



**2nd Regional Consultative Meeting for  
Disaster Risk Reduction  
in Central Asia**

**Draft REPORT**

**November 18-19, 2009**

**Bishkek, KYRGYZSTAN**

# FOREWARD

## Ministry of Emergency Situations , Kyrgyzstan

First of all, I would like to welcome guests and participants of Central Asia DIPECHO Partners Conference, as well as to express my deep gratitude to the European Commission for active participation and support rendered to the Kyrgyz Republic in disaster prevention and recovery.

The Second Regional Consultative DIPECHO Conference is a logical continuation of the event that was held in the Republic of Tajikistan in 2007.

It should be noted that the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one is characterized by the intensity of natural and anthropogenic disasters, which happened in our Republic as well.

Thus, it is quite obvious that the world community plays a significant role in natural disaster risk management both in the World and on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic.

One of the brightest examples is the implementation of the 5th Action Plan of the EC Disaster Preparedness Programme for Central Asia (DIPECHO).

DIPECHO is a unique platform on the elaboration of strategies for natural and anthropogenic disasters on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic. The programme basically covers the Southern region of our country.

Today we may note that the Ministry of Emergency of the Kyrgyz Republic achieved the following positive results together with our partners:

- Firstly, there is a positive tendency in terms of awareness -raising among the population of the KR via trainings, dissemination of printed materials among local communities and schools, the broadcasting of b-rolls on local TV , etc.
- Secondly, capacity building of local authorities and local communities in emergency management.
- Thirdly, implementation of mitigation projects, which are of great importance for our Republic.
- Finally, capacity building of local communities by providing the voluntary rescue units and rural rescues teams with necessary equipment.

It should be also noted that the respective ministries and agencies of the KR managed to achieve efficient cooperation with international organizations and NGOs within the framework of DIPECHO programme. It is obvious that prevention of emergency situations is ten s to one hundred times cheaper than disaster recovery.

To conclude I would like to wish us fruitful and successful work, as well as to wish everyone success and good luck.

• . Tashiev

Minister of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic

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## 1. SUMMARY

The second DIPECHO Regional Consultative Meeting for Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia, held on November 18-19, 2009 in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), brought together more than 160 stakeholders from the five Central Asia countries representing a range of government representatives, national experts, NGOs and international organizations, donor agencies and EU state members. The European Commission was represented by the Head of EC Delegation in the region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and by the assistant to the ECHO Operational Director.

The conference was aimed at providing a forum to foster dialogue, information sharing and cooperation in DRR in the region. It was set up to review the main achievements of the ECHO's Disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO) and to identify potential needs to be covered by the next DIPECHO programme in the region.

The opening speech of the conference was made by Mr. Temiraliev, the head of the international department of MoES Kyrgyzstan followed by Mr. Norbert Jousten, Head of the EC delegation. They welcomed the participants to the conference, and outlined the importance of disaster risk reduction and DIPECHO achievement in Central Asia and the active involvement of governments in the region.

Mr. Tashiev, the Kyrgyz Minister of the Emergency situations, underlined that DIPECHO programmes had proved successful in showing in practice how problems in the sphere of natural disaster prevention and elimination could be solved. He also stated that unlike some programmes that fail to go beyond seminars and conferences to achieve practical results, DIPECHO, in his view, is an example of good DRR programmes. He stressed that the DIPECHO programme was very successful and also expressed his gratitude to the MoES partners for their support.

A further intervention was made by Mr. Martin Landgraf, Assistant to the ECHO Operational Director, who acknowledged the achievement made by ECHO in the region through its DIPECHO programme. He also pointed out the need to strengthen the approach by mainstreaming DRR into local, national, and regional development policies. After the speech of Mr. Landgraf, Mr. Adam Yao, head of the ECHO office in Central Asia; introduced the objectives and the key topics to be discussed.

Mr. Thierry Bertouille, ECHO desk officer, presented the European Commission strategy in DRR. For him DIPECHO remains an instrument that should focus on preparedness, small scale mitigations and play an advocacy role in the mainstreaming of DRR in development policies of the countries of the region.

