

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

Scientific and Technical Committee

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IDNDR INFORMATION STRATEGY

1. The major assumptions behind the information strategy outlined for the Decade are:
 - (a) the possibility of achieving a significant reduction in natural disasters through the mobilization of international cooperation in the utilization of existing but underutilized advances in the fields of science and technology (major targets: governments in industrialized and developing countries, the scientific community, the media);
 - (b) the possibility of achieving significant reductions in loss of life and damage to property by improving coverage and credibility of warning systems (major targets: the media, the scientific community, disaster prone communities);
 - (c) the possibility of aligning disaster reduction measures with development plans without compromising the latter and even guaranteeing its sustainability (major targets: Governments in developing countries, disaster prone communities);
 - (d) the possibility and cost-effectiveness of re-channeling resources from emergency relief to disaster prevention programmes (major targets: Governments and funding institutions and major humanitarian organizations in industrialized countries);
2. Based on the above assumptions, four major objectives, target groups and methods for information exchange and dissemination have been outlined in the information strategy. The four major objectives are:
 - (a) to facilitate the collection and analysis of existing data and other disaster related information;
 - (b) to promote the dissemination of data and knowledge related to disaster reduction and information derived from data analysis;

- (c) to publicize the Decade itself and what it aims to achieve and
- (d) to mobilize support for the Decade's programme.

Objective 1: To facilitate the collection and analysis of existing data and other disaster-related information

3. One of the important tasks envisaged in this sphere is the establishment and/or strengthening of links between major Decade partners (i.e. between information generators, transmitters and users) from national to global levels.

4. At present there are a number of centres throughout the world which are involved in research work related to disaster reduction. A permanent and functional link between these centres and disaster-prone countries ought to be established for the realization of the envisaged transfer of findings and experience in the field of disaster reduction and also to strengthen the basis of the research work of the centres. As part of an STC recommendation and as an initial step which would contribute to efforts in this direction, the IDNDR Secretariat has recently invited all IDNDR national committees to join the United Nations International Emergency Network (UNIENET). The network provides an easy access to an important body of information on disaster management and also facilitates an important link between the world-wide disaster management community.

5. An initiative which would further bring together the world-wide disaster management community is IERRIS (The International Emergency Readiness and Response Information System) initiated by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in cooperation with CRED (The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters), USAID (The United States Agency for International Aid) and the IFRC (The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) amongst others, within the framework of the IDNDR. This initiative which aims at the establishment of a much awaited for world-wide network of information systems or a central data base crucial for strategic planning, mobilization of support response management, prevention and research activities should be further supported and concretized.

6. Strengthening data collection, analysis and dissemination capacity at national and regional levels is another major recommendation made by the STC in this sphere. The establishment of regional institutions, where these do not exist, and support to national institutions in disaster-prone countries would be an important step in this direction. Support to the establishment of an African Multi-Disciplinary Centre on Disasters (Recommendation of the Regional Meeting on Natural Disasters in Africa, organized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction) for instance, would contribute significantly to the realization of IDNDR objectives in the region. (Draft project proposal organized by the OAU secretariat with technical assistance from DHA). Support to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) which seeks assistance to assume additional information related functions is also recommended.

7. An improved and effective utilization of terrestrial and satellite communications technologies holds a widely-recognized potential in the flow of information aimed at the prediction, prevention and mitigation of disasters. Indeed this is one area where the application of science and technology is expected to assist in the reduction of natural disasters.

8. The International Conference on Disaster communications organized by UNDRO under the aegis of IDNDR in 1990 identified major needs in the field of disaster communications and also proposed corresponding recommendations to be implemented under the leadership of UNDRO within the IDNDR framework. The Tampere Conference which brought together experts in communications and disaster management (Tampere, Finland, May 1991) also outlined a number of recommendations, chief amongst which, is the development of an international convention on disaster communications which would establish mechanisms for international cooperation in the use of communications technology for disaster management.

