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Ministers are invited to join  
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## **Ministerial Roundtable**

Thursday 25 November – 10h to 12h CET

Hybrid format – Simultaneous translation into Russian and Portuguese

### **Concept Note**

The Ministerial Roundtable will be hosted by the EFDRR Secretariat, represented by H.E Eduardo Cabrita, Minister of Home Affairs of Portugal, Mami Mizutori, UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Janez Lenarčič European Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs and Crisis Management, and a representative from the Council of Europe. The session is open to Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Secretaries of State from the 55 countries supported by UNDRR in Europe and Central Asia. The discussion will be available on broadcast to all EFDRR registered participants and media.

#### **Context**

The COVID-19 pandemic is the biggest challenge we have faced in our lifetime. Millions of lives have been lost, billions affected, and with a huge economic cost. In the EU alone, EUR 3.7 trillion has been spent on COVID-19 response measures and EUR 1.8 trillion planned in the recovery phase. The countries in the Europe and Central Asian region have felt the heavy social and economic impacts of the pandemic. This has been compounded by the deadly climate-related disasters over the summer of 2021, from devastating floods to raging forest fires. Climate extremes and slow onset events due to climate change are happening more frequently and with greater intensity than expected. The recent IPCC report lays out how with every increment of increased warming, the world will face with intensifying disaster risk. UN Secretary General António Guterres warned the report "is a code red for humanity".

One thing is certain, we cannot go back to "business as usual".

The crises we face – from climate, to inequality, health, security, migration, food security or others – are interconnected and only soluble if we treat them as such. The pandemic has reinforced the urgency of integrating agendas. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is part of the thread that connects agendas – without it, hard-won progress on the Sustainable Development Goals is unravelled. The pandemic has exposed how all societies have systematically underinvested in DRR.

As we come out of the crisis, we must learn the lessons to build back better, building in resilience, and not creating new risks. COVID-19 has demonstrated the need for a whole-of-government approach that leverages the capacities of all relevant line Ministries, along with national and local government bodies responsible for disaster risk playing a crucial role. Furthermore, it has reinforced the importance of international cooperation for disaster preparedness. In this increasingly interconnected world, international cooperation is vital for good global risk governance in the face of planetary emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. The importance of this is underlined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which was the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda and with concrete actions to protect development gains from the risk of disaster.

To achieve a transformative approach to disaster risk reduction, it is necessary to work together. We are only as strong as the weakest and we must leave no one behind. An all of government, all of society, approach is needed. We must map risk from many angles and work in a collaborative, trans-boundary way since hazards do not respect borders or politics. Governments and society need to invest in prevention measures to ensure that we never experience crises of the scale of COVID-19 again and that we are prepared for the climate emergency ahead. Integrating disaster risk reduction into investment decisions is the most cost-effective way to reduce risk, which saves lives.

The focus of this roundtable is on the lessons learnt and charting the transformational approach needed for the way forward. This ministerial meeting takes place right after COP26 where adaptation and resilience is a crucial topic. New commitments coupled with stronger international cooperation are needed to deliver a resilient future. The 2021 EFDRR is the Forum to deliver these commitments for Europe and Central Asia. The governments of Europe and Central Asia are leaders on disaster resilience and can lead the regional and global shift from emergency response to prevention.

We can and must demonstrate that prevention is an investment and not a cost.

Now is the time to work together for increased public awareness for action on disaster resilience, supporting education and creating a culture of risk prevention.

This thought leadership gathered at the EFDRR by the governments of Europe and Central Asia, will be taken to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction taking place in Indonesia in May 2022.

