

Report of the Scientific and Technical Committee
on its Ninth Session

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	OPENING OF THE SESSION	page 2
II.	STC PRIVATE MEETING	3
III.	IDNDR PROGRESS REPORT	5
IV.	RECENT SIGNIFICANT NATURAL DISASTERS	6
V.	REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES	7
VI.	THE IDNDR PROGRAMME PLAN FOR 1998-1999	8
VII.	APPRAISAL PROCESS AND CONCLUDING EVENTS OF THE DECADE	9
VIII.	TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR THE 21st CENTURY	11
IX.	SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORT ON IDNDR	12
X.	REPORTING BY STC SUB-COMMITTEES	12
XI.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	12
XII.	CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL DECLARATIONS	13
XIII.	ADOPTION OF THE REPORT	14

ANNEXES

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS	16
LIST OF DOCUMENTS	22
AGENDA	24

BACKGROUND

1. The Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), established by the UN Secretary General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/236, held its Ninth Session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva (Switzerland), from 13 to 17 October 1997. The Government of Switzerland provided financial support for the meeting. The Chairman of the STC, Mr. Robert Hamilton, chaired the meeting and Mr. Francesco Pisano of the IDNDR Secretariat acted as Secretary. The list of participants is in Annex 1. The list of documents is in Annex 2. The Agenda of the meeting is in Annex 3.

I. OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. The inaugural session was opened by Mr. Hamilton, Chairman of the STC. The Chair thanked the Government of Switzerland for supporting the meeting. He welcomed the representatives from UN Agencies, the International Organisations and Non Governmental Organisations, the National Committees for IDNDR and the representatives from countries observing the meeting. The Chairman also welcomed the new members of the STC: Mr. Ahmed I. Naguib (Egypt), Mr. Bhuvarahan Narasimhan (India), Mr. Yanhua Liu (China), Mr. Tsuneo Katayama (Japan), Mr. Manuel Perlo Cohen (Mexico), Mr. Peter Anderson (Canada) and Mr. Maturana Palacios (Chile).

3. In his address, the Chairman highlighted the importance of the Decade as a global spotlight which had contributed to bring the issue of natural disasters to the attention of the international community. In this connection, the effect of continuing to deliver the message about the threat and the means for coping with it, had resulted in a significant change in the approach to dealing with natural disasters. As a consequence, the Decade was turning out to be a period of transition to a more enlightened state, where the principle of prevention was being embraced as the only viable solution.

4. After the introduction by the Chairman of the Agenda and Programme of Work, which were adopted (Agenda Item 2), the meeting heard opening statements from the following speakers:

- Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, who underlined the important undertaking of the final phase of the decade and the central role of the IDNDR in defining the substantial and functional aspects of disaster reduction in the next century. Mr. Akashi made also reference to the reform proposal formulate by the Secretary General of the United Nations, in which, he underlined, the IDNDR was considered as one of the two pillars in Geneva of the Office of the Emergency relief Co-ordinator.
- Her Excellency Mrs Isatou Njie-Saidy, Vice-President and Secretary of State for Health, Social Welfare and Women's Affairs, Republic of Gambia.
- Mr. Thomas Linde, from the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the International Organisations at Geneva.

5. After the opening statements, the Chair opened the floor for general discussion. The representative of Japan stated his country's continued support to the IDNDR and announced that the Government of Japan would contribute to the IDNDR Trust Fund the amount of 900,000 US Dollars for the year 1998. He also reminded that Japan had been providing continued support to the work of the IDNDR Secretariat, both in financial terms and by seconding staff, particularly for the implementation of the RADIUS Project.
6. The representative of Japan's National Land Agency (NLA) introduced to the meeting a project for the establishment of the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC).
7. The representative of the Kingdom of Morocco expressed his country's appreciation for the work of the IDNDR Framework, in particular the IDNDR Secretariat, and encouraged the donor community to continue and strengthen their support to the IDNDR Secretariat, especially to ensure adequate synergy to improve the North-South exchange of knowledge and technology transfer.
8. The representative from Italy stated the continuing interest of her country in disaster reduction in general and in the IDNDR activity in particular. She added that Italy, which had been the second largest donor to the IDNDR Trust Fund, was now considering to support the IDNDR Secretariat in the year 1998, in particular through the financing of specific activities both in selected countries and at the regional level.
9. The representative of Costa Rica expressed satisfaction at the improved visibility of disaster reduction in the international community and confirmed his country's support to the IDNDR Secretariat. He also commended the IDNDR Secretariat for the work performed through its Latin American Regional Unit, established in Costa Rica.

