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# UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SIXTH COMMITTEE,  
UNGA79, AGENDA ITEM 86

PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTERS – RECOMMENDATION  
OF THE ILC

9 October 2024

Delivered by Greg Reisman

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1. Thank you Chair.
2. The UK has welcomed the opportunity to consider the draft articles in the two working groups, and has listened, with interest, to the range of perspectives and many useful points made by colleagues. We acknowledge that many States making interventions have had their own difficult and distressing experiences of disasters, and that preventing and responding to disasters is among the highest priorities for many.
3. The development of the right global framework that elevates the responsibility of States to reduce disaster risk and provide for all the population in disasters, and strengthens the presumption in favour of appropriate external assistance being sought, allowed, facilitated and well-coordinated, is strongly in-line with the UK's humanitarian and development objectives.
4. We want further progress on the many ways we can mitigate the worst impacts of hazards such as the use of technology and data to predict and warn populations before disasters, and the construction of buildings and infrastructure that withstand earthquakes and severe weather. We engage across international financial institutions to improve approaches to prevent and anticipate crises. It is essential that international financial institutions increase the level of financing available, and strengthen technical capacities, to mitigate disasters in States affected by fragility.
5. When disasters happen, we want local and national responses to be as effective as possible. And, when an international or external

response is necessary, it should appropriately meet the needs of affected populations, be well-coordinated with the affected State and other national and local actors, and be well-facilitated without undue barriers. A well-calibrated framework could drive such progress. However, as we have set out, it will be important to ensure that such a framework complements and does not undermine other areas of international law.

6. One point that has not received attention in this process is how implementation would be supported and monitored, and what suitable existing or new mechanisms could be utilised. If what comes from the draft articles is to genuinely affect change in disaster prevention, preparedness and response, the instrument will also need to be accompanied by the right methods to enable these duties and principles to be realised.
  
7. I thank the Chair again for this further substantive discussion on the draft articles, and we look forward to devising the most appropriate next steps to build on the progress we have made towards greater protection for persons affected by disasters. The UK looks forward to continuing to play a constructive role in this work.