

**INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR
DISASTER REDUCTION (IDNDR)**

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Scientific and Technical Committee

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Draft Report of the Scientific and Technical Committee
on its Sixth Session

SECTION 1

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), appointed by the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/236, held its Sixth Session in Washington D.C. (U.S.A.), from 27 February to 3 March 1995, at the invitation of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and with the financial support of the U.S. Government. The list of participants appears in Annex 1.

II. OPENING OF THE SESSION

A. Introduction

The inaugural session was opened by Dr. Kintanar, Chairman of the STC. The Chair thanked N.A.S. and the U.S. Agencies co-sponsoring the meeting.

On the inaugural session, the meeting heard opening statements from the following speakers:

Mr. James Lee Witt, Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA),
Mr. Peter Hansen, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs,
Dr. Frank Press, former Director of U.S. National Academy of Sciences,
Dr. Olavi Elo, Director, IDNDR Secretariat

B. Adoption of the Agenda (annex 2)

The agenda and the programme of work were adopted with a modification of the private session which was moved from Thursday to Wednesday evening.

Upon proposal by Mr. Jim Bruce, the STC nominated Dr. Barbara Carby as Vice-Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Committee.

The STC approved names of rapporteurs for items 3, 4, 5, and 8 of the programme of work as follows:

- Item 3: Dr. Claude de Ville de Goyet from PAHO
- Item 4: Mr. Edward Gross from NOAA
- Item 5: Mr. Kevin Kennedy from UN New York (DPI)
- Item 8: Mr. Terry Jeggle, former Director of ADPC

C. General Discussion

The meeting heard and discussed a presentation by Dr. Ogawa (UNCRD) on the Japan's Kobe earthquake. Dr. Ogawa gave an overview of Kobe earthquake and considered the main aspects of Japan's disaster reduction policy.

D. IDNDR Progress Report

The Director of the Secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), presented the IDNDR progress report, which was distributed to participants. In particular, he touched the following points (see Progress Report)

III. GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Dr. Claude de Ville de Goyet (PAHO) opened the session by stressing the importance of IDNDR activities at the national and regional levels. He commended the IDNDR Regional Office in Costa Rica and underlined the partnership between PAHO and IDNDR.

The meeting heard presentations by the following speakers: Dr. Hugo Prado (sub-regional office, PAHO, Costa Rica), Ing. Vanessa Rosales (Disaster Mitigation Office, PAHO, Ecuador) and Mr. Mateo Casaverde Rio, Chairman, National IDNDR Committee, Instituto Nacional de Defensa Civil, Lima.

Mrs. Helena Molin Valdes (IDNDR Regional Office, Costa Rica) gave a short presentation on how to improve the IDNDR impact at the regional and national levels.

During the subsequent discussions, the meeting heard statements by the representative of Mexico, the Head of the IDNDR National Committee of Chili, the representative from St. Kitts and Nevis and the representatives of Kenya and Ethiopia. National representatives underlined their expectations in several fields, such as training, long term strategy, human resources development and legislative improvement, wider access to existing information, institutional capacity building.

The STC heard a presentation by Mr. Richard Moore (US Federal Emergency Management Agency) on the US national disaster mitigation strategy. Mr. Moore introduced the main features of the national strategy being finalized by FEMA. He underlined the importance of involving the private sector and the insurance industry in disaster mitigation planning. He also commended the IDNDR and the participants to the Yokohama Conference for their efforts in setting the main tracks for the elaboration of broad disaster reduction strategy.

The STC also heard a statement by Mr. Jeremy Collymore, Regional Co-ordinator, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA). He stressed the important role of the private sector, including insurance companies, in the activities being developed by CDERA. Institutional capacity building and involvement of broad sectors of society were mentioned as key-areas.

Members of the STC focused on IDNDR activities concerning the development of concrete measures for natural disaster reduction at the national and regional level. It was pointed out that, notwithstanding high expectations from several countries, many IDNDR National Committees are not active enough.