9. In concurrence with the follow-up to be given by DHA to the above-stated recommendations, the IDNDR Secretariat proposes the establishment of a communications advisory group to the decade which would:

- (a) identify priority areas in disaster reduction efforts which would benefit from existing communications technology,
- (b) identify potential projects and formulate appropriate plans for their implementation within the Decade period (with priority given to disaster-prone countries which do not have any or adequate access to communications technology and expertise, and to regional and inter-regional joint ventures),
- (c) examine and propose strategies for the implementation of the Decade's third target (i.e. the setting up of local, regional and global early warning system by the year 2000),
- (d) provide advice on the application of new technology and systems which would have maximum benefit in disaster reduction, and
- (e) identify the organizational structure, methods of operation and possible sources of funding and cooperative arrangements which can be entered into with other organizations for the implementation of the above-stated proposals.

The members of the proposed advisory group could comprise of disaster management and communications personnel from disaster-prone countries, representatives of major emergency relief organizations and institutes of communications, and scientists who have already made important contributions to this effort (eg. the Annenberg International Disaster communications Project group).

Objective 2: To promote the dissemination of data and knowledge related to disaster reduction and information derived from data analysis

10. Guaranteeing the availability of information on disaster reduction, although important, is only part of the process. As the ultimate goal of the strategy is to motivate people to adopt or promote, as the case may be, measures which will lead to disaster reduction, a long term strategy which would establish a stable communicative relationship is required between generators, transmitters and users of information.

11. In the implementation of an information strategy for a Decade programme which calls on the participation of several groups (disaster prone communities, governments in developing and industrialized countries, the scientific community, the media, etc.), it is necessary to identify priority areas and common strategies in order to achieve tangible results by the end of the Decade which can then form a good basis for continuing efforts in set directions. This in turn, requires that the joint efforts between the Decade partners starts out from a common or agreed upon point (basis).

12. Accordingly, the implementation of an information strategy which focuses on the three major targets of the Decade is proposed. i.e.

- (a) the undertaking of national assessment of risks
- (b) the formulation of national and/or local prevention and preparedness plans and
- (c) the setting up of local, national and global warning systems.

13. An information campaign which would concentrate on these targets on a phased (step by step) basis annually or bi-annually as the case may be, would facilitate the mobilization of international participation along a clearly defined path. In each campaign phase the scientific community, governments, disaster-prone communities, the media and all other Decade partners would be asked to contribute their share to the achievement of each target which can be planned and also quantified in terms of achievement. This approach would also facilitate the mobilization, prioritization and channelling of support to a selected number of disaster prone-groups, countries or regions which might seek assistance or collaborative efforts in each case. But most important, this approach would ensure that the important and basic questions of who is vulnerable to disasters why at what level etc. would be answered for all and particularly to the disaster-prone communities, and addressed sequentially, before any attempt at transmitting information on disaster reduction measures is made.

14. The themes for each International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction could then be selected in line with the above-stated targets (eg. "identifying hazards and disaster vulnerable communities" for target A) etc. Information and promotional material, like posters, leaflets, brochures, basic manuals, calendars, greeting cards, video tapes, etc. which would support each campaign phase can be organized accordingly by the IDNDR Secretariat.

15. International art competitions for different age groups which would be first preceded by competitions at national levels will also be organized to promote each campaign phase theme. Other activities like workshops, press briefings etc. can also be organized around annual IDNDR days both at national and international levels. National IDNDR Committees have already displayed a rich experience and a range of innovative methods for observing the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction (Pls. refer to annexed report on the observance of the 1992 International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction).

16. Workshops and seminars which would check the smooth functioning of the contact and communicative relationship between the major partners in information (i.e. between the scientific community, disaster management practitioners, the media and the general public) can also be held periodically through out the implementation phase of the strategy.

Objective 3 and 4: To publicize the Decade itself and what it aims to achieve and to mobilize support for the Decade's programme

17. Support for the Decade's programmes can be sought along the above phased and focussed approach and important collaborative efforts with the media and research centres will be explored to highlight information on the destructive effects of natural disasters, on the cost-effectiveness of disaster reduction measures on lessons to be acquired on new findings etc. by forming inter-connections between disaster areas and scientists in research centres via media channels on real or near real-time basis. The relationship with the media at national and international levels will also be utilized to transmit information on successful national IDNDR programmes, on exemplary regional and international joint ventures and practical information on disaster reduction.

18. Members of the Special High Level Council are expected to play an important role in the mobilization of support for the Decade's programmes and the above-stated approach of dividing the Decade into phases is expected to facilitate efforts aimed at the mobilization of support for the Decade's programmes.

