



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

**Mr. Thomas Ramopoulos, Counsellor, Delegation of the European Union to
the United Nations**

at the Sixth Committee

**on the Agenda item 86:
"Protection of Persons in the event of disasters"**

United Nations

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– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Mr./Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

[alignment paragraph]

We welcome the in-depth and constructive substantive debates that took place the last two years, including in the Working Group. Resolution 79/128 provides for the elaboration and conclusion of a legally binding instrument on the protection of persons in the event of disasters by the end of 2027 at the latest, based on the Draft Articles adopted by the ILC in 2016, without prejudice to the legal effects of any particular provisions contained therein. It also tasks the General Assembly at this year's session to determine the dates, location and modalities that will operationalise that decision. The importance of this resolution for the potential development of international disaster law cannot be overestimated.

Building on our previous statements on this agenda item, we would like to make three initial remarks of procedural nature.

First, the choice of dates and location as well as the modalities should ensure an **open, inclusive, transparent and efficient process** allowing for substantive exchanges of views on the draft articles and the envisaged legally binding instrument on the protection of persons in the event of disasters. All delegations and relevant stakeholders should have genuine opportunities to engage in meaningful debates and make their contributions. We recall in this regard the invaluable input provided by UN entities, civil society, academia as well as specifically the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in this process. We look forward to their continued active involvement at

the next stages of the process. The resolution should ensure that they are given this opportunity so that we can all benefit from their expertise.

Secondly, always in accordance with the requirements of openness, inclusivity and transparency, the EU and its Member States see the value of **substantive consultations** prior to the final elaboration and conclusion of a legally binding instrument with the aim to facilitate the process.

Thirdly, we are supportive of **exhausting all efforts in good faith** to reach an agreement on the content of a legally binding instrument by **consensus**.

Mr./Madam Chair,

Taking this opportunity, let me turn very briefly to the invitation in Resolution 79/128 to make substantive proposals for amendment to the draft articles no later than the end of 2025. The European Union and its Member States look forward to submissions with the aim to have a fruitful and well-informed subsequent negotiation.

As reflected in previous exchanges in the 6th Committee, our substantive positions will continue to be informed by the EU Treaties and secondary legal framework, the lessons learned from the more than 770 times since 2001 that the EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated having provided assistance across regions, and extensive practice in humanitarian aid. In addition, we take due account of existing international frameworks, such as specifically the **Sendai Framework**

for Disaster Risk Reduction, its Mid Term Review, and the relevant General Assembly resolutions.¹

Without being exhaustive, we recall that the EU disaster relief framework comprises of two pillars: one covering humanitarian aid and one covering civil protection. European Union humanitarian aid seeks to provide assistance, relief and protection to persons affected by natural or human-made disasters, with a focus on those in the most vulnerable situation. Assistance must be needs-based, provided without discrimination, and be based **on international humanitarian principles** and the **European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid**. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism is premised on the **principle of solidarity**. Its scope goes beyond the **protection primarily of persons to that of the environment and property, including cultural heritage**, against **all kinds of natural and human-made disasters**, including the consequences of acts of terrorism and technological, radiological or environmental disasters, occurring inside or outside the European Union. Lastly but very significantly, similarly to the Draft Articles, it covers the phases of **disaster prevention, preparedness and response**.

Mr./Madam Chair,

The EU and its Member States recognize that international cooperation must be at the centre of efforts to reduce the risk of disasters, prevent and prepare for disasters, and respond effectively when they occur. With this realization we will continue working closely together with all other delegations on this item.

¹ See Resolution 79/139 International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development; Resolution 79/140 Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations; Resolution 79/205 on Disaster risk reduction.

Thank you.