Meetings in Africa and South Pacific were mentioned as initiatives meant to encourage the culture of prevention at the regional and national levels. Mr. Bruce underlined the importance to joint projects as a means to involve national governments and international agencies.

The reduction of vulnerability to disasters was put in relation with specific needs of regional groupings having their peculiar expectations and priorities. Different institutional realities also contribute making IDNDR targets difficult to achieve on a national scale.

WHO's representative focused on the expectations of the African states in terms of disaster reduction. He stated that Africa was a typical example of the necessity of thinking globally, act locally and support regionally.

Commodore Littleton pointed out that the IDNDR concept had come in fact a long way, especially after the World Conference. He underlined the importance of key-countries paving the way towards the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy in their respective regions or subregions.

Mr. Bender (Organization of American States) talked about the IDNDR as a challenge demanding far more resources and international attention than it had at the present time. He suggested possible ways to gain more visibility, in particular by involving all institutions, including UN agencies and regional

institutions, in disaster reduction activities, within the framework of IDNDR.

The Regional Center for Seismology in Latin America was mentioned as a successful example of integrated regional activity involving 12 countries and about 100 seismologists. This initiative was set up in the spirit of IDNDR, as Dr. Giesecke said, and should be used as an example for other regions and in other fields related to disaster reduction.

A message from Mr. Vorobiev, containing proposals by the Russian IDNDR National Committee was conveyed to the meeting by Dr. Elo. The relevant paper was distributed to participants.

The Chairman commented on the discussions, stating that in spite of the frustrations expressed by many national governments and experts world-wide, the concept of disaster reduction, boosted by the IDNDR, is gaining ground in every sector of modern societies and public administrations.

IV. EARLY WARNING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

After the opening by the Chair, Mr. Edward Gross (U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration) introduced the morning session as Rapporteur.

The meeting heard a presentation by Mr. Fred Cate (Annenberg Foundation, U.S.A.) on information systems and natural disaster reduction. Mr. Cate gave an overview of most important matters relating to communications and disaster reduction, linking together the morning and afternoon session on public information and promotion.

Mr. Cate concluded by pointing out the potential role of STC members in guiding the Decade's efforts in addressing both the media and the information systems and networks relating to disaster reduction.

Mr. Peter Anderson (Simon Fraser University, Canada) gave a presentation on the latest developments in information and telecommunication technologies linked to disaster reduction and management. He also demonstrated the EPIX system, being developed by the Simon Fraser University in Canada. The demonstration featured live on-line link with Vancouver, including connection to external data banks and networks.

Mr. Edward Gross concluded with a brief presentation on information systems and IDNDR. In this context, he illustrated information needs and tools and described the HazardNet system by providing the meeting with a live on-line demonstration.

The meeting heard a presentation by Mr. Jukka Nieminen, Special Adviser, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) on Visual Settlement Planning (VISP) - VISP is a new technology approach based on GIS, enabling the user to plan for fast response, monitoring quick mapping and public awareness.

The meeting also heard a statement by Pat Bittner from PAHO, who introduced the PAHO/NASA project on Latin America focused on training.

Presentations were followed by general discussion and comments by the STC Members. The importance of information systems in preventing and managing slow-on-set natural disasters was particularly stressed.

STC was requested to give its consistent and continued inputs to organizations and entities in developing information systems for natural disaster reduction.

Mrs. Holloway stated the importance of keeping vital information on disaster reduction in the public domain, especially in developing countries. Those countries would in fact see their access to information systems sensibly reduced if information networks were not kept widely available at low cost.

Mr. Bruce commented on the proposal recently submitted to WMO, aiming at limiting the free exchange of information through the global communication network set up by WMO. Mr. Bruce encouraged all STC members to influence their governments in such a way that this proposal be rejected during the WMO congress. Mr. Bruce was asked to precise the STC position on this issue, for inclusion in final recommendations.