OBSERVANCE OF THE 1992 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

The 1992 International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction was observed under the theme: "Natural Disaster Reduction for Sustainable Development". An encouraging participation in the observance programme was registered both at national and international levels.

A. INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

1 - A statement by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, was released on the occasion of IDNDR Day 1992. In his statement, the Secretary-General pointed out the serious threat which natural disasters pose to sustainable development and called for an integrated approach and a strengthened coordination of efforts and strategies among all actors involved in development and relief work, to achieve the desired reduction in loss of life, property damage and social and economic disruption caused by natural disasters.

2 - At a press conference held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, Mr. Jan Eliasson, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Mr. James P. Bruce, Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Committee of IDNDR, briefed correspondents on; the growing human and economic losses resulting from natural disasters; the importance of natural disaster reduction for sustainable development and the opportunity which the Decade programme offers for international co-operation in the field of natural disaster reduction.

3 - A similar press briefing was given to members of the media in Geneva by Mr. Charles H. LaMunière, Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

4 - Messages on the occasion of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction were also released to the media by the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization and the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

B. NATIONAL LEVEL

National IDNDR Committees displayed an active interest in the observance Day and used the opportunity for promoting the Decade's objectives and for mobilizing support for disaster reduction activities. The IDNDR Secretariat dispatched the following material to supplement their efforts:

- (a) communication containing proposals on observance programmes
- (b) a set of posters and stickers featuring the theme chosen for the year i.e. "Natural Disaster Reduction for Sustainable Development"
- (c) a fact sheet on IDNDR
- (d) a video report which highlights the relationship between Disasters and Development ("Disaster Mitigation", a production of the Disaster Management Centre of the University of Wisconsin)
- (e) a set of UNDP and DHA publications including DMTP modules which deal with the subject of Disasters and Development
- (f) a summary of major Disasters in 1992 (source: DHA)
- (g) data on the impact of recent disasters (source: Munich Re, an insurance company in the FRG)

Summary of reports, newspaper clippings and copies of other media coverage received on observance activities from National IDNDR Committees (listed alphabetically)

Antigua and Barbuda

TV and radio reports which highlighted both on-going and completed disaster mitigation programmes in the country were broadcast on IDNDR Day in addition to newspaper coverages of the Decade's objectives.

Australia

The Tasmania State Emergency Service arranged public static displays on the 14th of October at Hobart City Mall, Launceston City Mall and the Burnie City Council Chambers to increase public awareness of the concept and principles of IDNDR and Tasmania's emergency management arrangements. In addition to the Tasmania State Emergency Service, the Australian Red Cross Society, the Bureau of Meteorology, the Rivers and Waters Commission, the Tasmania Police and the Tasmania Fire and Ambulance Services displayed material which depicted efforts underway in emergency prevention and mitigation.

In Canberra, a seminar which looked into the losses which natural disaster incur in the country and the potential risks from environmental hazards, was held on 14 October 1992. Presentations on these topics were made by Professors from the Australian National University, the University of Western Sydney, the Minister of Urban Services and a representative from the Bureau of Meteorology in Western Australia. A presentation was also made by the National Disaster and Emergency Coordinator of the Republic of Vanuatu.

Bangladesh

As a function organization to mark IDNDR Day in Bangladesh, the President of the country was present along with other high-ranking officials and head of missions in Dhaka. "Disasters, the Environment and Development: a complex link" a UN Focus article produced by the United Nations Information Center, was reproduced by two leading national dailies, the "Bangladesh Observer" and the "Bangladesh Times". The Government of Bangladesh has taken steps to establish a National Disaster Prevention Council headed by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Bolivia

The National Coordinator of IDNDR activities made a presentation on a TV programme which explained the 1992 theme of IDNDR Day. A video cassette on disaster reduction was screened on the national TV Service and articles on IDNDR were published in "El Diaro" a daily newspaper in Bolivia.

Brazil

In connection with the 1992 International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, a TV programme entirely dedicated to Natural Disaster Reduction and co-produced by the United Nations Information Center in Rio was broadcast nationwide by the Brazilian Educational and Governmental Television Network, TVE.

