

2017 European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction Open Forum Istanbul Outcomes

26-28 March 2017

High-Level Dialogue Communiqué Creating Incentives for Disaster Risk Reduction

Istanbul, 27 March – A High-Level Dialogue was held today in Istanbul, Turkey at the 2017 European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction Open Forum with the participation of Governments, the European Union, Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society, private sector, academic and other experts to consider incentives for disaster risk reduction as the world prepares to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The High-Level Dialogue recognized that the Sendai Framework identifies the need for individuals, households, communities and businesses to have incentives to take actions to reduce disaster risks. It similarly identifies enhancing relevant mechanisms and initiatives for disaster risk reduction, which may include financial and other incentives to ensure compliance with sectoral laws and regulations aimed at enhancing safety.

Turkey learned various lessons following the destructive effects of the Marmara Earthquake in 1999, and now shares with other countries the applications that were subsequently developed, at regional and global levels. Turkey prioritized the disaster risk reduction practices of, the private sector, and the NGOs while encouraging resource allocation to support the DRR practices. Turkey also identified concrete disaster risk reduction actions to initiate the preparations for comprehensive risk reduction plans. Examples of good practices in Turkey include strengthening of infrastructures such as schools, hospitals and public buildings, as well as the introduction of training centers in order to raise public awareness about disasters. Turkey gained further experience in human-induced disasters as a result of the humanitarian crisis in Syria. To this end, Turkey has commenced training programmes for Syrians living in temporary protection centers with a view to raise their awareness for disaster risk reduction as well as strengthen their resilience.

The participants cited recent experience highlighting the urgency of the need for incentives for disaster risk reduction in Europe which experiences average annual economic losses of 10 billion Euros.

The High-Level Panel acknowledged that disaster risk reduction investment makes strong economic sense as it is essential to achieving sustainable development. This is due to the growing exposure of economic assets and people to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and drought, which magnifies disaster risk.

Participants affirmed the urgent need to identify the existing incentives for disaster risk reduction, to share good practices and expertise to develop such incentives and the areas where challenges remain.

The High-Level Panel highlighted the need for public authorities and business to work together on disaster risk reduction to ensure public and private investments in disaster risk reduction lead to more resilient societies. Incentives in disaster risk reduction must be scaled up to reach individuals, households and communities. The High-Level Panel called on governments and local authorities to support efforts of multiple organizations and stakeholders in developing national disaster risk reduction strategies.

The High-Level Dialogue looked forward to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Mexico in May 2017. National Governments and other stakeholders will convene for strategic advice and coordination as the world prepares to take stock of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction implementation.

The High-Level Dialogue proposed the following way forward to unify the efforts of stakeholders:

1. Ensure that inclusive national and local strategies for disaster risk reduction are well coordinated and trigger the determination of specific roles and responsibilities and accountability to ensure that strategies are aligned with incentives to reduce disaster risk.
2. Leverage the work underway in Europe to integrate sustainable finance with the disaster risk reduction and climate agenda. Stronger links between sustainable/green finance and disaster risk reduction ensure sustainable development.
3. Raise awareness and risk knowledge including through parliamentarian and local community engagement in scaling up of disaster risk reduction incentives.
4. Acknowledge that measuring progress on Sendai implementation and accounting for losses arising from disasters provide tangible means to trigger financial incentives and engagement in disaster risk reduction and support implementation to this end. Continue Europe's engagement in addressing Sendai with the understanding that societal diversity is a value and a resource for strengthening resilience to disasters.
5. Further engage local stakeholders and citizens to ensure disaster risk reduction is integrated into local and regional development, including "intelligent" reconstruction after disaster.
6. Invest in education for emergencies and disaster risk and preparedness.
7. Strengthen partnerships as they are essential to build resilience while at the same time disaster risk reduction fosters investments that favor jobs and growth.