

**Mr. Chairperson,**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the delegation of the republic of Uganda. The delegation of Uganda aligns itself with the statement of the African group.

Uganda welcomes the continued significance of the topic: “Protection of persons in the event of disasters,” and the Sixth Committee’s continued consideration of this agenda item, including the recommendation of the International Law Commission (ILC) contained in paragraph 46 of its report (A/71/10) on the work of its 68th session – to elaborate “a convention on the basis of the draft articles”

**Mr. Chair,** the topic of protection of persons in the event of disasters is important for my delegation and would like to highlight the following points: We emphasize the responsibility of all States to undertake disaster risk reduction, including through preparedness, as well as response and early recovery efforts, in order to minimize the impact of natural disasters and build community resilience towards natural disasters, and recognized the importance of international cooperation, including through North-South cooperation complemented by South-South, as well as triangular cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships, in support of the efforts of affected countries which may have limited capacities and resources in this regard. Uganda expresses concern over the human suffering and economic impact caused by the natural disasters throughout the world, in particular by countries grappling with existing vulnerabilities such as African countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries, least developed countries, as well as middle income countries facing specific challenges.

In order to protect persons in the event of disasters, the establishment of concrete structures and measures guided by an international legally binding instrument is key to assisting persons and communities affected. Regional treaties like the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa of 2009, known as the Kampala Convention, which is the first regional treaty that reflects Africa's commitment in addressing the protection of persons in the event of disasters. Although, the treaty addresses mainly IDPs, Uganda believes that this is a positive step forward in having a comprehensive discussion on this agenda item.

**Mr. Chair,** the draft articles presented by the International Law Commission provide a solid foundation for disaster risk reduction. They encompass critical aspects, including the responsibility of affected states to ensure protection of their people and the role of the international community in providing immediate assistance upon the request of the affected nation. As much as the articles constitute a good foundation there is need for critical review of the

articles to ensure that the affected state retains its sovereignty over the management of disasters in the territory.

Affected states are indeed the primary actors in protecting persons in disaster situations. They have the responsibility to uphold and enforce existing humanitarian laws to ensure the safety and well-being of their population. the protection of persons and the responsibility of states, towards the heightened protection needs, during disasters, falls within the purview of human rights, humanitarian laws, and principles of humanitarian assistance.

**Mr. Chair,** we emphasize that the affected State has the responsibility first and foremost in responding and assisting the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring in its territory. Furthermore, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.

As we discuss the draft articles we must note that While the draft articles identify a “duty to cooperate” on the basis of the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and nondiscrimination, they also fail to identify that Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) on specific countries erode cooperation among member states but also endangers the livelihood of societies as such measures are a source of disaster that hinder an effective response to alleviate the damage incurred from said disasters. It also prevents targeted states from meeting their obligations under the current legal frameworks to address disasters adequately

**In conclusion,** we strongly encourage the international community, national authorities, private sector, as appropriate, and non-governmental organizations, to promote closer cooperation to reduce the impact of natural disasters by strengthening disaster risk reduction, mitigation and preparedness and disaster mitigation such as through risk mapping, early warning systems and exchange of information at all levels.

**I thank you**