Further presentations were made by DIPECHO partners, which clearly established the achievement of DIPECHO programmes in the five Central Asian countries and underlined the gaps to be bridged. Next, eight key topics relevant to disaster risk reduction were presented and then discussed in working Groups. The conclusions of these working groups resulted in the six key recommendations:

- To mainstream disaster risk reduction in Government strategy as an important approach to scaling up the implementation of the main goals of the Hyogo Framework for Action building the resilience of the population at all levels
- To set-up a regional working group with various experts from different sectors of activities to work on the intervention of public and private partnerships and to deliver practical outputs for Central Asia.
- To work out concrete approaches on how to address climate change adaptation in DRR through studies and the establishment of an expert network taking into account the social/economic specificity of each country.
- To scale-up and to improve the coordination of all stakeholders involved in DRR and cross-border projects. A regional experts working group should be established to assess existing coordination mechanisms in DRR in Central Asian States (at local, national, and regional levels) and to formulate recommendations
- To promote the use of education and knowledge as vector to create awareness and to reinforce the resilience of the populations exposed to natural hazards
- To reinforce the legal framework for DRR intervention and the protection of populations exposed to natural disasters, and to facilitate trans-border operations in emergency situations.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Central Asia is particularly exposed to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, avalanches and drought. The loss and destruction that result from these disasters in the countries of Central Asia are extremely high from a social and economic point of view, thus reducing the development potential of the country and specific provinces where large proportions of the population live in remote areas.

It is widely recognized that the failure to address this aspect of the problem will jeopardize any sustainable development activity. Current attention given to climate change and its impact on social and economic development is also contributing to accelerating the recognition that natural disasters are a critical factor in human development and preservation of life.

In response to the challenges raised by natural disasters on human development, ECHO launched the DIPECHO programmes in 1998. The clear goal was to work on the preparedness aspects of disaster risk reduction in order to improve the capacities of communities at risk to protect themselves against natural hazards. The main goal of ongoing DIPECHO programme is to reduce the vulnerability and increase the coping capacities of Central Asian populations. The projects implemented by DIPECHO partners have enabled local communities and institutions to better prepare for and to mitigate natural disasters.

With the five DIPECHO Action Plans from 2003 to date, more than EUR 22 million have been invested by ECHO, allowing for training and the establishment of more than 1 000 local community rescue teams in Central Asia. Moreover, to enhance the preparedness capacity of the communities, more than 1,000 disaster zones were mapped and about 250 early warning systems including radio communication systems, were established in most dangerous locations of the region.

The process of networking and knowledge-sharing among DRR actors has started in Central Asia, and ECHO is contributing through its DIPECHO programmes and activities by focusing on coordination mechanisms carried out by REACT<sup>1</sup> and DRCU<sup>2</sup>, respectively in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In addition to this, the organisation of national and regional conferences not only contributes to expanding the forum of networking and knowledge-sharing, but also proposes a transparent approach and methodology to address the complex issue of disaster risk reduction which requires a multi-sectoral approach.

The Regional Consultative Meeting (RCM) was attended by more than 160 participants including Ministry of Emergency Situations and government experts, representatives from donor organizations, DIPECHO partner organizations, United Nations and International Organizations, representatives of NGOs and civil society.

Hosted by the Government of Kyrgyzstan and jointly organized with ECHO, the RCM was officially opened by Mr. Taalaibek Temiraliev (Head of External Relations and

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<sup>1</sup> Rapid Emergency Action and Coordination Team

<sup>2</sup> Disaster Response and Coordination Unit

Investment Department of MOES of the Kyrgyz Republic) and Mr. Norbert Jousten (Head of EC delegation for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan).

The challenges in the sector are primarily to set up national and regional platforms for the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), and to reinforce national capacity to handle and coordinate issues related to disaster risk reduction. The integration of disaster risk reduction activities in national and regional strategic planning must become a reality in Central Asia. The conference reviewed the main achievements of the five Disaster Preparedness Action plans funded by ECHO in Central Asia, through presentations given by DIPECHO partners.

The conference also aimed at identifying the needs for the next programming cycle for the DIPECHO Sixth Action Plan for Central Asia. Government representatives underlined strategy and gaps in disaster risk management in their countries. Key topics were discussed in working groups. These included the breaches in disaster risk management in the region, the interaction with climate change and adaptation, the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development plans and Risk Assessment. The recommendations elaborated during the discussions, have been taken into account in the finalization of the DIPECHO 6 guidelines.

### **3. Opening and Welcoming Remarks**

#### ***Speech of the Kyrgyz Minister of Emergency Situations***

**Kamchybek Tashiev**, the Minister of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic, stated that the DIPECHO programme represented a unique platform for making decisions on measures to be taken against both natural and man-made disasters on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. The programme covers mainly the South of the country where considerable progress has been made thanks to the partner coordination.

