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WORKING GROUP: MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACHES TO CITIZEN SECURITY

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ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES FOR HUMAN SECURITY AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

This analysis establishes the relationship between human security actions and policies – citizen security – and disaster risk management, in order to attain an integration that ensures the development of a normative, institutional and citizen framework promoting security, sustainability and population welfare.

Risk and Insecurity

Events resulting in damage are usually called “risks” or “threats” and they generally refer to the notion of (in)security. Objective insecurity is based on mathematical models used by insurance companies, whereas subjective insecurity is an individual estimation of the degree of risk to which an individual is subject. This distinction lies at the root of all private or public strategic analysis to confront a problem. The established degree of security (or insecurity) depends on the threat: social security, industrial security, citizen security. On the other hand, “personal,” “family,” “national,” “household,” or “harvest” are terms frequently used to categorize the object at risk.

In 2010, there was a global toll of 373 natural disasters, resulting in over 296 800 fatalities, 208 million affected persons and an estimated cost of USD 110 trillion. The Americas account for one fourth of these natural disasters, 76% of the fatalities, 6% of the total affected persons and approximately 46% of the total losses. In every sense, 2010 set a new record for the number of natural disasters recorded yearly between 2000 and 2009¹.

¹ Annual Disaster Statistical Review 2010. The numbers and trends.

Globally, 41% of disasters are hydrological (floods, wet mass movements); 36% are caused by meteorological events (storms); and 6% are geophysical (quakes, volcanoes). The latter caused the greatest repercussions in 2010².

In 2011, after Japan's earthquake – and its devastating consequences in terms of population and economy – Switzerland and Germany shut down their nuclear power plants. At present, the world is moved by the 3 million+ people starving in “*The Horn of Africa*”, where the daily starvation toll averages 2 adults and over 150 children.

A disaster is the manifestation of a risk that was neither managed nor socially constructed. Based on a challenged development vision, the irrational exploitation of environmental resources was promoted during the last decades. In many cases, this broke up the natural cycle and fragile balance between humankind and nature. The indiscriminate land occupation, the overexploitation of the soil and the unplanned use of hydric resources are examples of the development model putting forth a short-term vision at the expense of long-term sustainability.

National models based on the overexploitation of environmental resources have resulted in high levels of vulnerability and disaster. However, vulnerability is not only the consequence of a challenged vision of development; it is also the consequence of various aspects related to lack of governability, weakness, institutionality and lack of normativity concerning environmental issues and disaster risk management.

Vulnerability originates in and largely contributes to major development barriers such as poverty, inequality and insecurity. It is hardly surprising that disasters are a recurrent manifestation in high poverty and exclusion areas, thus helping create vicious circles that render vast regions inviable.

In the last decades, there have been important advances to reduce the number and the impact of natural hazards. Since the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)³, governments have been developing actions oriented to systematically reduce vulnerability and risk, strengthening and spreading knowledge on threat related behaviour, building a prevention culture by introducing these issues into formal and informal educational systems, as well as promoting preparedness actions in the face of contingency. The HFA establishes a follow-up system with indicators for each of its components, as well as the drafting of reports to be submitted every two years.

In the past years, special care was given to attaching value and integrating the worldview and culture prevailing in countries with indigenous majorities to disaster risk management strategies. It is through this reinvalidation of first nations' ancestral knowledge and sustainable production practices that it was possible to strengthen knowledge exchange networks, thus promoting a form of sustainable development more in line with human culture and practice.

² Idem.

³ World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, January 18-22, 2005, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan.
<http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-spanish.pdf>.

Advances on gender issues have also been important: analyzing the impact of disasters helped recognize that in societies with higher gender inequality, consequences are more dire, and recovery and reconstruction processes demand more time and resources. Today it is an accepted fact that women are the most affected by disasters, by their direct impact on household integrity, health and children's development, as well as, in many cases, family production and income. Women play an important role in disaster risk management, not only because they are highly vulnerable but because they play such a relevant role in society.

Disasters know no boundaries. Many disasters impact more than one country. As a result, risk management has been included in regional and subregional integration agendas, thus building platforms for cooperation, coordination and the exchange of useful knowledge for addressing issues of such magnitude. These regional mechanisms are backed by a consensus of working agendas that allow governments to align their efforts to define comprehensive policies and strategies for the reduction and transfer of disaster associated risks, thus making it possible to optimize international cooperation resources and accomplish better results by building on experience.

In recent years, global warming and its impact on the future of human life has become a greater concern. Climate variability, evidenced through extreme events and a greater dispersion of the water cycle, increments the risk posed by natural threats by adding the threats caused by human action.

Climate change will affect a world already challenged by a severe human development deficit. Although the exact extent, time, nature and scale of its impact remains unknown, global warming is likely to aggravate the existing disadvantages. The degree of aggravation will be determined, to a great extent, by the location and structure of the means for sustenance. Concentrated in environmentally fragile areas, in arid lands prone to droughts, in coastal areas subject to floods and precarious urban settlements, the disadvantaged are extremely vulnerable to the risks posed by climate change. They lack the resources to respond to this threat.

The effects of climate change will be multifold: reduced agricultural productivity, higher water insecurity, greater risk of coastal floods and extreme weather conditions, ecosystem breakdowns, higher health risks.

Since natural disasters are a development problem, risk management represents a set of tools and instruments for identifying inherent factors and reducing risk in a comprehensive and sustained fashion. Disaster risk analysis is the basis for defining a strategy that will become a public policy to be implemented through development planning systems and instruments, such as public investment, territorial organization, institutionalization of disaster risk related responsibilities, appropriate resource allocation, as well as the dissemination of information on threats and vulnerabilities.