II. STC PRIVATE MEETING (Agenda Item 1)

10. The STC convened its private meeting on Monday 13 October 1997, under Agenda item 1
11. At the request of the Chair, the Director of the IDNDR Secretariat provided an overview of the Agenda items relating to the development of the IDNDR Action Plan for the final phase of the Decade, in the context of the ongoing reform process of the United Nations Organisation. Four proposals emerged from the Director's presentation and were approved by the meeting:
 - 1 That each STC Sub-committee may interface the IDNDR Secretariat in Geneva by means of the establishment of focal points or liaison officers among the IDNDR staff.
 - 2 That the set up of a Web Page of the IDNDR be explored by the IDNDR Secretariat in consultation with an ad-hoc working group of the STC, taking into account the need for concentration and flexible management of the information on IDNDR, presently available on the INTERNET on a variety of Websites (see also paragraph 23)

3. That the STC be provided more information on all the relevant activities and processes connected with the conceptualisation and implementation of the final phase of the Decade
 4. That, within the concluding recommendations of the Ninth Session, the STC consider issuing a final statement to be transmitted to the UN Secretary General, the members states, the UN Organisations and the IDNDR National Committee and Focal Points. The statement would contain the views of the Committee on the requirements to design and implement the final phase of the Decade and project the guidelines for the continuity of disaster reduction beyond the IDNDR.
12. The meeting considered the options for the closing year of the Decade in 1999. The holding of a special discussion on IDNDR during the ECOSOC meeting of 1999 and the organisation of one or more concurrent event at the international level was discussed at length. In this connection the Vice-Chairman of the STC, Mr Jean-Jacques Wagner, updated the members on the possible interest by the Swiss authorities to support an international event in Geneva.
13. The Director of the IDNDR Secretariat presented his views in a non-paper on "The Closing Event of the Decade: Some Proposals". The paper was discussed and commented by the meeting.
14. The private meeting held a preliminary discussion on the Proposed Action Plan for the Final Phase of the Decade (session document STC/1997-2/2), during which the main points of the proposed strategy were analysed. It was agreed that the STC meeting would focus on the process leading to the concluding events, rather than determining their agenda. Several comments were received concerning the nature of such process which would be based on the main objectives of consolidating the achievements of the Decade and creating a platform for the future of disaster reduction in the next century.
15. During the discussion, Mr Maturana Palacios introduced the *Ibero-American Association of Governmental Civil Protection and Defence Organisms*. He stated that the Association could become a powerful tool to strengthen international collaboration within the IDNDR framework. In this connection, Mr Maturana Palacios, who was elected as president of the Association, declared that this initiative as well as its expected achievements were to be considered a contribution to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. The text of an Ibero-American declaration and other information material on this initiative were made available to STC members and observers (information paper No. 19).
16. During the private meeting, the STC members adopted by consensus the following DECISIONS:
1. The STC members will make contacts with their respective governments to propose that the High-Level Segment of the ECOSOC meeting in 1999 be devoted to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction on its concluding year.
 2. The Chairman of the STC will address the final statement of the meeting to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the presidency of ECOSOC.

3. The Scientific and Technical Committee for IDNDR will elaborate a *Final Report of the Scientific and Technical Committee*, addressed to the UN Secretary General in the final year of the Decade. The report will address, among other points, the achievements and gaps of the IDNDR, the quality of the scientific progress made during the Decade in the various domains relating to the reduction of the impact of natural hazards. It will also express views on the requirements and guidelines for the future of disaster reduction beyond the year 2000.
4. The STC endorsed the present structure of the IDNDR Secretariat as functional to the accomplishment of the final phase of the Decade, including the elaboration of the guidelines for the future of disaster reduction and the support to be provided to the STC in the elaboration of the Final Report of the STC to the UN Secretary General. In particular, the STC decided to review the number, function and composition of its Sub-committees and to establish a direct link between each Sub-committee and a staff member of the IDNDR Secretariat nominated to this purpose

17. Several comments were received on the topics that the Final Report of the STC would address. This was also discussed under Agenda item 10 and it is reported upon in the present report (see relevant section)

18. Finally, the STC members heard a presentation by Mr. Anderson on the establishment of a IDNDR Website. This would be a near-term activity which should also build on previous work and available resources to the extent possible. This new resource of the IDNDR Secretariat should at least provide for: an IDNDR meta-database; access to IDNDR and other relevant documents on a long-term basis, means of networking and inter-linking; specific electronic instruments for disaster reduction

19. A general debate followed on the characteristics of the Website and the interrelation with other existing Web pages containing information on IDNDR.

III. IDNDR PROGRESS REPORT (Agenda Item 3)

20. The Director of the IDNDR Secretariat gave a comprehensive presentation on the strategy for the final phase of the Decade being elaborated by the IDNDR Secretariat. In this context, he touched upon the effects of the current UN reform process on the positioning and responsibilities of the IDNDR Secretariat. He reminded the participants that, as stated by USG Akashi in his opening statement, the IDNDR Secretariat had been identified by the UN Secretary General as one of the two pillars of the Geneva structure of the Office of the Emergency Relief Co-ordinator.

21. After explaining the nature and basic structure of the final phase of the Decade, as well as its implications on the future of disaster reduction beyond the year 2000, the Director of the IDNDR Secretariat presented the current and projected financial situation of the IDNDR Trust Fund. He noted that after the positive impact of the Yokohama Conference, and the increase in contributions in 1995, the financial contributions to the Trust Fund for the Decade had decreased in the year 1996.

22. The Chair commended the Progress Report and invited the Governments represented at the meeting to make bigger efforts in sustaining the activities of the IDNDR, especially in view of the final phase of the Decade, which would ensure the continuity of disaster reduction after the closing of the Decade.

