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**Statement at the 75th General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item Number 89: Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters
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October 27, 2020**

Thank you, Chair.

Protection of persons in the event of disasters is a critically important issue. The United States underscores its commitment to reduce the risks and impacts of disasters at home as well as abroad. To this end, we are promoting efforts to reduce the risk of disasters and respond to them in a way that takes into account the needs of those disproportionately affected—including persons with disabilities, children, women, and older persons—before, after, and during disasters.

At its 71st and 73rd sessions, following the International Law Commission’s completion of work on draft articles and commentary on this topic, this Committee considered the Commission’s recommendation that the General Assembly elaborate a convention based on the draft articles. At both of those sessions, the United States noted that this issue is best approached through the provision of practical guidance and cooperation, and not through the elaboration of an international agreement.

Our view has not changed since this issue was last considered by this Committee. We continue to believe that this topic is best addressed through practical cooperation and guidance and focusing on real world actions rather than the negotiation of a new instrument. In that regard, we have been pleased to work with member states and stakeholders in a variety of fora to enhance collaboration in this area, such as at the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Geneva, Switzerland, and the International Recovery Forum held earlier this year in Kobe, Japan. The United States also has been a strong supporter of the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, urging the Panel to develop actionable recommendations that can significantly improve assistance and protection for internally displaced persons and encouraging it to consider disaster risk reduction approaches and the critical role they play in preventing and mitigating the impacts of internal displacement through building local, national and regional disaster response capacities to confront natural hazards.

The U.S. government also supports a variety of programs and activities in this area. For example, we have supported the work of several partners to implement aspects of the strategic frameworks and work plans of the Global Protection Cluster and Interagency Standing Committee Results Group on Accountability & Inclusion. This includes supporting the development of interagency global guidance on disaster risk management frameworks that are inclusive of children, women, older persons, and persons with disabilities, along with other disproportionately affected groups, through several active pilots in Latin America. We are also supporting non-governmental organizations and partners worldwide to work with local communities and governments at all levels to improve and disseminate strategies and plans to manage the risk of natural and other disasters.

We will continue to engage in such fora and activities to advance work in this area, but do not see a need for elaborating an international agreement, or for further considering this topic in this Committee.