



Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations

Statement by Hungary
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Sixth Committee – Item 86: Protection of persons in the event of disasters
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Delivered by: Melinda Vittay, Legal Adviser of the Permanent Mission of Hungary

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Mr. Chair,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your election and wishing you every success in your work. Hungary fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States, and would like to offer some additional remarks in its national capacity.

Last year, the Sixth Committee engaged in rich and substantive deliberations on the International Law Commission's (ILC) Draft Articles on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters. Since then, the relevance of these draft articles has only grown. As noted in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) annual report, the unfortunate trend of increasing humanitarian needs, driven by disasters and crises, persisted throughout 2023. The correlation between many of these disasters and climate change has become increasingly evident, underscoring that this trend is likely to continue.

Despite the urgency on the ground, the field of disaster law remains fragmented, lacking a comprehensive and universally accepted flagship treaty. This gap should not be viewed as a simple hiatus but rather as a reflection of the absence of coherence among a wide array of dispersed legal instruments. Many of these instruments suffer from limited ratifications and focus narrowly on

specific aspects of disasters, often limited to facilitating exchanges of best practices and information. Therefore, we recognize the value of the ILC's approach, which seeks to bring coherence and systematization to this fragmented legal landscape.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Colleagues,

We will address our substantive observations on the draft articles during the thematic clusters of the working group. At this stage, we would like to focus on why we see merit in advancing these deliberations into a formal negotiation process, and we make three points in this regard.

First, we note that the ILC chose to prepare draft articles, despite recent trends favoring “soft” final forms, such as guidelines or recommendations, for topics under consideration. Second, the ILC recommended that the General Assembly proceed with the elaboration of a convention based on these draft articles. This stands in contrast to other topics where a two-step approach has been proposed; here, the ILC has demonstrated confidence in moving directly to a convention. Third, while Hungary considers the draft articles as a basis for future negotiations, we believe there are several opportunities for improvement. For example, the impact of disasters on cultural heritage—both tangible and intangible—deserves further consideration in the final form of the articles. The destruction of cultural heritage during disasters may entail significant consequences, not only for communities' identity and cohesion. It is our shared responsibility to safeguard these irreplaceable assets—not only to honor our past but to ensure their preservation for future generations. A formal negotiation process is the appropriate forum for addressing such concerns.

In conclusion, we reiterate our strong support for the ILC's efforts to codify and progressively develop this critical area of international law. We believe that advancing towards a coherent and comprehensive legal framework will significantly enhance the capacity of States and the international community to respond to and mitigate the effects of disasters.

I thank you for your attention.