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## UNU to Host Int'l Symposium on Disaster Risk Reduction

**Event:** Symposium on “Cooperative Actions for Disaster Risk Reduction”  
**Date:** 4–6 March 2009 (Wed.–Fri.)  
**Venue:** United Nations University Headquarters, Tokyo (U Thant International Conference Hall and Elizabeth Rose Conference Hall)  
**Organizers:** International Association for Wind Engineering (IAWE), UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace (UNU-ISP), United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN/ISDR), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), and Tokyo Polytechnic University – Global Center of Excellence ((TPU-GCOE)

- Extreme wind events (typhoons, cyclones, hurricanes, etc.) are responsible for a major part — by some estimates, 80% or more — of global natural disaster economic losses. IAWE undertakes wind hazard mitigation studies aimed at achieving a better understanding of wind forces and designing stronger, more resilient infrastructure. But this work has so far been carried out in relative isolation, with little collaboration from the broader disaster risk reduction community.
- Issues such as human vulnerability to natural hazards, disaster risk management, and environmental change mitigation/adaptation are important components of the UNU’s research and capacity development efforts, including the work of UNU-ISP.
- This international symposium, based on an innovative partnership between UNU-ISP and IAWE, is the first major activity to integrate the wind engineering community with the disaster reduction community under the global multi-hazard risk reduction framework organized under the UN. As such, it will be a significant step toward incorporating knowledge from diverse disciplines into a holistic, multi-hazard risk reduction approach to improve the assessment of disaster risks and mitigate their adverse impacts.
- The UN/ISDR proposal to establish a “Thematic Platform on Wind-related Disasters” will be formally discussed at the symposium. A number of other significant interdisciplinary and cross-platform activities are expected to emerge from this symposium, which will be attended by researchers, engineers, educators, and government representatives. Discussions will cover all major types of wind-related disasters, including strong winds, earthquakes, heavy rains, floods, tsunamis, landslides, fires, and heat waves.
- The symposium is being organized within the scope of the “Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters”, which was adopted at the 2005 UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe. The outcome will feed into the UN/ISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- Day One of the symposium will feature presentations on “Trends and Statistics of Hazards” and “Recent Devastating Disasters”. Day Two will comprise lectures on a wide variety “Disaster Risk Reduction Activities” and “Recovery/Construction” as well as a panel discussion on “cooperative actions”. Day Three will be a public session consisting of presentations related to on-going research on wind hazard mitigation.
- Simultaneous English–Japanese interpretation will be provided for sessions on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> (day one and day two)
- See the symposium website, <http://www.wind.arch.t-kougei.ac.jp/ISWE4/>, for more information.

Media representatives may contact Naoko Yano, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1311; e-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)) to reserve a space at this symposium.

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United Nations University (UNU) is an autonomous organ of the UN General Assembly dedicated to generating and transferring knowledge and strengthening capacities relevant to global issues of human security, development, and welfare. The University operates through a worldwide network of research and training centres and programmes, coordinated by UNU Centre in Tokyo.

**MEDIA ADVISORY**