

**THE SECRETARY GENERAL MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY  
FOR DISASTER REDUCTION 10 October 2007**



Nearly three years ago, Governments adopted the Hyogo Framework -- a plan of action to reduce our collective vulnerability to natural hazards. Today, as we commemorate World Disaster Reduction Day, recent calamities around the world -- including floods, storms, and droughts -- continue to remind us of the devastating effects of natural hazards, as well as the potentially harmful effects of a warming planet. The need to engage fully in disaster risk reduction has never been more pressing.

Disaster risk reduction is about stronger building codes, sound land use planning, better early warning systems, environmental management and evacuation plans and, above all, education. It is about making communities and individuals aware of their risk to natural hazards and how they can reduce their vulnerability.

We have a moral, social and economic obligation to act now in building resilient communities and nations. Last year saw the launch of a global awareness campaign entitled "Disaster risk reduction begins at schools". Its aims to mobilize Governments, communities and individuals in making disaster risk an integral part of school curricula, while ensuring that school buildings are built or retrofitted to withstand natural hazards.

Disaster reduction is everybody's business. All of us can do our part to raise awareness and reduce our vulnerability to future hazards. I urge all concerned -- Governments, civil society and the private sector, international financial institutions and other international organizations -- to invest in disaster reduction and to step up implementation of the Hyogo Framework, with concrete measures to reduce vulnerability. On this International Day, let us renew our dedication to this mission.

SOURCE: [www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org)