The chair thanked Mr F. Cate, Mr. P. Anderson, Mr. J. Nieminen for their presentations and Mr. E. Gross who was rapporteur of the session and also contributed to its organization.

V. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND PROMOTION

After her opening of the session, Mrs. Natalie Domeisen (IDNDR Secretariat Promotion Officer) introduced Mr. Kevin Kennedy (Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York) who served as rapporteur for this item.

Mr. Fred Cate (Annenberg Foundation) introduced the first part of the session featuring a panel discussion on media and disaster reduction, with the participation of Mr. Christopher Hanson ("Seattle Post Intelligence"), Mr. Marvin Kalb (Professor at the George Washington University, former Chief Diplomatic Correspondant for both CBS News and NBC News), Mrs. Johanna Neuman (Foreign Editor for "USA Today").

The panel addressed questions such as what makes natural disaster and disaster prevention news, from which angle the press consider natural disaster, sensitivity of media organizations to disaster mitigation, professional requirements for UN and other international organizations to approach correctly the media, in particular television.

After the Chair had thanked Dr. Cate for having moderated the panel discussion in the first part of the session, Mrs. Domeisen introduced the second part of the session, dedicated to discussion of conclusions and recommendations on item 5.

The general discussion focused on channels and means of spreading information on disaster reduction, depending on the local realities and opportunities made available by existing media. The specificity of target audience and messages to be sent out was stressed as the most important aspect of public information.

It was also mentioned that teacher's associations and their specialized publications would be the most suitable tool to reach children, which is vital to a long reaching programme of awareness building.

The Chair reminded participants that, besides the role of the IDNDR Secretariat in Geneva, each STC Member should be active in his respective national and sub-regional domain.

Upon request by the meeting, the IDNDR Day was introduced by Mr. Domeisen. Comments on the theme for 1995 "Women and Children, Key to Prevention" were made by several STC Members.

Presentation on Kobe earthquake by Mr. Takeda

Mr. Atsushi Takeda, STC Member, gave a presentation on the Kobe earthquake of January 1995. The presentation focused on scientific and seismological aspects of the earthquake, as well as lessons learned in the preparedness and relief fields.

The STC decided to convey to Japan's authorities a message of sympathy and hope, based on the lessons learned on the occasion of the Kobe earthquake. The STC expressed his appreciation for Japan's high grade of preparedness which prevented human and economic losses from being even greater.

VI. ECONOMICS OF DISASTERS

The Chair opened the session and introduces Mr. Mohan Munasinghe, Chief of the Environmental Economics Division of the World Bank. Mr. Munasinghe gave a presentation on cost-effectiveness of disaster reduction. The presentation focused on the main arguments upon which cost-benefit analysis of disaster

reduction policies is based. Points made by Mr. Munasinghe are contained in the draft report of the Yokohama Conference session on economics of disasters distributed to the meeting as information paper No.22.

A panel of STC Members continued the discussion on economic aspects of disaster reduction and possible ways to involve the World Bank and other financial institutions in disaster reduction.

The World Bank is presently collaborating to an IDNDR project aimed at gathering and analysing case studies on cost effectiveness of disaster reduction.

Prof. Arya gave a brief demonstration of cost of hazard resistance measures for traditional masonry. He stated that those few low cost measures should be included in development projects involving construction or reconstruction.

The meeting also discussed about insurance and reinsurance industries as valuable partners in conveying to the general public the need for developing a global culture of prevention.

VII. OUTCOME OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE AND UNGA RESOLUTIONS

After the opening by the Chair, Dr. Elo, Director of the IDNDR Secretariat, introduced resolutions 49/22 A and 49/22 B (information papers 8 and 9) as well as the IDNDR Action Programme for 1995 (information paper 12).

Dr. Elo pointed out contents of resolutions particularly relevant to the STC. He requested STC Members to express their advice on the reorganization of the Special High-Level Council for IDNDR.