However, the challenge is not limited to establishing public policies for each development problem; it lies also in developing comprehensive public policies that address the problem, as well as the solution, through a holistic approach. This particular document seeks to establish synergy with human security.

Human security has two fundamental aspects: safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression; protection against sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in

homes, in jobs or in communities. Both aspects suggest that countries would highly benefit from adopting preventive and proactive perspective and policies, in order to maximize the reduction of these threats and of the risks resulting from society's structural vulnerability, in particular.

Disasters unleash multiple consequences, micro-disasters, the disappearance of family, crops and efforts, the destruction of households, roads and bridges. Deeply-rooted uncertainty and insecurity translates into a wide and complex array of problems that vary with each region and community. The disruption of habits, rules, confidence, stability and daily predictability breaks the vital, existential and institutional balance on which human life is based.

The impacts of disasters have a social dimension. The direct impact generates and aggravates economic, political or social insecurity; yet, it causes a new subjectivity to surface. Individuals grow increasingly aware of the fact that they live in a society jeopardized by micro and macro risks, where disasters are not only the result of recurring natural phenomena. Disasters affect the different types of security:

- **Personal and Legal Security.** Disasters disturb and reduce the security threshold of persons, not only on account of their natural force, but of the loss of lives they represent. Legal security, human rights and freedoms, are directly related to the exercise of citizenship, understanding citizenship as human beings' ability and duty to get involved in the issues of the community where they live.
- **Economic Security.** Disasters increase poverty, which can bring about an increase in crime. Economic security means access to stable sources of income. Income-related human insecurity is evidenced in society's difficulty to guarantee the majority of its citizens the right to paid work – one of the fundamental human rights and, no doubt, a source of dignity, worth and self-esteem. In addition, it is one of the pillars of a country's economic development. Disasters shut down stable job sources, especially in the women's formal economy. They result in the loss of a great portion of agricultural production, including self-consumption, they lead to various types of price increase, and they directly or indirectly affect the income and the jobs of most families within a country. In addition, the obstacles to generating and accessing income are forcing people to depend on external aid and preventing them from participating in the reconstruction process.
- **Environmental Security.** Disasters affect environmental security, i.e., the relationship persons establish with their natural environment. For example, disasters can limit persons' access to water.

Disasters leave persons in a state of shock, at a point of extreme vulnerability. This restricts their dynamism and participation, rendering them helpless to adequately respond to the personal and community problems posed by the new reality. Although many persons actively participate in reconstruction tasks and receive timely aid, many others are overwhelmed with despair, as they realize the degree to which their options have narrowed and their outlook on life has changed.

An untrusting society is the tell-tale sign of uncertainty and despair. Uncertainty and despair undermine the development of social capital; they gnaw away at the wealth of knowledge and tradition, as well as at the communication of all the practical, mental and emotional experiences that people in societies accumulate, reproduce and transform across generations. Furthermore, mistrust is connected with people's lack of motivation to participate in organized work and collective action, i.e., with their tendency to respond individually, rather than on behalf of their community. This explains why, when humanitarian aid is provided during an emergency, transparency in aid management is a daily challenge.

Communities prefer to manage aid themselves, rather than have the church or international organizations do it for them. This is an unmistakable sign of mistrust.

The following recommendations follow:

- Integrating human security, disaster risk management and climate change public policies, in order to attain synergy in normative, institutional and social organization aspects.
- Strengthening the integration of countries into regions and subregions, to develop common instruments, horizontal cooperation, as well as information and knowledge exchange on security and disaster related matters.
- Building and strengthening the institutionality of disaster risk management, to pursue the enforcement of human rights and the principles of human security.
- Promoting a vision of civil protection that, based on solidarity and participation, helps attain citizen organization, which coupled with relevant volunteering normative, can make it possible to integrate these elements.
- Including tools to strengthen social capital and human security in the pos-disaster recovery and reconstruction processes.

SHORT BIO OF THE PRESENTER: MARCO ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ CORRALES

Bolivian consultant. Designated by the President of Bolivia as National Director of the National Risk Reduction Service. Since 1998, a consultant with the National Civil Defense Service, the Ministry for National Defense, and the Ministry for Sustainable Development. As a Project Manager, he promoted the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act No. 2140, the design of the Amendment Act No. 2335, and the associated regulations (Decree No. 26739). In Bolivia and other countries within the region, he designed such disaster risk management methodologies and instruments as National, Sectorial, Departmental and Municipal Plans; Agency and Inter-Agency Contingency Plans; the systematization of lessons learned from disaster management; the systematization of risk management, preparedness protocols and disaster response practices; preparedness, emergency and disaster response strengthening strategies.

Since 2003, as a member of UNDAC, he participated in ten coordination and response missions to Guatemala, Guyana, Dominican Republic, Peru, Cuba, Honduras, Panama, Haiti and Colombia. On account of his experience and professional background, he integrates the international team of instructors at OCHA, Geneva, (2005) and Team Leaders (2007).

In Latin America and the Caribbean: Designed the Knowledge Platform implementation strategy for the nutrition and emergency components; organized preparedness activities for the 2006 cyclonic season; designed the Methodology for Rapid Humanitarian Assessment approved by REDLAC, implementing training processes for the benefit of UNETE teams and humanitarian partners in Honduras, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Panama and Belize. In Guatemala: implemented training processes on the Methodology for Rapid Humanitarian Assessment at municipal and community levels.

Educational Background: Masters Degree in Corporate Strategy and Global Competitiveness (Bolivia); International Especialization in Strategic Planning and Senior Management (Bolivia); Especialization in Financial Management and Control (Chile/Bolivia); Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (Bolivia); Stock Market Technician (Bolivia).