

Minutes of Side Event 11 of

“Launch of International Group for Wind-Related Disaster Risk Reduction”

The session of “Launch of International Group for Wind-Related Disaster Risk Reduction” was held from 8:00 to 9:30 on June 17, 2009 in Room 6 of the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG), as a Side Event of the Second Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction hosted by UN/ISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) Secretariat. The objective of this Side Event was to launch an International Group (IG) to work on Wind-Related Disaster Risk Reduction (WR DRR).

After the opening addresses by the IAWE President (Dr. Y. Tamura) and the Director of the UN/ISDR Secretariat (Dr. S. Briceno), Dr. Tamura introduced in detail the purpose, structure and plan; participating organizations; and possible actions of this International Group. His presentation was followed by a lot of discussions and comments from the WG participants and the audience. The 25 participants in this session were from more than 9 organizations, including IAWE (Dr. Y. Tamura, Dr. A. Kareem, Dr. C. Baker, Dr. K. Kwok, Dr. P. Krishna and Dr. S. Cao), UN/ISDR (Dr. S. Briceno, Dr. Y. Ono, and their colleagues), WMO (Dr. T. Toya and his colleague), ICHARM (Dr. K. Takeuchi and his colleague), IFRC (Ms. J. S. Recass), United Nations University (Ms. K. Teichman), ADRC (Dr. K. Suzuki), SEEDS (Mr. M. Gupta, Ms. E. Tsunozaki) and the Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Center/ Bangladesh Disaster Management Bureau. Dr. A. Kareem chaired the discussion of this session.

The Special Event facilitated launching of the IG WR DRR. The participants representing different groups and organizations overwhelmingly embraced the establishment of IG WR DRR and promised their cooperation and collaboration in ensuring its success in achieving its goals. The IG WR DRR promised to establish linkages and to coordinate various communities to serve as inter-agency coordinators with a charter to work with international organizations involving agencies of the UN and involved NGOs, and to

empower them with the responsibility to serve as a bridge between policy makers and agencies responsible for actually carrying out the DRR at the local community level.

Several key questions were raised during the discussions on how to apply the mitigation technologies to housing in coastal regions like Bangladesh; the need to work collectively in wind and water hazard areas, localized wind storms such as tornados, and the enforcement of building codes, and the need for education in wind related hazards.

The main challenges were identified as follows: Bridging the gap between policy makers, technology experts and groups responsible for implementation; knowledge / technology transfer to local communities; and the impact of climate change on wind related hazards. Accordingly, proposed solutions to these challenges were: to enhance interactions among the three associated groups through IG WR DRR; to improve knowledge/technology transfer through workshops, training programs and cyber-infrastructure under the auspices of IG WR DRR; and to improve understanding of the impact of climate change on the frequency and intensity of wind storms (through closer interactions with IPCC and WMO).

Minutes taken by Shuyang Cao