23. The representative of WMO stated the full commitment of the World Meteorological Organisation to collaborate to the implementation of the final phase of the Decade within the IDNDR International Framework, in close co-ordination with the IDNDR Secretariat.

14. The representative from UNESCO briefly introduced the new Unit for Disaster Reduction set up by his organisation. He also affirmed the importance of continuing to act with an inter-agency and team spirit in co-ordination with the IDNDR Secretariat in the domain of disaster reduction. He noted how prevention aspects had become central in a range of activities including development, environment and cultural heritage.

IV. RECENT SIGNIFICANT NATURAL DISASTERS (Agenda Item 4).

25. Under this Agenda item, the meeting heard several presentations on recent natural disasters, their scientific aspects, their consequences and the relevant lessons learned. The following presentations were given:

- The Monserrat volcanic eruptions, by Mr. J-J. Wagner;
- Recent earthquakes in Italy and the protection of cultural heritage, by Mr. G. Luongo;
- Consequences in Mexico of hurricane *Pauline* and the phenomenon El Niño, by Mr. M. Perlo Cohen;
- Consequences in Peru of the El Niño and other natural disasters, by Mr Homero Nureña L., Chief of the National Institute of Civil Defence, Lima;
- Drought and El Niño: the South Africa experience, by Mr. W.J.R. Alexander;
- The May 1997 earthquake in India: analysis of meaningful post-disaster measures, by Mr. B. Narasimhan.

26. A general discussion followed the presentations and several comments were received by various observers and delegations. In particular, the issue of the safeguard of cultural heritage was commented by UNESCO, the Vice-President of the French National Committee for IDNDR. The STC called attention to this issue, which should be addressed in collaboration with the main international organisations active in this field and the relevant national constituencies.

27. The Committee noted that several of the recent disasters were related to the phenomenon *El Niño* (South West Oscillation) and that this further demonstrated the need to strengthen disaster preparedness, based on hydro-meteorological forecasts made on seasonal and inter-annual time frame.

28. The delegation of Peru called attention on the difficulty in obtaining funds for short term disaster reduction projects. It was stated that international money lenders, especially regional development banks, should become more receptive in this field and develop appropriate project evaluation procedures.

29. It was also underlined that recent natural disasters had demonstrated that effective coping measures had been based on a mix of civil protection measures, scientific knowledge, local community involvement and the political recognition of the validity of a preventive approach.

V. REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES (Agenda Item 5).

30. Under this Agenda item, the meeting heard a review of significant activities performed by the IDNDR Secretariat and the IDNDR International Framework.

31. The IDNDR Secretariat provided the meeting with comprehensive presentations on the following ongoing activities, which were also summarised in the relevant Information Papers circulated to the participants:

- The Early Warning Project and the IDNDR Early Warning Report to the forthcoming fifty-second UN General Assembly (Info. Paper No. 9);
- The RADIUS Project: update (Info. Paper No. 13);
- World Disaster Reduction Campaign and Internet Conference (Info. Paper 15)
- The IDNDR Task Force on recent floods in Germany and Eastern Europe (Info. Paper 16);

32. The STC commended the IDNDR Secretariat for the activities presented. The members of the Committee acknowledged in particular the success of the two Internet Conferences organised by the IDNDR in 1996 and 1997 and renewed their commitment to collaborate on this and other relevant promotion initiatives. The Committee also suggested that the proceedings of the two Internet Conferences should be made available to the general public on CD-ROM.

33. A proposal for the 1998 IDNDR Campaign was presented by the IDNDR Secretariat to the STC and briefly discussed. The theme proposed for the campaign was "Disaster Prevention and the Media". A self explanatory memorandum summarising the ideas for the campaign was distributed to the participants. Several comments on both the theme and the organisational aspects for the campaign were received. The meeting agreed that the IDNDR Secretariat would elaborate the exact wording of the theme, which was selected ahead of time to allow for improved early dissemination of information and material to the National Committees and other partners concerned.

34. Under this Agenda item, the Director of the IDNDR Secretariat informed the STC that the public information strategy of the Secretariat was being reviewed in consideration of current difficulties in financing the publication of the IDNDR Magazine *STOP Disasters*. He announced that discussions were being held with some IDNDR partners, including

Italy's *International Institute STOP Disasters* in order to find a suitable solution, also in conjunction with the shift of emphasis in information needs required by the final phase of the Decade.

VI. THE IDNDR PROGRAMME PLAN FOR 1998-1999 (Agenda Item 6).

35. Under this Agenda item the STC meeting heard a comprehensive presentation by the IDNDR Secretariat on the Proposed IDNDR Action Plan for the Final Phase of the Decade (Session document STC/1197-2/2), which had been elaborated pursuant to the deliberations of the Eight Session of the STC in Paris, January 1997.

36. A discussion followed on the structure of the proposed action plan with regard to the primary themes, the priority areas for action, the overall process and the concluding events to be organised in 1999. The STC reached consensus on a structured process aimed at the consolidation of the results of the Decade and the creation of a platform for the future. This process should focus on all those primary themes that had been put forward at the outset of the Decade and reinvigorated by the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action.