STC requested the IDNDR Secretariat to share with the STC Members drafts and reports being produced in relation to dispositions of resolution 49/22 B on Early Warnings.

WMO stated its full availability to co-operate with IDNDR in fulfilling the mandate given to the IDNDR Secretariat in resolution 49/22 B.

It was also pointed out that, technological hazards being included in resolution 49/22 B, the STC and the IDNDR Secretariat should establish relations with a local and international entities dealing with technological disasters.

VIII. PROGRAMME FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE DECADE

The Chairman introduced Mr. Terry Jeggle, rapporteur for

item 8. Mr. Jeggle briefed the meeting on the discussion paper distributed to STC with the title "Preparing for 2000: an IDNDR Programme Framework for 1995-1999".

Mr. Jeggle explained the purposes of the document, which in its final version will have to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council in April 1995. Also, he briefed the meeting on the policy guidelines which inform the strategy outlined in the paper.

A round table debate on the discussion paper followed. It was noted that the discussion paper offered the basis for a strategy for the institutionalization of disaster reduction beyond the year 2000, as well as set the tracks for the action programme for the remainder of the Decade.

The future of disaster reduction beyond the Decade was also considered by the meeting. Statements were made as to whether IDNDR should seek institutionalisation of disaster reduction within DHA or elsewhere. Dr. Carby, Vice-Chairman of the STC, affirmed that the future of disaster reduction should rely on a UN body or agency seriously committed in this field.

The representative from DHA made a statement commending the IDNDR Secretariat and the STC for the objectives achieved so far. He also affirmed that DHA was discussing internally as to whether IDNDR should find a more secure position within the Department. In addressing this topic, the DHA representative stated the necessity for IDNDR to continue in addressing the UN member states in order to seek determinant support.

UNESCO's representative insisted on the importance of a strong and stable IDNDR Secretariat, as it is the only tool to enable Decade's partners to reach their objectives in disaster reduction.

The representative from WMO endorsed UNESCO's statement. He added that, although WMO had not expressed its views on a possible strategy for beyond the Decade, he felt that determining such a strategy should become one of the STC specific tasks during the second half of the Decade.

It was pointed out that a more significant role of STC in the international domain for the remainder of the decade would only be achieved if STC were able to rely on a more stable IDNDR Secretariat.

Discussing the future role of the Special High-Level Council for IDNDR, the Chair endorsed UNESCO's point of view concerning the setting up of a new SHLC able to be mobilized on several key issues relating to both disaster reduction at the regional and national levels and securing visibility and financial support to the IDNDR Secretariat.

SECTION 2

Conclusions on Item 3

National, Regional and Global Strategies

A. Some highlighted points:

- If the goal of the Decade is to reduce the impact of natural disasters at country level, we need to understand that this vulnerability is not uniform - that all the countries have different starting points vis a vis disaster reduction. Perhaps this means we should not limit ourselves to one global strategy as this limits flexibility of approach. Far better to focus our efforts at sub-regional or regional levels where there can be greater flexibility and awareness of opportunities for disaster reduction.

- One of the reasons why it is difficult for developing countries to buy into the Decade and its structures is the lack of ownership they feel towards an initiative whose inception has occurred far away in the world. Again this issue could be at least in part addressed by better mobilizing sub-regional focal points in developing countries. - empowering them to chose their own pace and strategy to use the most appropriate receptive agencies/channels to promote disaster reduction - depending on each country i.e could be M.O Health, M.O. Civil Protection, IDNDR National Committees, local UNICEF office, Red Cross - whatever.

If IDNDR wants to work with focal points closer to the ground, those focal points are in the best position to identify which structures to work with.

- How to support country efforts in the presence of declining resources and comparative "disadvantages" of mitigation versus relief. Secretariat to advocate with an international development and financing organizations i.e. IMF, WB, EU/ECHO, NORAD, USAID, CIDA etc to incorporate funding for mitigation in both development and emergency relief financing agreements at country level.

