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UNIVERSITY

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## Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction Will Launch in Tokyo on 22 May

**Event:** Launching Forum on Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction  
**Theme:** “Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow”  
**Date/Time:** 22 May 2009 (Friday), 2:00–4:00 PM  
**Venue:** Elizabeth Rose Conference Hall, United Nations University Headquarters, Tokyo  
**Organizers:** United Nations Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and United Nations University (UNU)

- In early May 2008, the deaths of approximately 140,000 people and the collapse of more than five million buildings in the Myanmar cyclone, followed just ten days later by almost 70,000 deaths and damage to 21 million structures from an earthquake centred in China's Sichuan province, were stark reminders that the disaster risk associated with natural hazards such as tropical cyclones, floods, earthquakes and droughts are constant threats to our modern society, rich or poor.
- The United Nations is launching the first “Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction”. This report identifies increasing disaster risk factors and recommends 20 disaster risk reduction actions that will reduce poverty, safeguard development and adapt to climate change, with beneficial effects on broader global security, stability and sustainability.
- In his foreword to the 200-page report, which draws together reviews, trend analyses and data from across the disaster risk reduction arena, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon writes: “While we cannot prevent natural phenomena such as earthquakes and cyclones, we can limit their impacts. Pre-emptive risk reduction is the key. Sound response mechanisms after the event, however effective, are never enough.”
- Recognizing the timeliness of such assessments to influence policy decisions, UNISDR and UNU will organize a public forum to reiterate the prioritization of disaster risk reduction in the realms of development. The panel discussion complementing the launch of the report in Japan will be facilitated by Dr. Srikantha Herath (UNU Senior Academic Program Officer), Prof. Sawako Takeuchi (Kyoto University, and Chair of the Result Management Council for the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery), Mr. Kikuo Nakagawa (Director General, Japan International Cooperation Agency), and a senior representative from the Japanese Government.
- Mr. Andrew Maskrey of UNISDR, lead author of the report, will make a presentation on the UN report and take questions.
- The language of the forum will be English; no Japanese interpretation will be provided.
- The “Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction” (English) and an Executive Summary (in both English and Japanese) will be distributed at the event. The full report and associated documentation can also be accessed from 17th-May at <http://www.preventionweb.net/gar09>

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend. For more information, or to reserve a space at the forum, please contact Naoko Yano, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1311; e-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)).

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