



**Organization of American States
Executive Secretariat for Integral Development - SEDI**

Washington D.C., May 23, 2007

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Best Practices Forum of the Americas on the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) for Natural Disaster Mitigation. We will be grateful if you could extend this invitation to experts and staff members of your institution and partner institutions, which may be interested in providing inputs to the discussion and, at the same time, may benefit from it.

The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) of the General Secretariat of the OAS, through the Department of Sustainable Development, is organizing the sixth edition of the Best Practices Forum of the Americas on Natural Disaster Mitigation with the aspiration of "Reaching most vulnerable communities and sectors: Connecting High Technology Information Systems with Community-based Information and Communication Systems". The objective of the Forum is to promote the exchange of consolidated practices and lessons learned through interaction over the Internet.

This Forum is part of the efforts and activities of the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation (INDM) to better integrate disaster prevention, mitigation and risk management in development policies and reduce the vulnerability of communities and sectors hit the hardest by natural disasters. Government officials and professionals on the field of sustainable development from the OAS member States are invited to participate.

The transfer of knowledge and best practices have become very useful for government officials and decision makers throughout the region, since they provide the opportunity to learn from the experience of other countries, while help them sort obstacles and make the best use of their resources.

In this edition of the Forum, three experts on the topic, who are directly involved in the development and implementation of prevention and mitigation plans will share their experiences with the participants, as to exchange institutional experiences and assess common practices to various countries in the Americas.

In the first online session, Mr. Ronald Jackson, General Director of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) of Jamaica, will present the Jamaica's experience on ICT's applications as an alternative source of information. This session will be held on **Wednesday, June 6, 2007, at 3:00 p.m.** EST (Washington D.C. time).



**Organization of American States
Executive Secretariat for Integral Development - SEDI**

In two other subsequent sessions, the following themes will be presented at the Forum:

- Peru's experience in the implementation of Educational Rural Networks for Disaster Prevention.
- Central America's experience in the introduction of ICT's to coordinate the operations of the National Emergency Centers.

We hope to count on your active participation. We will appreciate very much your confirming your interest to participate at the forum by email to Rosa Trejo (rtrejo@oas.org), as soon as possible and **no later than June 3rd**, since the number of participants is limited.

Sincerely,

Pablo González

Chief, Natural Hazard Risk Reduction
Department of Sustainable Development

Co-chair, Inter-American Network for Disaster
Mitigation (INDM)

Miguel Porrúa

Coordinator, E- Government
Executive Secretariat for Integral
Development - SG/OAS