Esteemed delegates,

It is an honor to welcome you to KnightMUN XXI! My name is Gianna Florentino and I am very excited to be your chair for the General Assembly of the UN office of Disaster Risk Reduction. I'm a 2nd year general biology major here at the University of Central Florida. I have been involved in Model UN since my sophomore year of high school. If this is your first time participating in MUN, I hope that this committee helps you spark the same love for MUN that I and many others have.

Environmental issues are very important for me personally. This committee topic really allows for a large range of applications for the protection of our ecosystems, and how a lot of mechanisms for sustainability and reducing risk ultimately lead back to respecting the Earth. I am excited to see what you all do with this and the resolutions that will be built in committee.

If you have any questions about the committee or this background guide, please do not hesitate to email me at giannaflorentino@knights.ucf.edu. I am looking forward to meeting each one of you and seeing your hard work come to fruition during the course of the conference weekend!

Best Regards,

Gianna Florentino.

Committee Background

On December 22nd, 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. While not the first step that the United Nations had taken to assist in disasters, it was by far the most influential for the establishment of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in 1999 [1]. Formerly referred to as UNISDR, it is now the UNDRR. Disaster risk is understood by UNDRR in three main components: hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. Recently, the UNDRR supported The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), which was adopted as a successor for the Hyogo Framework for action (2005-2015) [2]. The new framework shifted the focus to preventing and reducing the negative effects of disaster from the previous goals of management after a disaster had already occurred. Currently, the main function of the UNDRR is to support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework [3]. The document details how to achieve each priority at both the local and global scale. It also describes the means of implementation and follow up actions.

Sendai Framework:

The main goal of the Sendai Framework is to: "to achieve the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries over the next 15 years" [4]. The Sendai Framework lists four priorities for action:

Priority 1: **Understanding disaster risk.**

- Policies and practices for disaster risk management should be based on an understanding of disaster risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of persons and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment. Such knowledge can be leveraged for the purpose of pre-disaster risk assessment, for prevention and mitigation and for the development and implementation of appropriate preparedness and effective response to disasters.

Priority 2: **Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.**

- Disaster risk governance at the national, regional and global levels is of great importance for an effective and efficient management of disaster risk. Clear vision, plans, competence, guidance and coordination within and across sectors, as well as participation of relevant stakeholders, are needed. Strengthening disaster risk governance for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation is therefore necessary and fosters collaboration and partnership across mechanisms and institutions for the implementation of instruments relevant to disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

Priority 3: **Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.**

- Public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the environment. These can be drivers of innovation, growth and job creation. Such measures are cost-effective and instrumental to save lives, prevent and reduce losses and ensure effective recovery and rehabilitation.

Priority 4: **Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better"**

- The steady growth of disaster risk, including the increase of people and assets exposure, combined with the lessons learned from past disasters, indicates the need to further strengthen disaster preparedness for response, take action in anticipation of events, integrate disaster risk reduction in response preparedness and ensure that capacities are in place for effective response and recovery at all levels. Empowering women and persons with disabilities to publicly lead and promote gender equitable and universally accessible response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction approaches is key. Disasters have demonstrated that the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, which needs to be prepared ahead of a disaster, is a critical opportunity to "Build Back Better", including through integrating disaster risk reduction into development measures, making nations and communities resilient to disasters [4].

Topic 1: Nature–Based Prevention

Environmental based disasters and risks were identified as the most important issue facing humans in the 2021 publication of Words Into Action: Nature-Based Solutions for Disaster Risk reduction [5]. A nature based solution (NBS) is an umbrella term that involves a range of management systems that keep the ecosystem in mind. Examples include, but are not limited to, sustainable agriculture solutions, habitat restorations, or integrated water systems. These types of solutions are intertwined with climate change and reducing human impact. As global climate change worsens, it increases natural disasters in both number and severity. This sort of prevention aids in the long term impact on disaster risk. Ecosystem based disaster risk reduction (Eco-DRR) can also have more positive, short term benefits. A holistic, ridge-to-reef approach for restoration and management was conducted in Port Salut, Haiti [6]. Reforestation and a change in agriculture practices significantly reduced soil erosion, which reduced risk for events such as storm surges. This was just one result of the massively impactful undertaking of the UNEP.

Questions to consider:

- What efforts have your country made to reduce the risks of climate change?
- What are the ecological/natural risks in your country that need to be addressed? What has been addressed?
- How has your country addressed the sendai framework and how could they be further achieved?
- Are there NBS programs that can be put in place to further the Sendai framework?

Topic 2: Resilience and Sustainability

Sustainable development goal number eleven is to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. More than half the world's population resides in cities, and that is only going to grow [7]. The UNDRR's first Make Cities Resilient campaign ran from 2010 to 2020 [8]. It was used to engage communities and their political leaders towards making their community more resilient against disaster. Risk assessment in participating cities was performed, and subsequent DRR plans were developed. The data done on existing DRR plans showed, "measures to reduce existing risk (element iii) are the most captured element and measures to strengthen investments in DRR (element vii) are the least captured element in the strategies" [8]. These plans are designed to be integrated into sustainable development and climate change adaptations.

Questions to consider:

- What steps has your country taken towards SDG 11?

- How should the UN approach building resilience and sustainability, not just in cities?

- Are there any subgoals of SDG 11 that should gain more attention or be addressed to help further the Sendai framework? Why or why not?

Resources

[1]:https://www.undrr.org/about-undrr/history

[2]:https://www.unisdr.org/2005/wcdr/intergover/official-doc/L-docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf

[3]:https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework

[4]:https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2157sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

[5]:https://globalplatform.undrr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Nature-based%20Solutions%20for%20DRR_2021_06_24_0.pdf

[6]:https://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/Haiti/Haiti_Eco_DRR_case_study_2016.pdf

[7]:https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/

[8]:https://www.undrr.org/publication/report-making-cities-resilient-mcr-campaign-comparing-mcr-and-non-mcr-cities