

**Statement by Sweden on behalf of the Nordic Countries
(Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)**

at the

**General Assembly,
Eightieth Session**

Sixth Committee

Agenda item 86:

Protection of persons in the event of disasters

United Nations, New York

14 October 2025

– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Madame/Mr Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and my own country, Sweden.

Let me begin by noting the significance of the decision taken by this Committee and the resolution adopted by the General Assembly last year to move forward with the elaboration of a legally binding instrument on the protection of persons in the event of disasters. This represents an important development, reflecting our shared commitment to strengthening international cooperation and providing a strong foundation for further progress in this area of international law.

Madame/Mr Chair,

The adverse effects of climate change are an undeniable reality, resulting in more frequent and intense extreme weather events, which in turn increases the risk of disasters worldwide. These developments further underscore the need for effective international cooperation in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and response—whether disasters are natural or human-made. We need to face these challenges together. Strengthened international cooperation in all phases of disasters will help reduce risks and to ensure that the needs of persons affected by disaster are met in a timely manner.

The International Law Commission's draft articles on protection of persons in the event of disasters serve as the solid foundation for this work.

The Nordic countries consider the draft articles to strike an adequate balance between the rights and obligations of the affected state and those of assisting actors. By providing that external assistance in principle requires the consent of the affected state – but that such consent shall not be withheld arbitrarily – the draft articles reflect the dual nature of sovereignty as entailing both rights and obligations.

It is important that the draft articles reflect the centrality of the principle of human dignity and that the future convention also recalls the duty of States to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. The draft articles underline that disaster response shall be undertaken in accordance with the humanitarian principles, including to assist persons most in need, especially those in the most vulnerable situations. The Nordic countries emphasize the need to preserve principled humanitarian assistance throughout the future legally binding instrument. We would also wish to reiterate the importance of integrating a gender perspective and taking into consideration those in the most vulnerable situations in all disaster-related efforts, to ensure that assistance and protection are provided without discrimination.

Madame/Mr Chair,

Prevention remains key. The obligation of states to take appropriate measures – including through legislation and regulation – to prevent, mitigate, and prepare for disasters is an important aspect of the ILC draft articles. This is not only a legal imperative but also a practical necessity in the face of disasters.

Madame/Mr Chair,

The Nordic countries wish to reiterate our commitment to engaging constructively in the negotiations ahead, with the ILC draft articles serving as a starting point for a strong, effective, and inclusive instrument on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters.

We look forward to working with all delegations to advance this important agenda.

Thank you.