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## **UN development chief announces increased support for disaster reduction**



UNDP Administrator Helen Clark. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

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Disaster risk management must become a central feature of development planning, the United Nations development agency chief [declared](#) today as she highlighted her agency’s intent to boost overall support for global disaster reduction.

In a [speech](#) delivered to the University of Canterbury, in Christchurch, New Zealand, the Administrator of the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), Helen Clark, underscored her plan to double UNDP assistance for disaster reduction over the next five years, as well as add five countries per year to the growing list of potential “champions of disaster resilience.”

“In view of mounting disaster losses, investment in disaster risk reduction needs to be scaled-up exponentially,” Ms. Clark told the audience.

In 2005, 168 countries endorsed the Hyogo Framework for Action, under which they agreed to achieve by 2015 the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries. With the 2015 deadline fast approaching, calls for a new disaster management blueprint have been gaining traction.

“2015 is the date for achieving most of the Millennium Development Goal targets which have guided international development since 2000,” Ms. Clark said. “Disaster risk reduction needs to become central to mainstream development planning and action, and be reflected in discussions of the overall post-2015 development agenda.”

Ms. Clark’s address followed the recent launch of consultations by the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) on a replacement for the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The head of UNISDR, Margareta Wahlström, [welcomed](#) Ms. Clark’s announcement.

“UNDP and other UN agencies have an important role to play in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into their day-to-day development work,” said Ms. Wahlström. “And that experience is very important to the debate now underway among member States on a new international instrument for disaster risk reduction.”

In her address in New Zealand, Ms. Clark also stated that a new post-Hyogo Framework could specify measurable outcomes rather than just processes.

“The negotiations around the post-Hyogo Framework will be an opportunity to explore financing mechanisms for disaster reduction, particularly at the local level,” she noted, adding that the new framework to replace the Hyogo Framework for Action would also need to focus on building safer cities as most of the world’s population was now urban-dwelling.

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