37. Following the discussion by the Committee and the suggestions by delegations and UN Agencies representatives, the document illustrating the proposed action plan was amended as appropriate. The aspects linked to human welfare, social stability and the interrelation between poverty and vulnerability were enhanced in the new text, thus providing a stronger emphasis on such aspects for the final phase of the Decade.

38. In conformity with the decisions taken during their private meeting, the STC members decided that a Final Report of the STC to the UN Secretary General will be produced by June 1999, and would take into account the inputs by the concluding events to be organised in the same year. The report would then be finalised and presented to the UN Secretary General by October 1999. On this matter, the meeting received the report of the in-session working group on the overall contents of the Final Report co-ordinated by Mr Maturana Palacios

39. The meeting agreed in principle on the structure and schedule of the report as summarised and proposed by the Chairman and reproduced herebelow:

Structure

1. NATURE OF THE CHALLENGE (Human needs Quality of life Threat of natural disasters)
2. EVOLUTION OF THE IDNDR (Formulation: Tokyo meeting; Framework) (Mid-term transition: Yokohama Conference) (Culmination: Final Phase / Closing Process)
3. PARTICIPATION
4. PROGRESS (Themes)
5. OVERALL EVALUATION & OUTLOOK
6. BOXES - SIDEBARS - VIGNETTES - TABLES (Success stories. Issues. STC activities. IDNDR Demonstration Projects. GTC).

Schedule

- January 1998: Annotated table of contents and assignments
April 1998: Rough draft (ready before Tenth Session of STC)
January 1999: Complete review draft
April 1999: Preliminary report (printed before ECOSOC 1999 and Programme Forum)
August 1999: Publication of Final Report (before 54th Session of UN general Assembly).

40. Accordingly, the STC decided to form an Editorial Board for the Final Report of the STC. It would be set up to finalise the structure and gather the contributions to the report. The Editorial Board will assign responsibilities to STC members to carry out the completion of the final report. The IDNDR Secretariat would provide backstopping and information material and support the work of the STC Editorial Board.

41. The 1989 report of the ad-hoc group of experts on the nature and scope of the IDNDR was presented as an example of possible structure and guideline for the elaboration of the Final Report of the STC. It was noted that the report of the ad-hoc group of experts could provide a good parameter to evaluate the achievements and gaps of the Decade.

42. Finally the meeting expressed interest in producing a shorter version of the Final Report of the STC in order to disseminate it to a wider audience including the general public. To the same purpose, the option of producing a CD-ROM featuring the Final Report and other relevant information and data was discussed and agreed in principle, subject to the availability of funds.

VII. APPRAISAL PROCESS AND CONCLUDING EVENTS OF THE DECADE
(Agenda Item 7).

43. Under this Agenda item the STC discussed the concluding events of the Decade to be organised in 1999.

44. The STC meeting agreed that the closing year of the Decade (1999) should include a Programme Forum, described as an international event to be held in Geneva in concurrence with, or before the intended discussion of the Decade at ECOSOC. The internal structure of such event would be determined by the process leading to its organisation (as discussed under Agenda Item 6), and would be based on, and benefit from, regional activities and meeting taking place in 1998-1999. The event would be designed to ensure wide participation from all constituencies active in the context of the Decade.

45. It was agreed that the Programme Forum would result from a wide co-ordinated effort under the leadership of the IDNDR Secretariat and supported by the STC, involving the IDNDR Framework, the UN Agencies and other relevant partners, with the support of the Government of Switzerland. The Committee also agreed that the Vice-Chairman of the STC, Mr. J-J. Wagner would be the focal point of the STC on this topic, in his capacity as chairman of the STC Sub-committee on the Programme Forum, in close co-ordination with the Director of the IDNDR Secretariat and the Chairman of the STC.

46. With reference to the process leading to the closing of the Decade, the meeting heard comprehensive presentations by several UN Agencies, Intergovernmental Organisations and other institutions.

47. The Chief of the Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP), cosponsored by DHA and UNDP, offered a brief presentation on the nature and scope of the programme. She also provided a few examples drawn on the experience gained by DMTP at the field level. The relevant documentation was made available to the participants.

48. The representative of the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO), also representing ICSU, offered a presentation of the Roving Seminar initiative, currently taking place in the Mediterranean region, based on the successful experience in Latin America and the Caribbean. He underlined the full concurrence of WFEO and ICSU with the principles and activities of the Decade and declared WFEO's full commitment to play a constructive role in the final phase of the Decade.

49. Mr. Belazougui offered a brief update on the GSHAP initiative aimed at developing seismic micro-zonation in the Mediterranean basin. He mentioned the successful regional seminar held in Barcelona in 1996 and the realisation of the first draft micro-zonation map of the Iberian and Maghreb regions, in May 1997.

50. Mr. Katayama presented an update of the World Seismic Safety Initiative (WSSI), one successful IDNDR demonstration project launched in 1993. A comprehensive description and evaluation of this initiative, which matched the themes selected for the final phase of the Decade, was presented in Information Paper No. 17.