**Objective and format of the Roundtable**

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
5min	Welcome and moderation by co-chairs <i>Eduardo Cabrita, Minister of Internal Affairs of Portugal</i> and <i>Mami Mizutori, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction</i>
115min	<p><b>Moderated Roundtable</b></p> <p>Ministers will be invited to contribute to this moderated discussion by exchanging on experiences and providing an intervention or statement. Please kindly indicate your preference to contribute on either part 1 on lessons learnt or part 2 on transformative opportunities. We kindly ask for interventions of up to 3 minutes. As part of the discussions, high-level experts will provide scene setting remarks at the beginning of each part.</p> <p><b>Part 1 - Lessons Learnt</b></p> <p>This session will begin with a high-level expert contribution on lessons learnt in an evolving systemic risk landscape. Thereafter, Ministers will be invited to share their experiences on lessons learnt for managing systemic disaster risk following the public health crisis and simultaneously managing growing climate impacts. These experiences demonstrate the need to move to a multi-hazard approach. With intensifying climate change, strong governance with greater investment in adaptation and prevention will be important to chart the way forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have we learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing climate disasters, in order to prevent such impacts again?</li> <li>• What have we learnt from the governance of these crises considering the interlinked nature of disasters?</li> <li>• How can governments better coordinate an all of government approach on DRR to tackle systemic crises?</li> </ul> <p><b>Part 2 - Transformative Opportunities and Way Forward</b></p> <p>This session will begin with a high-level expert contribution on the transformative opportunities to increase action on disasters and climate change. The governments of Europe and Central Asia have agreed on the approach needed to advance the resilience of the region within the EFDRR Roadmap 2021-2030. Ministers will be invited to elaborate on their vision on the transformative opportunities for their countries for the way forward, and are invited to announce new commitments working towards this goal.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What actions are needed to work better together, across borders and regions, to reduce disaster risk and deliver transformation?</li> <li>• What will be the concrete next steps to implement the Prevention Pledge and EFDRR 2021-2030 Roadmap?</li> <li>• How can we secure greater investment in prevention to save lives?</li> </ul>
15min	Prevention Pledge signing and photo opportunity for the Ministers on site

### **Ministerial Prevention Pledge**

The aim of the Prevention Pledge is for decision-makers to pledge visible political support for disaster prevention. This is the first step in leading a transformational approach to disaster risk reduction. The Prevention Pledge is part of the Prevention Saves Lives communication campaign in support of the 2021 EFDRR. It builds on the four pillars of the EFDRR Roadmap. As part of the roundtable intervention, Ministers will be invited to confirm their commitment to the Prevention Pledge. There will be visibility and media coverage of the Prevention Pledge and ministers are invited to announce new commitments on prevention as part of this.

The pledge will be structured around the theme of making a commitment to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals through the areas of priority defined in the EFDRR Roadmap 2021-2030 and to making disaster resilience a priority. This includes strengthening national and local budgets and regulatory powers for inclusive DRR to address future climate and disaster risks. Investing in prevention saves lives. The text of the Prevention Pledge will be shared ahead of the Ministerial Roundtable.

The Prevention Pledge will be a key call for action part of the Prevention Saves Lives Campaign. This communications campaign seeks to reframe the narrative on disaster resilience, demonstrating that it is an investment and not a cost. It will communicate at the 2021 EFDRR how Europe and Central Asia will lead a fundamental shift from emergency response to prevention. These messages will be amplified and carried up to the Global Platform and beyond. Reducing the impacts of disasters will make everyone safer.

### **Next Steps**

As a next step, governments are kindly invited to confirm the participation of their Minister to this Ministerial Roundtable, as well as the preference to contribute to the discussion under Panel one on lessons learnt or Panel two on the transformative opportunities and way forward. The guiding questions in the agenda under each of the panels may help indicate the preferred topic of intervention. We also welcome new announcement that can contribute to the Prevention Pledge, which will support the implementation of the EFDRR Roadmap 2021-2030. Please get in touch with us if you would like to discuss further on potential media opportunities.



For confirming Ministerial participation or any further information about the Ministerial Roundtable please contact Ms. Tessa Schmedding: [tessa.schmedding@un.org](mailto:tessa.schmedding@un.org)