

Experts from the Inter-American and UN Systems meet to discuss preparations for the 1st Session of the HFA Regional Platform of the Americas

On January 28th, experts from inter-governmental organizations of the Inter-American and UN Systems met to discuss preparations for the 1st Session of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) Regional Platform of the Americas. This 1st Session of the HFA Regional Platform is being co-organized and co-convened by the GS/OAS, through its Department of Sustainable Development of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, and UNISDR Americas with the financial support of the Government of Canada.

The 1st Session of the Regional Platform of the Americas will take place in Panama City, on March 17-19, 2009, almost two years after the first meeting of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and just months before its second session. This 1st Session looks to bridge the gap between the Global Platform and the National Platforms in the region of the Americas, with the purpose of establishing a formal multi-stakeholder mechanism at the hemispheric level. The Regional Platform of the Americas is therefore expected to become the main regional forum for all parties involved in disaster risk reduction and the ISDR system, namely the Governments of the 35 sovereign States, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, regional bodies, civil society, the private sector, and the scientific and academic communities.

As part of the preparations for the 1st Session, a hemispheric study is being conducted. The study includes an analysis of existing instruments at the hemispheric level within the Inter-American System to support and advance implementation of the HFA; and the identification of overlaps and potential discrepancies between the UNISDR HFA and the OAS Inter-American Strategic Plan for Policy on Vulnerability Reduction, Risk Management and Disaster Response (IASP), so as to draw recommendation for better alignment of the OAS IASP with the UNISDR HFA.

The Regional Platform of the Americas will provide for a single reporting process for the UNISDR HFA Regional Platform and the OAS IASP; and for coordination mechanisms capable to capitalize on the comparative advantages of the various sub-regional and hemispheric inter-governmental organizations (IGO), so as to optimize each organization's value added and areas of competence, and forge synergies and inter-agency cooperation across all levels from hemispheric to regional, national and local levels.

More than 200 participants, including government officials, experts, scientists and university representatives, NGOs and international cooperation agencies officers, and members of civil society organized groups are expected to attend the 1st Session, in Panama City.

For more information on the 1st Session of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) Regional Platform of the Americas, please go to: www.eird.org/regional-platform/