British Virgin Islands

The Office of Disaster Preparedness in the British Virgin Islands organized a three week programme to observe the 1992 International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction. In the second week of October, the Coordinator of the Office of Disaster Preparedness, visited 18 schools in the territory delivering lectures on IDNDR and its relevance to the British Virgin Islands. Also included in this programme, were sessions on hurricane tracking, the interpretation of different types of weather notices and the corresponding preparedness actions to be taken in each case. Information material were also distributed to the children on the same occasion. In the following week, the Emergency Operation Centre organized a visit programme to its office complex and tours and demonstrations were conducted for the general public, members of the media and school children by the Emergency Telecommunications Manager and the Disaster Preparedness Officer. An annual radio quiz programme scheduled between September 28th - October 16th, was this year dedicated to IDNDR day observance and emergency equipment like sleeping bags, flash lights, portable radios and first aid kits were given out as prizes to winners of the quiz programme. On the 14th, the Chief Minister of British Virgin Islands addressed the territory stressing the commitment of the territory to the Decade and its implementation programme in the territory. Also on the same day, a press conference focusing on the 1992 IDNDR day observance programme and the significance of the decade to the Islands, was given by the Chairman of the National Emergency Committee and the Coordinator of the Office of Disaster Preparedness. The most lively and colorful part of the programme occurred in the third week of October where a walkathon was organized for school groups of the territory. All participants were given IDNDR T-shirts, which featured the International logo and the major activities which need to be addressed to bring about disaster reduction in the territory (building codes, etc.). The children walked from the main square to one of the most famous beaches where a "disaster rap" (song), poetry and essay competitions were held under the theme "How can natural disaster reduction contribute to sustainable development?". Leaflets and other information material were also distributed from an information booth set up on the beach by the Office of Disaster Preparedness.

China

A series of commemorative events were conducted in China to mark the IDNDR Day 1992. On 11 October 1992, the China National Committee for IDNDR convened an "IDNDR International Day Conference" which was attended by more than 200 people. The participants included government officials, experts, scholars, representatives of the media and the United Nations agencies.

Mr. Chen Hong, Secretary General of CNCIDNDR and Vice Minister of Civil Affairs, presided over the conference and Mr. Tian Jiyun Vice Premier of the State Council and Chairman of the China National Committee for IDNDR, Mr. Yang Zhenhuai, Minister of Water Resources and Ms. Deng Nan, Vice Chairman of the State Science and Technology Commission gave presentations at the Conference. An award ceremony was held in the evening of 11 October to present prizes to artists who had won the 1992 "Disaster Reduction Contribution Award". From October 13 to mid-November, an "International Disaster Reduction Knowledge Contest" was held by the China International Broadcasting Station, in which listeners from all walks of life participated. The China Central TV (CCTV) produced in its weekend prime time, a special programme entitled "Peace, Disaster Reduction and Development", which highlighted the government's policy in disaster reduction and enhanced public awareness of disaster reduction. Furthermore, over 10 provinces/cities also observed IDNDR Day in different forms.

Colombia

The National Directorate for Disaster Prevention organized a seminar in Bogota which concentrated on earthquake risks in Colombia. Representatives of various technical, academic and research institutions, journalists and students took part in the seminar. The major highlight of the observance programme in Colombia was the launching of a teaching manual entitled "My friend Earth, Let us get ready for the next (earth) quake". The manual which is the product of a joint effort between several institutions was widely publicized and distributed in several hundred copies. Other regional and local committees also commemorated IDNDR Day with different types of programmes which dealt with other natural hazards.

Costa Rica

A one-week programme was organized in Costa Rica to mark the 1992 IDNDR Day. A five-day conference which dealt with different topics of disaster reduction, video presentations and a successful exhibition in which the Red Cross, the Fire Brigade, PAHO and book editors, among other groups participated, were jointly organized by the National Emergency Commission, the Regional Emergency Commission of Cartago, the Technology Institute of Costa Rica and the Regional IDNDR Secretariat Officer. The exhibition was visited by more than 6,000 people, including school children.

Cuba

The Third International Congress on Disasters was held in Havana between 12-15 October 1992 within the framework of the 1992 IDNDR Day programme. Close to 100 papers on various topics of disaster reduction were presented and related round tables, workshops and demonstrations were also held concurrently within the stated period.