51. The meeting heard a presentation on the Asian Disaster preparedness Centre (ADPC) offered by its Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director. The presentation described the Centre and its main activities and highlighted the numerous opportunities currently available within ADPC's programmes and activities to promote the goals of the Decade also beyond the year 2000. ADPC stated their commitment in co-operating within the framework of the IDNDR in achieving the objectives of the final phase of the decade as they had been put forward by the STC.

52. The IDNDR National Committee of the United Kingdom offered a presentation on their structure and activities. The representative of the UK also presented the Flagship Project and the related conference scheduled in autumn 1998. He suggested that the Early Warning Conference, to be hosted by Germany in the same year, be an opportunity to disseminate the results of the project.

53. The representative of UNCHS (Habitat) explained how disaster reduction was being given increasing attention by the Centre, also following the indications given by the Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul in 1996, and stated in the Habitat Agenda. He suggested that the network of national committees for Habitat, launched at the conference, be considered for joint action with the IDNDR National Committees network, particularly in view of the final process of the Decade. Finally, he mentioned the potential for collaboration on the

subject of the Global Urban Observatory, in particular in regard to best practices and indicators, considered as implementation and monitoring instruments.

54. The UN Office for Project Service (UNOPS) gave a summary presentation of their main services and underlined the existing partnership with the IDNDR Secretariat on current pilot initiatives integrating disaster reduction into sustainable development projects at the regional and national levels. The representative of UNOPS underlined the inter-agency inspiration shared by UNOPS and IDNDR as a source of further collaboration.

55. The STC members also took note of all other international, regional and national partners of IDNDR which could not be present at the meeting but were equally active in deploying ample efforts for the reduction of the impact of natural disasters around the world.

VIII. TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR THE 21st CENTURY: PROPOSALS FOR A SUBSTANTIVE APPROACH TO DISASTER REDUCTION IN THE NEXT MILLENNIUM (Agenda Item 8)

56. Under this Agenda item the meeting considered the expected role of the UN system in disaster reduction after the end of the Decade, in terms of ensuring the continuity of a disaster reduction function. The substantive approach to disaster reduction in the next century should be complemented by proposals for the institutionalisation of disaster reduction within the UN system.

57. The discussion was introduced by a presentation by the IDNDR Secretariat based on Information Papers 11 and 12. The IDNDR Secretariat is mandated to prepare for the UN Secretary-General a report on future options for disaster reduction within the United Nations. Such options should integrate the requirements expressed by all constituencies gathered under the umbrella of the IDNDR International Framework.

58. It was agreed that, in substantive terms, the disaster reduction function of the future would have to relate to human welfare and social stability, as well as to economic growth and the protection of assets. With particular regard to the UN system requirements, such function would also aim to ensure a functional and institutional bridge between disaster response and development.

59. The STC meeting reached consensus on a first set of functional options for disaster reduction beyond the Decade, as listed below:

- The continuity of advocacy and awareness raising (institutionally linked to UN/DESA);
- The responsibility for country level planning and development (institutionally linked to UNDP);
- The need for international scientific co-operation and the transfer of technology (linked to several UN Agencies and Programmes, such as WMO and UNESCO);
- The need for expanded public-private partnership, including universities and associations;

- The integrated approach to disaster prevention and humanitarian assistance.

60. The STC and all those country delegations and UN Agencies representatives that spoke to the subject recognised the need after the year 2000 for a central point of reference within the UN system in the domain of disaster reduction, to ensure the coherent implementation of an integrated and co-ordinated approach to disaster reduction in the future.

61. The representatives of UNESCO and WMO commended the IDNDR Secretariat and the STC for the forward looking vision presented to the meeting and expressed support to the options illustrated therein, as well as the commitment to participating in a co-ordination mechanism which would be established along the lines suggested by the IDNDR Secretariat after the closing of the Decade.

IX. SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORT ON IDNDR TO THE FIFTY-SECOND UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (Agenda Item 9).

62. The meeting was informed about the structure and contents of the Secretary General report on IDNDR being prepared by the IDNDR Secretariat in view of the forthcoming fifty-second session of the UN General Assembly. It was noted that the IDNDR will be discussed under the agenda item on "Environment and Sustainable Development".

X. REPORTING BY STC SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS (Agenda Item 10).

63. Under this Agenda item the STC reviewed the number, composition, tasks and structure of its Sub-committees. The STC Sub-committees were reorganised as follows:

1. (NEW) Sub-committee on the Programme Forum (1999), chaired by Mr. J-J. Wagner;
2. (NEW) Sub-committee on the RADIUS Project, chaired by Mr. Katayama;
3. (NEW) STC Editorial Board for the Final Report of STC to the UN Secretary General;
4. Sub-committee on Information Management and Telecommunications, chaired by Mr. Staffa.

64. The five pre-existing Sub-committees (Action Plan, Early Warning, Training, IDNDR Projects, Economic Aspects) were discontinued. Their respective capacities would be used in the framework of the newly constituted STC Editorial Board. Although it was recommended that the Editorial Board be a restricted, action oriented group, the Chairman encouraged the members of the former five Sub-committees mentioned above to offer their experience and advice to the Board.