B. The STC adopted the following recommendations:

- The IDNDR Secretariat and the STC should approach regional or sub-regional organizations and national groupings to develop or consolidate partnerships (PAHO, OAU, SADDC, CDERA, ASEAN, etc.) to promote disaster reduction activities. STC Members from regions concerned should be actively involved in these activities.

- The Secretariat should pursue and expand to other regions joint initiatives like presently carried out in Latin America and the Caribbean. Resources should be mobilized jointly to ensure a continuing presence of the IDNDR Secretariat at national, subregional/regional level.
- At a global level the IDNDR Secretariat and STC should pursue strong advocacy role with international development agencies and senior government officials, especially through the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, ECOSOC, UN Development Programme, Habitat, World Bank, Regional Development Banks etc.
- STC and the IDNDR Secretariat should continue to distribute to regional organizations and National Committees all relevant reports and information.
- STC and the IDNDR Secretariat must develop a vision or concept of joint Decade actions and communicate these concepts for feed-back to regional and national organizations. STC and the IDNDR Secretariat should also request National Committees to elaborate specific reports on various aspects of disaster mitigation (will help keep committees alive, thinking and active).
- National and regional disaster reduction activities should be emphasized in the preparations for the second world conference at the end of the Decade.
- STC Members should also promote disaster mitigation (and IDNDR) in all relevant regional and international conferences and meetings.
- STC should further strengthening collaboration with UNEP and UNCHS (Habitat) because of their prominent environmental and regional role.
- In the aftermath of the tragic Kobe earthquake, ASEAN and other regional groupings should be approached to develop co-operation in disaster reduction, emphasizing "lessons learned".
- The Secretariat should encourage the development of joint projects at sub-regional level to promote disaster reduction, following the example of those carried out in Latin America and by Mexico-USA-Canada for the exchange of experience and policies, programs and legislation.

C. Country expectations of the IDNDR bodies expressed during the meeting by representatives from the IDNDR National Committees of Mexico, Chile, St. Kitts and Nevis, Kenya, Ethiopia and Peru:

- Support training for key personnel and policy makers, including legislators.
- Support long-term strategies for development that integrate disaster reduction.
- Facilitate country access to existing information sources.
- Support the creation or strengthening of National Disaster Management Institutions (multisectoral).
- Promote and support the exchange of regional or neighboring countries experience and development of knowledge.
- Stimulate more national participation from vulnerable countries in international events. Stimulate bi-national or regional meetings (STC members should participate).
- Disseminate information to vulnerable countries in their own languages.
- Promote more actively the environmental linkages to disaster reduction.
- Mobilize more resources for disaster mitigation. Implement pilot projects with national and local impacts.

A clear message to the STC members:

- Contribute actively to convince political (policy-making) levels, the private sector and funding agencies of the need for disaster mitigation in development context.

D. The STC was informed of and endorsed the following up-coming meetings:

- An International Health Facility Mitigation Meeting to be held in February 1996, organized by PAHO/WHO with support from the IDNDR-DHA, the World Bank, ECLAC, OAS, and others. It is a policy meeting to adopt frameworks for mitigation policies in disaster service sector.
- End of April, beginning of May 1995 the Peruvian Government is sponsoring and International IDNDR meeting to follow up on national strategies after the Yokohama Conference in junction with the 25th anniversary of the Huaylas earthquake and landslide that killed around 60.000 people.

Conclusions on item 4

Early Warning and Information Systems

Bearing in mind the IDNDR goal of improving ready access to global, regional, national and local warnings and the UN General Assembly resolution A/49/22 B on Environmental Early Warnings, the STC:

Endorses the international development of HazardNet which embodies the experience of the Emergency Preparedness Information

Exchange and HazardNet's predecessor IERRIS, along with regional and sub-regional networking initiatives.

Urges the Secretariat and STC Members to ensure the coordination of other related international initiatives with HazardNet, and to make all efforts to ensure support for HazardNet and related activities.