The congress which was jointly organized by the WHO Pan American Health Organization, the Academy of Sciences of Cuba, the Ministries of Agriculture and Health of Cuba, the Cuban Red Cross and the National staff of the Civil Defence was attended by more than 200 participants from Cuba, the United Nations Agencies and other International Organizations.

Egypt

"What a coincidence! an earthquake hits Egypt on the World Day for Disaster Control" runs a headline on "The Pyramids" an Arabic daily published in Egypt. The coincidence was a source of interest for journalists in other parts of the world too including participants of the two press conferences organized on the international level on 13 and 14 October 1992 in New York and Geneva. Prior to the earthquake incident, and as part of the IDNDR day observance programme channel I on the National Television devoted one of its programmes to introduce the IDNDR and the work of the National Committee. On Friday 9 October, an interview with the Director of the Civil Defence was broadcast on "Think a few Seconds and Win a few Minutes" a weekly TV Programme. On the 11th and 12th Al-Akhbar (The News) a national newspaper and Al-Wafd (The Delegation), a leading opposition newspaper also came out with articles on plans for disaster mitigation activities in Egypt and the Middle East. Media coverage after the earthquake incident on the 12th and up to the end of October were devoted to the losses incurred, emergency relief activities and future plans with regard to preparedness and prevention.

El Salvador

A discussion forum under the theme "Natural Disaster Reduction through Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation" was held in El Salvador in connection with the 1992 IDNDR day. The objectives of the National IDNDR Committee and its activities, the role of the media in the prevention of natural disasters, emergency plans in school curricula, strategies for prevention and mitigation and threats to the environment were some of the topics considered by the participants of the discussion forum.

The forum was organized by the Ministry of Education, the Disaster Technical Unit, the Inter-institutional Technical Disaster Committee (COTIDE) with the support of the Italian Cooperation, PRODERE, UNDP, PAHO/WHO, Red Cross, Green Cross, the City's Fire Brigades, the Ministries of Interior and Public Works and Non-governmental organizations.

Federal Republic of Germany

The German National IDNDR Committee organized a press conference on IDNDR Day which received wide coverage in the media. A joint statement signed by all committee members was also released to the press on the same occasion. As part of the preparations for the day, a paper entitled "The economic, political and ethical dimensions of disaster prevention" was published by the Executive Director of the German Committee for IDNDR.

France

A meeting organized by the French National IDNDR Committee and chaired by Mr. Henri Legrand, from Major Hazards, Ministry of Environment, brought together approximately forty people including representatives of eight French Ministries, the UN, UNESCO, the Swiss National IDNDR Committee, representatives of the scientific community and non-governmental organizations.

The meeting served as an opportunity to recall the twenty recommendations appearing in the "Guideline for IDNDR programmes" published by the French National IDNDR Committee in May 1992. These recommendations concern research and increasing public awareness of natural hazards and organizing training and education in France. Two important regional co-operation programmes, proposed by the French National IDNDR Committee, were also mentioned, i.e. "Risk Management for Cyclones, Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Tsunamis, Floods and Landslides", in the Caribbean, and "Risk Management for Earthquake and Floods in major cities in the Mediterranean".

The willingness of the scientific community to join efforts in contributing to the decade programme, was noted as well as the need of sensitizing government ministries to extend the necessary financial backing which will be necessary to achieve decade targets. The meeting which was preceded by a press conference, attended by 14 journalists from the daily press and scientific magazines, was reported upon extensively.

Haiti

The Haiti National Committee for the IDNDR organized a week long "Natural Disaster Prevention" programme from 12 to 16 October 1992. On 13 October 1992, a press conference was held by the National Committee at the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP) to inform the public about the history, composition, role, objectives and activities of the National Committee. On the 14th, a panel discussion with specialized technicians was held at the Ministry of National Education. The discussion covered the following subjects: disastrous fires, environment, city planning, health, and meteorology in the context of durable development in Haiti. The conference was attended by journalists from the print and electronic media. A further debate covering the same topics was held on the national television.

Holy See

Disaster Prevention and the Decade were the subject of a radio announcement and press release on 14.10.92.

An article by the Pontifical Council was published in "Osservatore Romano" (Newspaper) and also broadcast on Radio Vatican. In his message for Lent 1993, Pope John Paul II referred to the problem of desertification and its consequences and to ecological balance which is threatened by uncontrolled industrial development.