XI. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 11).

65. The delegation of Peru announced the intention of Peru to invite and host in Cusco the Tenth Session of the Scientific and Technical Committee, in 1998. The Chair thanked

the Peruvian delegates and suggested that the organisation of the meeting be negotiated with the Director of the IDNDR Secretariat.

66. Mr. Maturana Palacios had to leave the meeting on 15 October, due to an earthquake that had stricken Chile earlier that day causing important damage and loss of life. He offered a short briefing on the current situation in his country and apologised for being forced to leave to take up his responsibilities as Chief of Chile's Civil Protection. The Chairman of the STC asked Mr. Maturana Palacios to convey to the Government and the people of Chile the sympathy of the Scientific and Technical Committee for IDNDR and the IDNDR Secretariat.

67. The meeting heard a message sent by Mr. Kavaliku, STC member, who had to leave the meeting before its conclusion. The participants took note of the points made by Mr. Kavaliku, especially in relation to the undertaking of the Final Report of the STC to the Secretary-General.

68. Mr. Hans Zimmermann, Secretary of the UN Working Group on Emergency Telecommunications (WGET) announced the decision by the Government of Finland to host in 1998 the intergovernmental conference for the adoption of the Convention on the use telecommunications for disaster mitigation and response. On this occasion, he thanked the IDNDR Secretariat for its involvement in the work of WGET and the elaboration of the draft text of the Convention.

69. ADPC announced that they would host a regional seminar on "Emerging Issues in Disaster Management in Asia" in November 1998. The event would be organised in conjunction with the final phase of the Decade and would cover both natural and man-made disasters.

XII. CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL DECLARATIONS (Agenda Item 12).

70. Under this Agenda Item, the meeting adopted a final statement, containing the main conclusions of the meeting with regard to final phase of the Decade (see paragraphs 16 and 22). The text of the statement is reported herebelow:

Final Statement
by the Ninth Session of the Scientific and Technical Committee
for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

The Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) of the IDNDR reaffirmed at its Ninth Session held in Geneva from 13 to 17 October 1997 the need for governments all around the world to integrate disaster reduction and risk management as an essential element of their development planning and sustainable development policies.

The growing vulnerability of populations to natural threats and the increasingly heavy toll of disasters on human beings and their property require urgent attention from all. At least, three million people have lost their lives in disasters during the last 30 years; with 6,5 million people affected by natural disasters and recorded economic losses amounting to more than US\$240 billion in 1995-1996 alone.

Humanity cannot afford to wait for disasters to come and only then take action through response and rehabilitation. This is becoming a severe burden for most societies and their governments, both in financial and social terms. Prevention and preparedness strategies, based on scientific and technological applications as well as on social equity, and including the full involvement of civil society, must be put in place to protect national assets and property and especially to reduce human suffering, the loss of life, and the disruption of livelihoods.

The Scientific and Technical Committee strongly believes that the issue of disaster reduction must be taken up at the highest level of international and intergovernmental deliberations and urges all governments to consider discussion of such issues at the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), in Geneva, in 1999 or, alternatively, at a Special Session of the General Assembly during that year. It is of paramount importance to ensure that there is a concerted and coordinated international approach to risk reduction strategies in the 21st century. There will otherwise be no international foundation for risk reduction strategies at the closing of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-2000). A new approach to disaster reduction, on the basis of an evaluation of the Decade's achievements, must be collectively agreed to by the international community.

The STC stresses that, in addition to selecting the appropriate high-level forum for 1999, governments should seriously consider providing the necessary support for the IDNDR Action Plan 1998-1999 and for a Programme Forum in Geneva, centred around the main themes for disaster reduction strategies for the end of the Decade. It also urgently requests all relevant organisations of the UN System to provide specific human and financial support to the IDNDR and to its Action Plan so that the stated goals and objectives of the Decade can be effectively met.

71. The Chairman thanked all the STC members and the other participants for their attendance and contributions. He also thanked the IDNDR Secretariat for organising the meeting and supporting the work of the Committee. Special thanks were addressed to those Governments that offered to finance the travel of some STC members, and to the Government of Switzerland, which funded the organisation of STC meeting in Geneva. Finally, the Chairman expressed appreciation at the internal reorganisation and effective work of the IDNDR Secretariat in undertaking the organisation of the final phase of the Decade.

XIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Agenda Item 13)

72. The STC read the preliminary report of the meeting, presented by the secretary, and approved it with minor modifications. The Chairman requested the IDNDR Secretariat to edit and finalise the report for translation, reproduction and distribution, according to the UN rules.

73. The Chairman declared the Ninth Session of the STC closed at 12.30, Friday 17 October 1997.

ANNEXES

ANNEX ONE

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

STC Members

Mr. William John Richard Alexander
Department of Civil Engineering
University of Pretoria, South Africa

Mr. Peter Stephen Anderson
Director
Centre for Policy Research on Science and Technology
Simon Fraser University, Canada

Mr. Mohamed Belazougui
Directeur
Centre National de Recherche Appliquée en Génie Parasismique
Algeria

Mr Mustafa Erdik
Professor and Chairman
Department of Earthquake Engineering
Bogazici University, Turkey

Mr. Robert Hamilton
Chairman STC, Science Vice-Chair
Subcommittee on Natural Disaster Reduction
U.S. Geological Survey, U S A.

