of assessments will be reviewed by ESCAP and UN/ISDR considering further cooperation activities; and
- (f) ESCAP and UN/ISDR will conduct a joint assessment of the overall development impact of the ESCAP-UN/ISDR cooperation as inputs into a joint mid-term review of the implementation of the MOU.

12. ESCAP and UN/ISDR recognize that the involvement of both organizations in joint cooperation activities needs to be publicized. They agree that:

- (a) There will be public acknowledgment of the role and contribution of each organization to cooperation projects in all public information documentation related to such cooperation; and



- (b) The use of emblems of each organization in documentation related to cooperation will be in accordance with the then current policies of each organization concerning such usage.

#### VII. TERM AND REVIEW OF THE MOU

14. ESCAP and UN/ISDR agree that:

- (a) The term of the MOU will be from the date of signature by both Parties (effective date) until the date falling three years after the effective date; and
- (b) A joint mid-term review will be carried out after two years with any necessary amendments to the MOU being made at that time.

#### VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

15. Any specific activities under this MOU shall be covered by a project document, written agreement, or exchange of letters.

16. The MOU may be amended by mutual written consent of the Parties.

17. The MOU may be terminated by either organization on three months notice in writing.

This MOU was signed on the day of 30 March 2007

For the United Nations Economic  
and Social Commission for Asia  
and the Pacific



Kim Hak-Su  
Executive Secretary

For United Nations International  
Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
Secretariat



Salvano Briceno  
Director

## APPENDIX

### PROPOSED AREAS FOR ESCAP-UN/ISDR COOPERATION

The focus of areas for joint priority activities between ESCAP and UN/ISDR may include the following:

1. Facilitating the participation of both organizations in regional meetings and conferences as follow-up of the Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005-2015, particularly to promote and support the preparation of a regional platform for disaster risk reduction (including key regional inter-governmental organizations, the UN/ISDR Asia Partnership and Governments), in line with the objectives and functions of the Global Platform for disaster risk reduction;
2. As a component of this emerging regional platform, work together to link the on-going bi-annual ministerial conference on disaster reduction so that the regional platform will be a forum to ensure political commitment, discuss technical and thematic issues and exchange information and experience related to disaster risk reduction in order to sustain socio-economic development of the region;
3. Supporting countries to enhance their capacities in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, including the joint implementation of projects on the development of strategic national action plans (SNAPs) and strengthening of national platforms for disaster risk reduction;
4. Supporting countries, including Members of the Typhoon Committee, to improve disaster risk management, through active participation during the Committee meetings from UN/ISDR secretariat or other UN/ISDR partners, and ensure that the hydrological and meteorological community get involved with the disaster risk reduction focal points and community in their countries, as well as promoting the tools of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action in these forum;
5. Supporting national capacity building on disaster risk reduction, including facilitating joint activities such as workshops and seminars at regional and subregional levels within the scope of both organizations, with the aim of supporting countries in implementing their disaster reduction policies and actions. This activity will be linked to initiatives such as strengthening national early warning capacities (using both the UN/ISDR-coordinated Indian Ocean Consortium for Tsunami Early Warning and the ESCAP Trust Fund for Regional Tsunami Early Warning, among other initiatives) to ensure coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of resources allocated to the various initiatives;
6. Promoting public awareness to understand risk, vulnerability and disaster reduction; and
7. Working together to mainstream disaster risk reduction into socio-economic development planning and processes in the Asia and Pacific region, through advocacy, technical support and partnership with sub-regional inter-governmental organizations and to empower the members of the ISDR Asia Partnership to work jointly towards common goals.

