

Date: 9 March 2023
Place: European Union Delegation, New York
Time: 10:00 – 11:00
Co-chairs: Joachime Nason (European Union) and Khalid Lashani (Kingdom of Morocco)
Minutes: Staff, EU Delegation
Attachments: Powerpoint Presentation

Summary

The Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) is a State-led initiative working towards greater protection of persons displaced in the context of disasters and climate change. It is currently chaired by the European Union with Kenya as Vice-Chair. The PDD established the Group of Friends (GoF) in 2019 to increase awareness of the topic of disaster displacement, to disseminate information about the PDD and its work and to provide a platform for engagement with States interested in disaster displacement. This seventh meeting of the GoF meeting was co-chaired by the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco. It served to raise awareness on disaster displacement ahead of the UN 2023 Water Conference and High-Level Meeting on the Sendai Framework Mid-Term Review in New York.

More information on the PDD and the Terms of Reference of the PDD GoF can be found on www.disasterdisplacement.org.

1. Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Joachime Nason, representing the European Union as the Chair of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) opened the meeting. Ms. Nason contextualized the meeting of the Group of Friends of the Platform ahead of the upcoming High-Level Meeting on the Sendai Framework Mid-Term Review (18-19 May 2023), as well as the water and displacement nexus to be discussed at the UN 2023 Water Conference (22-24 March 2023). She highlighted the need for continuous engagement on topics such as data, communication, climate financing and planned relocation.

Khalid Lashani, representing the Kingdom of Morocco, explained that the PDD Group of Friends aims to strengthen awareness among Member States on disaster displacement. Mr. Lashani explained that the Group of Friends was established in 2019 as a part of the strategy of the Steering Group of the PDD to disseminate information about the Platform and its work, provide tools for member states interested in disaster displacement and strengthen awareness regarding the protection and assistance needs of disaster displaced persons.

The EU and Morocco, in their capacities as co-chairs of the PDD Group of Friends, welcomed the participants, and informed about the calendar of future Group of Friends meetings – each year, approximately two meetings shall be held in Geneva and two meetings in New York, with the following meeting possibly taking place in Geneva still in the first half of 2023.

2. Presentation of the Platform on Disaster Displacement

The Envoy of the Chair, Prof. Walter Kaelin, gave an overview of the PDD and its work. Emphasizing the humanitarian challenge posed by disaster displacement, he stressed the Platform's role in offering durable solutions for displaced individuals, offering them a path towards stability and self-sufficiency. Prof. Kaelin laid out the structure of the PDD, with its Steering Group, Advisory Committee, Secretariat, and Group of Friends. He also underscored the close cooperation the PDD has with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as other UN agencies, civil society, academia and other stakeholders.

He noted that the incorporation of a humanitarian-development nexus approach has yielded significant impact and positive effects on the lives of communities affected by natural hazards, thereby promoting long-term resilience. He also welcomed the increased use of aggregated data, which has allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of disaster displaced persons, facilitating more effective humanitarian interventions and resource allocation.

Prof. Kaelin emphasized the importance of the Sendai Mid-Term Review process in conjunction with the upcoming UN 2023 Water Conference. According to the IDMC 2022 Global Report on Internal Displacement, more than 23 million people have been displaced by disasters, with small island developing states (SIDS) being disproportionately affected. Prof. Kaelin reaffirmed that the PDD aims to promote durable solutions and highlighted the importance of a humanitarian-development nexus for addressing the impact on affected populations. He encouraged efforts to build capacities at a broad level and engage stakeholders, which have the potential of yielding greater community ownership and participation in humanitarian initiatives, leading to more sustainable and impactful outcomes.

3. Including Disaster Displacement in the Political Declaration to be adopted at the High-Level Meeting on the Sendai Mid-Term Review

The EU and Morocco, as co-chairs of the Group of Friends invited participants to exchange, discuss and identify engagement opportunities to facilitate collaboration and consultation on issues related to disaster displacement and risk reduction.

Setting the scene presentations from Toni-Shae Freckleton, Chief of New York Liaison Office of UNDRR; Pär Liljert, Director of the IOM Office to the UN in New York; Amy Prosser, Second

Secretary at the Australian Mission; and Imanuel Lim, Third Secretary at the Indonesian Mission covered four main themes. First, they put the issue of disaster displacement in context of the upcoming High-Level Meeting on the Sendai Framework Mid-Term Review scheduled for 18 - 19 May 2023. Second, they promoted action on risk reduction using whole-of-government and triple-nexus approaches to tackle disaster displacement, in order to address the growing number of displaced persons as result of natural hazards related to extreme weather events and climate change. Third, they stressed the need to address data gaps, especially regarding the impact of slow-onset disasters on human mobility. Finally, they stressed the importance of policy coherence to achieve protection for persons displaced in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change.

UNDRR highlighted that the Sendai Framework focuses on six key areas to achieve disaster risk reduction, including mapping displacement, engaging with marginalized groups, preparing for people at risk, supporting host communities, finding durable solutions, and strengthening disaster preparedness. UNDRR with partners has released "Words into Action" guidance and a checklist that can support states to include displacement considerations into their national DRR strategies. The need for better data in particular on displacement in contexts of slow-onset events was also stressed.

Australia and Indonesia emphasized the need for collaboration on issues related to disaster displacement and risk reduction to create effective policy frameworks that can better address the needs of those affected by disasters. Indonesia also stressed the need for collaborative approaches to disaster displacement that prioritize risk reduction and support the creation of durable solutions for those affected. Prof. Walter Kaelin, Envoy of the Chair of the PDD, confirmed that disaster risk reduction was a longstanding area of priority for the PDD in coherence with its engagement on climate change and human mobility. In their capacity as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental process to agree a political declaration of the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, both Australia and Indonesia invited for comments and inputs from Member States to the zero draft of the Political Declaration, and also reminded meeting participants of the high-level strategic objective of the Political Declaration. They recommended that more technical aspects and inputs could be tabled elsewhere, for example in the process of agreeing on the annual DRR Resolution.

Norway welcomed the meeting of the Group of Friends and emphasized its government's commitment as Steering Group member of the PDD and its role as chair of the Nansen Initiative together with Switzerland. Norway emphasized how the PDD has contributed to bringing the topic of disaster displacement to the international agenda and emphasized that there is potential to strengthen the Political Declaration by including references to disaster displacement in relevant paragraphs. Additionally, Norway stressed the need for capacity building and of making resources available to address the prevention of and preparedness for disaster displacement.

IOM participated in the meeting by virtue of being a Standing Invitee to the PDD Steering Group and welcomed the work of the Group of Friends of the PDD. IOM expressed its support to include human mobility and disaster displacement more strongly into the Political Declaration of the Sendai Framework Mid-Term Review. IOM also highlighted its following priorities on human mobility in the context of disasters: strengthening risk mitigation governance; increasing preparedness and effective support (build back better and recovery); and increasing the use of anticipatory action and early warning systems. On the point of data, IOM emphasized that it is actively supporting governments in obtaining data to strengthen response to disaster displacement.

End./

The following States and regional organizations participated in this meeting: Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Ethiopia, Estonia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Philippines, Sudan, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Kingdom. CIVIC, IOM, IFRC, Oxfam International and UNDRR were present as well.