Urges that these efforts be used to foster further initiatives in this field.

Recommends that the following measures and actions should be undertaken:

- a. A user survey - To help determine information and communication requirements and availability in order to develop and improve channels for effective information collection and exchange.
- b. Ensure that the operational component of the system satisfies user needs in the decision making process.
- c. Develop scenarios to demonstrate how HazardNet could operate during natural hazard occurrences.
- d. Scale capabilities to user needs and resources.
- e. Use international codes and graphical techniques in the warning dissemination process.

The STC will contribute to the HazardNet development effort by:

- a. Providing advice and recommendations for improving capabilities
- b. Identifying data sources
- c. Organizing, participating and evaluating results of demonstration projects

From the perspective of early warning and information systems, the STC recommends that the following aspects be given due consideration:

- a. Assurance that data and information required for disaster mitigation remain in the public domain.

* An STC decision (annex 4 to this report) supports the continued and free open exchange of hydrometeorological information. This decision will be forwarded to the Secretary General of WMO.

- b. Concerns related to costs, access and privatization of information and networks.
- c. Authenticity of warnings and other critical information required in preparing for and responding to natural hazards.
- d. Network security.

The STC also

Acknowledges the G7 Ministers Information Society Conference Initiative Project 6b on a Global Emergency Management Information Network;

Endorses ITU Resolutions COM 4/14 and 7 referring to IDNDR and the need to take into consideration disaster reduction in developing emergency telecommunications;

Encourages the Working Group on Emergency Telecommunications (WGET) and the other UN organizations and bodies involved in the preparations for the international convention on emergency telecommunications, to continue in giving due consideration to disaster reduction matters;

Conclusions on Item 5

Public information and promotion

Discussion on public information/promotion activities

1. STC members engaged in a wide-ranging discussion of the means for increasing the visibility of IDNDR and projecting the message that "prevention pays" by minimizing the vulnerability of communities and reducing the damage caused by natural disasters. Several key points emerged:

a. Efforts to convince the major international media to reflect IDNDR concerns about prevention and mitigation in press reports are worthwhile, but greater use of alternative channels of communication at local, national and regional levels are likely to be more fruitful.

b. Efforts to promote IDNDR and its message should be undertaken at a variety of levels, and through a variety of channels. Opportunities should be seized for communicating with the public and policy makers through the national and international media, relevant UN system vehicles and institutions of civil society. Promotional efforts should be appropriate to the target audience, and should be timed to coincide with seasonal or other factors likely to maximize their impact.

c. Greater emphasis should be placed on initiatives at the national and regional levels, particularly those aimed at educating children, women and teachers about the decade and its message.

d. STC members, national committees and focal points should be encouraged to play a more active role in stimulating such initiatives. Efforts at the national level and those by the IDNDR Secretariat at the international level should be mutually supportive. The timely input of individual STC members - for example, by supplying data on successful prevention or lessons learned in the wake of disasters for wider dissemination - is essential to the Secretariat's work.

e. At the international level, the IDNDR Secretariat should seek the cooperation of other parts of the UN system to incorporate the IDNDR message in reports, such as the State of the World's Children or Human Development Report, and other vehicles that reach policy - and decision makers.

Panel discussion with U.S. journalists

2. While stressing the "nationality of the news" and the particular working constraints on U.S. journalists, a panel (Marvin Kalb, lecturer at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and former senior television correspondent; Johanna Newman, Foreign Editor of USA Today, and Christopher Hanson, Hearst Newspapers Washington Bureau Chief and former Reuter correspondent), made several points regarding attempts to encourage media coverage of IDNDR themes:

- a. Recognize journalist's needs and the constraints they face in terms of deadlines and, frequently, a lack of familiarity with the topics or regions they must cover. Help journalists identify what is crucial and important about developments relating to IDNDR and its themes. This includes identifying and explaining trends, or elements that made a difference in the way a disaster unfolded.
- b. News organizations are not faceless monoliths. Identify journalists who regularly cover IDNDR-related themes and events and cultivate a one-on-one relationship with them. This includes briefing them in advance about significant developments that are likely to occur. Be selective. Do not overwhelm the press with details, lengthy reports or too much attention.
- c. Make available to the press directories of experts competent to comment on various aspects of disasters, their prevention and mitigation.