Honduras

In Honduras, the whole month of October and the first week of November were dedicated to disaster preparedness activities. The programme started with an awareness raising seminar for owners and managers of major media agencies and was subsequently followed up by a workshop for 25 journalists from all over the country. The workshop concentrated on ways of handling information in the event of a disaster and on the role of the media in disaster preparedness in general. A follow-up workshop which was requested by the journalists, has been scheduled for 1993.

At a meeting held on the 14th of October, COPECO, the Civil Defence Organization presented its plans for Prevention and Mitigation in Disaster-Prone Areas. On the same occasion, a donation of rescue equipment and a mobile hospital were presented to the Civil Defence Agency by a representative of the Italian government. In other regions, students took part in fire drills. Medical students who also took part in the drills took opportunity of the occasion to provide medical service to students who come from low income families.

As part of the overall programme planned to observe IDNDR Day 1992, a course in the prevention of flooding was also given to leaders of peasant communities during the first week of November.

India

A meeting organized by the Disaster Management Center of the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health and attended by over 200 participants, was held in Calcutta to mark IDNDR Day. The meeting was inaugurated by Prof. A.K. Chakraborty, Director of the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health. Prof. Mukhopadhyay, in charge of the Disaster Management Center, briefed participants on ongoing global efforts aimed at disaster reduction, on the current status of disaster management in India, and on the significance of IDNDR Day and the necessity of active community support for the attainment of the objectives of the Decade. The guest of honor, Dr. Sudboh Day, Mayor in Council, in Charge of health services, Calcutta Municipal Council, also addressed the participants and presented prizes to winners of essay, drawing, song composition, and public speaking competitions organized on the topic of disaster preparedness and response.

Iran

A press release prepared in Farsi and English by the United Nations Information Center was reproduced in Kayhan International and Tehran Times and also dispatched to other media outlets by the International Department of the Islamic Republic News Agency, IRNA. "Up Against Nature", a video cassette produced on the occasion of the 1991 IDNDR day was also covered by the Science Programme of the Iranian TV.

Italy

A two-day seminar which was attended by representatives of the scientific community, different governmental and international organizations, was organized by the Osservatorio Vesuviano in Italy on 14 and 15 October 1992. The seminar which was marked by important deliberations, was officially closed by H.E. Mr. Ferdinando Focchiamo, Minister of Civil Protection.

Jamaica

"Natural Hazards in the Caribbean" published by the Geological Society of Jamaica, was launched on 14 October. The function was attended by representatives of various governmental and international agencies and the private sector. A keynote address by Dr. Vishnu Persoud, UWI's Professor of Sustainable Development, highlighted the university's contribution to disaster reduction efforts in cooperation with national and regional disaster

management agencies. Dr. Barbara Carby, chairman of the function, warned against complacency in public attitude towards natural disasters and called for a coordinated effort to achieve success in mitigation efforts.

Japan

On the occasion of the 1992 IDNDR Day the Japanese IDNDR Committee headed by the Prime Minister held its third meeting. Among other issues, the proposal to examine the possibility of holding the 1994 World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Japan was approved at this meeting. In addition, the National Land Agency which is the Secretariat of the Government Headquarters for IDNDR, held an IDNDR panel exhibition at ShinJuku station, Tokyo, which has the largest number of railroad passengers in Japan and also organized publicity panels on IDNDR at the "Message tower" in front of the Agency's office. The Ministry of Construction held an IDNDR symposium in Tokyo on 6 October, in Nagoya on 14 October, and in Niigata on 19 October 1992. It also organized an IDNDR panel exhibition in Nagoya which was complemented by a wall panel at the Ministry's headquarters office.

Nigeria

The sub-committee on Public Enlightenment and Information of the Nigerian IDNDR Committee was charged with the responsibility of organizing activities for the IDNDR day. With the support of the Secretariat of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, it organized an exhibition and a press briefing, given by the Director of the Federal Environment Protection Agency. Posters, TV spots and radio jingles were also organized to mark the Day.

Panama

Designated as the "Month of Civil Protection", October has been dedicated to IDNDR activities since 1990. This year, a poster competition for school children under the theme of "Disaster Prevention" and various training activities for prevention and preparedness were organized for employees of Public Institutes by SINAPROC, the Civil Protection Agency.

