

8. Disaster Management

Recognizing the need to develop, implement and sustain shared comprehensive disaster management strategies and programs to reduce the vulnerability of our populations and economies to natural and man-made disasters and to maintain or quickly restore minimum levels of consumption, income and production at the household and community levels in the aftermath of disasters, including irregular population settlements; acknowledging in this regard the need to expand the community of stakeholders at the regional, national and local levels engaged in the formulation of early warning systems, the management of risk and response operations in the event of disasters and integrated sustainable development strategies:

Develop the capacity to forecast, prepare for and mitigate the potential impacts of natural and man-made hazards; promote vulnerability reduction; adopt and enforce better building codes and standards; ensure appropriate land-use practices; inventory and evaluate the vulnerability of critical facilities and infrastructure; estimate climate change variability and sea-level rise and assess their possible impacts; and in pursuit of the above, create the requisite legal framework and establish the cooperative mechanisms to access and share advances in science and technology and their application in the early warning, preparedness for and mitigation of these hazards;

Promote the exchange of information on the vulnerability of infrastructure exposed to disasters as well as the early warning capacity, particularly in the border areas of the countries of the Americas, in order to design specific prevention measures in the fields of engineering and legislation with the aim of reducing the socio-economic impact of natural disasters;

Establish or strengthen, where appropriate, partnerships with all relevant actors, including the private sector, technical professional associations, regional institutions, civil society, educational and research institutions and other multilateral coordinating agencies such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in the development and implementation of disaster management policies and programs at the national and community levels, and promote greater awareness and effective integration of these policies and programs among national policy makers, local authorities, communities and media, and promote the insurance and reinsurance of the social and economic infrastructure as well as the decentralization of information and decision-making;

Promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences regarding the combat against inappropriate practices in the exploitation of natural resources and unsustainable patterns of consumption, including the problems of waste management, which increase the vulnerability of the people to natural disasters;

Promote the development of telecommunications for humanitarian assistance; actively encourage greater use and interoperability of telecommunications and