



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

IFRC SECRETARY GENERAL ELHADJ AS SY

Remarks to the High-Level Roundtable on Natural Disasters and Climate Change:

Managing Risks and Crisis Differently

World Humanitarian Summit

24 May 2016

Madam Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Natural hazards will always occur. Our level of preparedness or lack thereof will often determine if shocks and hazards become disasters or not. Therefore early warning, early alert, followed by early action, will make the difference. And that is what we have to commit to. This will comprise organization of local knowledge, translation and use of meteorological information by communities, forecast-based programming and funding – all these constitute critical elements of preparedness and risk mitigation and need to be taken into account.

All shocks, no matter how large, do strike at the local level. And it is exactly where they must be addressed. That reminds us once more of the critical role of local action and local actors. However, we cannot shift the burden of the response to communities alone. To paraphrase Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, we should aim for a response and a system that is as local as possible and as international as necessary.

Effective local action can only happen in an enabling environment where good governance is exercised through application and respect for disaster laws, appropriate building codes and fight against corruption and protection of local communities, so that they can build back and build back better, and not be left at the same level of vulnerability after a natural disaster response.

In that spirit, and together with a number of major partners, we are pledging to build a global coalition, with the goal of supporting one billion people to take action to strengthen their resilience by 2025. This “One Billion Coalition for Resilience” will bring together partners from all sectors, and from local to global, to motivate, inform, mobilize and support communities to take action, to be safer and withstand shocks better.

I thank the organizers of this event and of the summit for their support for the One Billion Coalition. We are already seeing it taking shape, and align with other multi-stakeholder initiatives, including the “Connecting Business” initiative, launched by some colleagues in this room.

We offer 17 million volunteers in 190 countries to make this One Billion Coalition a reality.

Thank you.