



**New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations
Te Aka Aorere**

**Sixth Committee, 79th Session of the General Assembly – 86
- *Cluster 2: WG on Protection of Persons in the Event of
Disasters - Core obligations***

**New Zealand Statement delivered by
First Secretary, Zoe Russell**

7 October 2024

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Thank you, Chair.

New Zealand appreciates the opportunity to participate in these working group discussions on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters.

New Zealand commends the emphasis placed in the draft articles on human dignity, human rights, applicable humanitarian principles, and the responsibility to reduce the risk of disasters.

Regarding **draft article 4**, New Zealand recognises the importance of respecting and protecting human dignity in the event of disasters. The concept of human dignity is closely related to and underpins the concept of human rights, which has a standalone draft article 5. New Zealand is open to how best to reflect the concept of human dignity in the text, including by mention in the preamble.

New Zealand welcomes **draft article 5**, that states persons affected by disasters are entitled to the respect for and protection of their human rights in accordance with international law. The draft article serves as a valuable reminder that human rights must be protected during a disaster.

New Zealand also welcomes **draft article 6**, that states response to disasters shall take place in accordance with relevant humanitarian principles. Humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and non-discrimination are key humanitarian principles that must be complied with in disaster responses. New Zealand considers "independence" a further important humanitarian principle, and would support its inclusion in the text.

Regarding **draft article 9**, New Zealand recognises the fundamental importance of the responsibility to reduce the risk of disasters.

New Zealand recognises the importance of bilateral, regional and multilateral frameworks and instruments concerned with disaster risk reduction, which we see the draft articles as largely complementing. We support the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction as the core global guiding document to manage disaster risk prevention and reduction. We also highlight the importance of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, which provides an integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management.

New Zealand notes that the scope of the duty to reduce the risk of disasters is closely linked to the definition of "disaster" in draft article 3. New Zealand would welcome clarity around the definition of "disaster" as it is currently very broad.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to discussion on this cluster.