Ms. Ailsa Holloway
Project Co-ordinator
Disaster Mitigation for Sustainable Livelihoods Programme
University of the Western Cape, SADEP, South Africa

Mr. Tsuneo Katayama
Director General
National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention
Science and Technology Agency, Japan

Mr Senipsi Langi Kavaliku
Chairman
Tonga National IDNDR Committee, Office of Deputy Prime Minister
Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Tonga

Mr. Clem J. Littleton
Quixote Consultancies, Australia

Mr. Yanhua Liu
Deputy Director General
Department of Science and Technology for Social Development
State Science and Technology Commission, China

Mr. Giuseppe Luongo
Professor
Department of Geology and Volcanology
Università Federico II, Italy

Mr. Andrew Ch. Maskrey
General Co-ordinator
LA RED, Peru

Mr. Alberto Maturana Palacios
National Director
National Emergency Bureau, Ministry of Interior, ONEMI, Chile

Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Naguib
National Co-ordinator
Academy for Scientific Research and Technology, Egypt

Mr. Bhuvarahan Narasimhan
Chairman and Secretary to Government of India
Bureau of Industrial Costs & Prices, Ministry of Industry, India

Mr. Isaac O. Nyambok
Professor
Department of Geology, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Mr. Manuel Perlo Cohen
Tenured Researcher
Institute of Social Research, University of Mexico, Mexico

Mr. Hermann Schmitz-Wenzel
Former Secretary-General of the German Red Cross
Germany

Mr. Eugène Staffa
President
Tel-Econ Consulting, Canada

Mr Jean-Jacques Wagner
 Vice-Chair STC
 C.E.R.G., Sciences de la Terre, Université de Genève, Switzerland

Country Representatives

Algeria

Ms. S. Benmati
 Secrétaire diplomatique,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Australia

Mr. Angus Macdonald
 Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Brazil

Mr. Ricardo Maschietto Ayrosa
 Third Secretary,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Costa Rica

Mr. Rafael Carrillo Zurcher
 Minister Counsellor, Charge d'affaires a.i.,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Czech Republic

Mr. Pavel Skoda
 Second Secretary,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

China

Mr. Tu Zhifang
 Ministry of Forestry, P.R.

France

Ms. Hélène Dantoine
 Ministère des Affaires étrangères,
 Direction des Nations Unies, Paris

Mr. Philippe Masure
 Vice-President
 National Committee for IDNDR

Gambia

Her Excellency Mrs. Isatou Njie-Saidy
 Vice-President
 and Secretary of State for Health,
 Social Welfare and Women's Affairs

Germany

Mr. Holger Eberle
 Minister, Deputy Permanent Representative,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Ms. Martina John
 Third Secretary
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Italy

Mrs. Valeria Spinelli Catani
 First Counsellor,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Japan

Mr. Makio Miyagawa
 Counsellor,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr. Junzo Fujita
 First Secretary,
 Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr. Koji Suzuki
 Deputy Director, National Land Agency

Kenya

Mr. Mohamood Hussein
Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Lithuania

Mr. Audrius Navikas
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

Malaysia

Mr. Mohd Aylan Modh Yusof
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Maroc

Mr. Mohamed Bentaja
Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mongolia

Mr. Bat-Ochir Erdenebulgan
Attaché, Permanent Mission, Geneva

New-Zealand

Mr. Mike Chapman
Executive Officer, Ministry of Civil Defence,
Wellington

Nigeria

Ms. Yemisi Kikelomo Marcus
Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Peru

Mr. Homero Nureña L.
Chief
National Institute of Civil Defence, Lima

Mr. Mateo Casaverde
Adviser

Mr. Ernesto Ramirez G.
Adviser

Mr. Gonzalo Guillen
First Secretary

Poland

Mr. Maciej Maciejewski
Professor
Institut Météorologie et Gestion des Eaux

Portugal

Ms. Isabel Maria Marquez Ribeiro Da Silva
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Mr. Mahendra Mathur
Chief Coordinator, Ministry of National
Security, NEMA, Port of Spain

Romania

Mr. Gheorghe Vlad
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr. Anton Pacuretu
Third Secretary,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

Russian Federation

Ms. Tatiana Serafina
Expert
EMERCOM of Russia, Moscow

Slovakia

Mr. Fedor Rosocha
Second Secretary,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

South Africa

Mr. Mokgethi Samuel Monaisa
Director, Humanitarian and Social Matters
Department of Foreign Affairs, Pretoria

Spain

Mr. Carlos Dueñas Molina
Asesor Local
Civil Protection, Ministry of Interior, Madrid