A seminar for journalists on their role in prevention and a conference organized by the Association of Engineers and Architects on different topics of Natural Disaster also formed parts of the month-long programme.

On the 14th, SINAPROC organized an exercise in flood control in the Panama Channel. The exercise in which the Channel Commission, students of the Institute of Technology and members of various public institutes took part, received wide coverage in the media.

Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea observes May as the "National Month for Natural Disaster Reduction" to promote public preparedness against natural hazards which claim most casualties as of June, the first month of the rainy season. This year, various training programmes for disaster managers, government officials and high-school students were carried out at the Civil Defence School. Overseas study tours were also organized for government officials at different levels. 25 578 people from different government organizations took part in the field exercises which took place from May 12 to May 23 1992 in 136 counties of the country. A total number of 1,876 units of heavy equipment were mobilized for the exercise. Numerous types of booklets, pamphlets, video tapes, radio and TV programmes were also organized in the "Month of disaster preparedness", to increase national preparedness levels against disasters.

Romania

A press conference which was organized by Romanian organizations involved in disaster reduction was held in Bucharest on 14 October 1992. The press conference was attended by representatives of the media, NGOs and staff of the United Nations Information Centre. The Ministry of Public Works and Physical Planning, issued a press release on the occasion and also organized, in cooperation with the United Nations Information Center, a series of radio programmes and a video cassette which was screened by the Romanian Television.

A conference dedicated to the Day was also held at the Students' Club of the Academy for Economic Studies in Bucharest and information material including the United Nations Secretary-General's message on the Day were distributed to participants. All of the events organized in connection with the Day and the objectives of the Decade programme received extensive coverage in all the major dailies, TV and radio networks.

St. Kitts and Nevis

An information sheet containing basic guidelines on disaster preparedness and entitled "Plan Now for Your Family, if you Fail to Plan, You are planning to Fail" was prepared by the National Emergency Management Agency and used as an insert in all newspapers on 14 October 1992. Radio Programmes on the same topic were also broadcast on the same day.

Sweden

The Swedish Rescue Services Board which is the focal point for IDNDR programmes in Sweden issued a press release on IDNDR Day and information material sent by the IDNDR Secretariat was distributed by the Board to organizations involved in IDNDR activities in Sweden.

Switzerland

The Swiss National Committee organized a conference on IDNDR Day which dealt with the role of Switzerland in the Decade programme. The conference which was organized

at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, was attended by over fifty senior managers from different organizations. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Swiss IDNDR Committee to meet and initiate with representatives of different UN organizations a programme on the transfer of disaster reduction technology to developing countries.

Trinidad and Tobago

A colloquium on the management of Natural Hazards was held on 14 October to discuss issues facing the country in the field of natural disasters. The meeting was addressed by the Honorable Minister of National Security. Presentations on major guidelines for disaster preparedness and on the role of the military in disaster management, were made by the Director of the National Emergency Management Agency and the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Minister respectively.

United States of America

In the United States, a Natural Disaster Awareness Day Working Group was formed to coordinate efforts of the US Government Sub-Committee for Natural Disasters and the National Research Council National IDNDR Committee.

The group supported three major activities:

- (a) a pilot school programme on disaster preparedness for 9-12 year old.
- (b) a full day public service announcement and programmes on the weather channel.
- (c) general public information outreach.

Over 1,00 students from 11 schools across the United States participated in the school pilot programme which involved the active participation of students, their families and staff of the respective schools. The weather channel, a cable TV network headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, devoted its programme on 14 October to Disaster Preparedness. Mrs. Elizabeth Dole, Director of the American Red Cross, Dr. Joe Friday of the National Weather Service and Dr. Dallas Peck, Director of the US Geological Survey gave public service announcements. Mrs. Marilyn Tucker Quayle, Member of the IDNDR Special High-Level Council, not only appeared on the weather channel but also visited with students at one of the schools involved in the pilot programme on disaster preparedness.

Vanuatu

In Vanuatu, IDNDR day was marked by the launching of the 1992-93 preparedness programme for cyclones. A radio interview which informed the public about IDNDR objectives, an IDNDR exhibition at one of the cultural centres and briefings for school children on disaster preparedness for cyclones, comprised the major components of the 1992 IDNDR day observance programme.