- d. Exploit the potential for "contrarian stories". Make use of the opportunities presented by the occurrence of a disaster for making information about preventive measures, which made, or which could have made a difference in its impact.
- e. Anniversaries of previous disasters also provide a potential occasion for encouraging such stories. Use regulations or industry practices requiring the media to print or broadcast public service announcements to the maximum extent possible.

3. A central theme running throughout the panel discussion was that U.S. journalists did not consider it "their job" to educate the public about prevention and preparedness. Coverage of AIDS in the U.S. media provided some evidence to the contrary, but this is, to some extent, an anomaly. Therefore, the STC and IDNDR Secretariat should not exaggerate the potential for projecting the Decade's message in the media, particularly the commercial media. Another important theme was the "audience focus" of the media

While the panelists emphasized this as a characteristic of the U.S. media, there is considerable evidence that this is also true of other national, or local media as well.

4. An implicit message in the discussion was that if the commercial press was not likely to serve as the primary, or even the principal means for public education about IDNDR themes, then it was necessary to identify other channels. These would include government agencies and other institutions which have the specific responsibility for disaster prevention and preparedness, and non-governmental organizations. IDNDR should enhance its outreach to such groups.

Conclusions on Item 6

Economics of disasters

The STC recommends that:

- hard data and figures be collated in order to understand the insurance industry's attitude towards natural disaster reduction.
- the World Bank will pursue efforts in analyzing economics of disasters so that this way lead to future concrete involvement of the World Bank in the implementation of disaster reduction projects.
- the World Bank and other financial institutions consider disaster reduction as a parameter for project development and implementation, following the principle that disaster reduction is part of sustainable development.

- the banking community and the insurance industry participate actively in setting up appropriate procedures and policies to incentive the adoption of hazard-resistant measures by the general public.

Conclusions on Item 7

Outcome of the World Conference and UNGA resolutions

The Scientific and Technical Committee for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Concerned about the lack of financial security and the priority given in the UN system to IDNDR, particularly in view of the consensus reached at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction at Yokohama, May 1994, which was consequently endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 49/22 A;

Urges the Secretary-General and the Heads of UN organizations and Specialized Agencies of the UN system, to take the appropriate measures to guarantee the financial security and priority to disaster reduction in their programmes, so that resolution 49/22 A be implemented in the consensus spirit of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action;

Authorizes the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Committee for IDNDR to write to the Secretary-General and to the Heads of the Organizations of the UN system accordingly.

Recommends that STC Members and the IDNDR Secretariat establish relations with national, regional and international entities dealing with technological hazards, according to the new tasks given to IDNDR by resolution 49/22 B.

Affirms that the effectiveness of Early Warning systems relies on strong and effective preparedness programmes at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

Conclusions on Item 8

The Scientific and Technical Committee for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Pleased with the participation and active involvement of UNCHS (Habitat), UNESCO, WHO, WHO/PAHO, the World Bank and WMO in the Sixth Session of the Scientific and Technical Committee and in the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

Encourages further collaboration between the IDNDR Secretariat and the organizations and specialized agencies of the

UN system within the Decade framework, concluding agreements leading to joint programme development for the second half of the Decade and beyond, using the Inter-Agency Steering Committee Working Group as coordinating mechanisms;

Requests the IDNDR Secretariat to work out similar collaborating mechanisms with the main Decade partners in the private sector and with non-governmental organizations, possibly inviting them to participate in the Inter-Agency Steering Committee Working Group;

Recommends the assigning of collaborating centres and other networks of institutions and individuals to support strengthening of national, regional and global capacities for disaster reduction.