Switzerland

Mr. Thomas Linde
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

IDNDR/STC/1997-2/3

17 October 1997

<u>Ukraine</u> Mr. Volodymyr Pakhil First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva		ECE	Ms. Dunja Pastizzi-Ferencic Deputy Executive Secretary
<u>United Kingdom</u> Mr. Roger Clarke Head of Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation, Emergency Aid Department, Department for International Development, London		UNICEF	Ms. Kirsi Madi Project Officer, Geneva
Mr. Brian Lee National Committee for IDNDR London		WFP	Mr. Werner Schleiffer Director, Geneva Office
<u>United States of America</u> Mr. William McPherson First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva		UNCHS	Mr. Pietro Garau Director, Europe Office
			Mr. Lars Ludvigsen Human Settlements Officer
		UNITAR	Mr. Jacques Tassin Senior Special Fellow
<u>Specialized Agencies</u>			
<u>United Nations</u>		FAO	Mr. David Lawson FAO Liaison Office
DDSMS	Mr. Michael A. Zinovieff Chief, Geneva Office	UNESCO	Mr. Badaoui Rouhban Chief Unit for Disaster Reduction
DHA	Mr. Poul Brandrup Senior Adviser, IASB	WHO	Dr. J.R. Flores Medical Officer Development and Coordination, Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action
	Ms. Nahla Haidar Chief, DMTP		
	Mr. Klaus Wiersing Officer-in-Charge, DMB		
	Mr. Hans Zimmermann Senior Officer	ITU	Ms. Carmen Prado Consultant
UNOPS	Mr. Christophe Bouvier Chief, Rehabilitation & Social Sustainability Unit Geneva Office	WMO	Mr. Arthur Askew Chief, Water Resources Division
	Ms. Katrin Lichtenberg Associate Portfolio Manager Geneva Office		Mr. Robert Landis Director, World Weather Watch Department
			Mr. Ed Gross Consultant

Intergovernmental Organisations

ADPC Mr. John W. Barrett, AFSM
 Executive Director

 Ms. Famula Rodriguez
 Deputy Executive Director

IOC Mr. Badaoui Rouhban

ICDO Mr. Vladimir Kakusha
 Assistant to the Secretary-General

Non-Governmental Organisations

WFEO/UATI Mr. Adelin Villevielle
 Coordinator
 IDNDR Demonstration Projects, Paris
 (Also representing ICSU)

ANNEX 2**LIST OF SESSION DOCUMENTS**

IDNDR/STC/1997-2/1	Agenda
IDNDR/STC/1997-2/1/Add 1	Programme of Work
IDNDR/STC/1997-2/2	Proposed IDNDR Action Programme 1998-99

IDNDR/STC/1997-2/INF 1	List of participants
IDNDR/STC/1997-2/INF 2	List of documents

LIST OF INFORMATION PAPERS

Information Paper 1	Progress report handout
Information Paper 2	IDNDR participation in the ACC Sub-Committee on Water Resources
Information Paper 3	Regional Conference on the results of IDNDR Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. Final Document
Information Paper 4	Office for Outer Space Affairs Space technology to prevent and mitigate the effects of disasters, Overview of activities held in 1996-1997
Information Paper 5	Miami Declaration on Disaster Reduction and Sustainable Development, Florida International University
Information Paper 6	List of STC members
Information Paper 7	Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, Report of the Secretary-General
Information Paper 8	Medium Term Plan for the period 1998-2001 as revised by the General-Assembly at its fifty-first session
Information Paper 9	Environment and Sustainable Development IDNDR Improved effectiveness of early-warning systems with regard to natural and similar disasters Report of the Secretary-General
Information Paper 10	Outline of the publication "Natural Disaster Management"

Information Paper 11	Follow-up to the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction within the United Nations system-wide co-ordination of summits and world conferences and their respective action plans
Information Paper 12	Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development
Information Paper 13	Radius update
Information Paper 14	South Pacific Region initiatives for the remainder of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction
Information Paper 15	1997 World Disaster Reduction Campaign
Information Paper 16	IDNDR Task Force for the Floods in Central Europe Lessons learned
Information Paper 17	Recent activities of World Seismic Safety Initiative by Tsuneo Katayama
Information Paper 18	Plan for 3-D Full-scale Earthquake Testing Facility by Tsuneo Katayama
Information Paper 19	The Ibero-American Association of Governmental Civil Protection and Defence Organisms (A brief history)
Information Paper 20	Emergency Communications: "Telecommunications in the Service of Humanitarian Assistance" by Hans Zimmermann

ANNEX 3**AGENDA**

1. STC Internal Session (private meeting).
2. Adoption of the Agenda and Organisation of Work.
3. IDNDR Secretariat Progress Report
4. Discussion on Recent Significant Natural Disasters.
5. Review of significant activities: the Early Warning Project; the early warning conference in 1998; the annual promotion campaign; the RADIUS Project.
6. The Programme Plan 1998-99: presentation of the programme launched at the Eighth Session of the STC in Paris.
7. Appraisal process and concluding events for the Decade: activities at the global, regional and national levels.
8. Towards a Strategy for the 21st Century: proposals for a substantive approach to disaster reduction in the next millennium.
9. Secretary-General Report and General Assembly Resolution on IDNDR at the 52nd Session of the UN General Assembly.
10. Reporting by the STC Sub-committees and working groups.
11. Any Other Business.
12. Conclusions and Final Declaration.
13. Adoption of the report.