

II Hemispheric Encounter  
National Mechanisms and Networks for Disaster Risk Reduction  
"Santa Marta Encounter: From Theory to Practice "

Special Session:  
Creating a Segment of Universities to train Policy Makers in Risk Management  
and Development

Santa Marta  
16 April 2010  
14:00 – 16:30

Disaster preparedness and response requires extensive inter-institutional coordination. Similarly, disaster mitigation, including vulnerability reduction and risk management, requires even more coordination and cooperation because a wider range of sectors, institutions and stakeholders must work together. Due to the large interdependence between all of the abovementioned players, this can only be achieved by creating networks. This means that each institution must understand each others functions, needs and capacities in order to coordinate efforts with each other. Creating networks not only allows for information exchange, which can be used to implement effective vulnerability reduction and disaster mitigation measures, but also for institutional strengthening, establishing effective cooperation and optimizing the use of scarce resources.

The Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation (INDM) was established by the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD/OAS) of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS) with the financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), in compliance with a number of mandates and resolutions emanating from the Summits of the Americas and the General Assembly of the OAS. More precisely, establishing the Network complies with the Declaration of Santa Cruz +10, and the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (PIDS 2006-2009) adopted at the ministerial meeting on 5 December 2006 by the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI).

OAS General Assemble Resolution 2314 adopted on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007, at the XXXVII General Assembly, in Panama, "recognizes the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation as the permanent hemispheric mechanism for strengthening practical cooperation among intergovernmental agencies in the area of disaster reduction, especially by sharing technical information and best practices."

*The Network's mission is to establish a hemispheric platform for cooperation between governmental and intergovernmental agencies in disaster mitigation. The Network seeks to be the platform for the exchange of lessons learned and best practices as well as a forum for experts involved in policy making and natural disaster reduction.*

Firstly, the network is comprised of the National Operational Focal Points (NOFP), which are institutions that the OAS Member States nominate in order to coordinate and liaise with relevant bodies - governmental, non-governmental and private - within their respective countries. Similarly, any government entity or non-governmental organization, international organization, international cooperation agency, private enterprise and all civil society organizations that advocate, support and/or actively participate in natural disaster risk management activities, in accordance with the principles and mission of the Network, are invited to become members.

***The INDM Segment of Universities***

The establishment of a segment of universities is being proposed within the Network in order to

create a range of educational and research tools for risk management policy makers, which focuses on policy formulation and development planning. Bilateral agreements with the GS/OAS outline the universities' involvement, with the specific purpose of training professionals capable of integrating risk management into public policies, development planning, institutional policies - both government agencies and NGOs, including private companies, religious and social organizations – as well as other civil society organizations.

The Inter-American Network offers a meeting space for policy makers and decision makers (for planning and development management), as well as for those who educate professionals that will assume leadership positions in risk management at all levels of state government -from the national level to local levels and in all phases of risk management, from preparedness, prevention and disaster response; to development planning and finance; from education, health, and all production systems (agriculture, industry, energy, etc.); to all segments of society, including public and private bodies, micro-businesses and corporations, and civil society groups, such as agricultural and industrial cooperatives, social clubs, social enterprises, and religious bodies, among many others.

In late 2008, GS/OAS signed a cooperation agreement with the University of the Salvador (USAL) in Argentina to establish a cooperation framework between the parties in order to "*advance educating and/or training public policymakers on risk management and development, by creating a group of universities that offer programs and interdisciplinary graduate and post-graduate degrees designed to train professionals capable of integrating risk management in public policy development.*" This agreement is the first in a series of agreements that are expected to be signed in the coming months with other prestigious universities in the hemisphere and thus forming a segment of universities in the INDM.

### ***The Vision of the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation***

Inspired by the values of Dr. Leo Stanton Rowe<sup>1</sup> and the Good Neighbor Policy that he advocated, the INDM seeks to promote and support professor exchanges as well as exchanges of graduate and post-graduate programs that have a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to integrated disaster risk management, policies and development plans.

The *Vision* of the segment of universities is that of a united hemisphere under a single objective of providing a forum for policy makers (public and institutional) and decision makers, at all government levels and of all segments of civil society, capable of understanding and integrating disaster risk management as a vital part of policy making, development planning, daily life and social entrepreneurship.

The *Mission* is to develop and harmonize multidisciplinary programs (in the context of policies, and development planning and business) on disaster risk management (should they exist) through exchanges of professors, graduate and post-graduate programs, and the certification of programs and professors who would desire to be part of an Inter-American Cadre of Itinerary Professors (ICIP).

### ***Objective of the Special Session***

The objective of this special session of the Santa Marta Encounter is to advance an action plan to establish the INDM segment of universities. The specific objectives are to:

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rowe was the Director of the Pan-American Union, since 1920 until 1946 - two years before the Pan American Union became what is now the OAS, when the OAS Charter was adopted in Bogota on 30 April 1948, at the conclusion of the Ninth International Conference. The OAS Charter came into force on 13 December 1951 and was subsequently amended by the Buenos Aires Protocol in 1967, the Cartagena de Indias Protocol in 1985, the Washington Protocol in 1992 and by the Managua Protocol in 1993.

1. Present and review the INDM's vision for the segment of universities, its mission, and its goals;
2. Identify universities in the hemisphere with multidisciplinary graduate and post-graduate programs for training professionals capable of integrating risk management into public policies and development plans;
3. Define an action plan to advance the cooperation agreements between universities and GS/OAS.

Another objective of the meeting will be to seek out opportunities for future meetings amongst the selected universities, so as to advance a common risk management agenda in the Americas. Furthermore, it could serve to identify opportunities for cooperation between universities, GS/OAS and UNISDR Americas - including internships, special events and preparing publications, among others.

Similarly, this special session will examine the opportunities that INDM may offer as "the permanent hemispheric mechanism for strengthening practical cooperation" in the Americas, within the framework of the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas. In this regard, INDM is envisioned as the operating arm of the Regional Platform, under the co-secretariat of the GS/OAS, through its Department of Sustainable Development and its Risk Management Section, and the Secretariat of UNISDR, through its regional office, UNISDR Americas.

***Expected results***

1. Letter of establishment of the INDM segment of universities; and
2. Action Plan for establishing cooperation agreements and cooperation programs.

***Duration***

2 hours and 30 minutes

***Participants***

To be defined

## **Agenda**

### **Time**

02:00 PM	Presentation of the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation (INDM)
02:15 PM	Presentation of Member Universities: a) Universidad del Salvador, USAL, Research Institute for Risk Management, Disasters and Complex Emergencies (IIDEC), Faculty of History, Geography and Tourism, Buenos Aires, Argentina b) Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Sede Manizales, Institute for Environmental Studies, Manizales, Colombia
02:45 PM	The role of the Academic Sector a) Academic offer - the result of a study by Luis Martinez from Colombia b) Graduate and post-graduate interdisciplinary under-graduate and post graduate programs designed to train professionals in risk management and public policy development
03:15 PM	Discussion
04:15 PM	Conclusions
04:30 PM	End of the special session