Mr. Tashiev stressed the ongoing tendency to raise awareness among the population regarding natural disasters and their consequences. Trainings had been organized, and information materials had been provided in more than 400 villages.

The MoES, as the state-partner of DIPECHO, had carried out two large-scale projects. In coordination with IOM and with the financial assistance of the Swiss Agency of Cooperation (SDC), the MoES organized courses on civil defence. In 2009, MoES jointly with OSCE, established a modern Regional Training Centre in Osh under the authority of the Central Rescue Department of MoES. Here additional courses to prepare for natural disasters and to train in first aid were provided to all interested parties.

Volunteer rescue teams are being formed. About 200 local rescue teams have been established as a response to recurring natural disasters which make communities vulnerable to consequent emergency situations. Within the framework of DIPECHO and with the help of IOM, the MoES established a Science and Technical Council to provide coordination between MoES, scientific institutions, and other stakeholders. Mr Tashiev noted that on 18 November, the Interdepartmental Commission approved the plan of the Science and Technical Council for 2010.

On the basis of the Country Development Strategy, MoES came up with the Programme and Project Initiative for 2010-2011 in the sphere of risk management, reflecting further cooperation within DIPECHO. Mr. Tashiev expressed the hope that all aspects of the initiative would also be considered in the implementation of DIPECHO 6.

Mr. Tashiev revealed that Kyrgyzstan was not prepared for the earthquakes which occurred in the Osh region at the end December 2007 and early January 2008. There were no warm tents and no stocked food to distribute to the population. Many international organizations extended their help to Kyrgyzstan by providing goods. As a result, about 1000 tents were distributed to the affected people.

Mr. Tashiev pointed out that the situation had changed in the meantime, stressing that the country is now prepared to take responsibility for its own safety. MoES now has a capacity to provide assistance to 1000 families, as the state budget takes possible expenditure into account in advance. MoES has purchased 50 heavy vehicles to provide immediate help. The MoES has also acquired about 70 fire trucks in 2009, as its financial situation had improved compared to the previous 20 years.

Regarding next steps and what international organizations should know, Mr. Tashiev proposed to implement projects that provide technical hardware to rescue services, to



implement projects assisting populations living in regions exposed to natural disasters, and to develop the capacity building and coordination enhancement of MoES.

Mr. Tashiev pointed out that the DIPECHO programme proved that the problems in the sphere of natural disaster prevention and elimination can be solved in practice. He also stated that unlike some programmes which fail to go beyond seminars and conferences to achieve practical results, DIPECHO, was in his view, an example of good DRR programmes. He stressed that the DIPECHO programme was very successful and expressed his gratitude to the MoES partners for their support.

### ***Speech of the Head of External Relations and Investment Department.***

In his opening speech, **Mr. Taalaibek Temiraliyev**, Head of the External Relations and Investment Department in the Kyrgyz MoES, stated that the conference was indeed important for Central Asian countries. He drew the participants' attention to the recent important meeting of the interdepartmental commission with the participation of the Prime Minister, governors and other officials responsible for preventing emergency situations in the autumn, winter, and spring seasons.

Mr. Temiraliyev noted that the conference was a logical continuation of the first consultative meeting held in 2007 in Dushanbe, which highlighted the tasks and priorities for the following years. He further noted that conclusions would be drawn from the work of those involved in natural disaster risks reduction in the region in order to determine tasks for 2010-2011.

### ***Intervention of the Head of the European Commission Delegation***

In his speech, **Mr. Norbert Jousten**, Head of the European Commission Delegation, stressed that Central Asia is particularly exposed to natural disasters such as landslides, avalanches, floods, earthquakes, and drought. He pointed out that the losses and destruction that result from these disasters are extremely considerably high from a social and economic point of view. They reduce the development potential of the countries affected and the specific parts of the region where a large proportion of the population live in remote areas.

He went on to say that all agree that it makes no sense to work on development issues without reducing the risks of disasters. Therefore it is very appropriate that ECHO continues its intervention with the launch of its 6th DIPECHO action plan for Central Asia at the beginning of the next year.

In recent years, disaster risk reduction promotion and advocacy has become a major concern for the European Commission. In 2009, the Commission published its communication on EU strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries. The action plan to implement this strategy is under preparation and will soon be finalized.

During the last 15 years the European Commission has not only provided vital humanitarian assistance and disaster preparedness projects to Central Asia, but also contributed to development with the provision of technical and financial assistance. EC assistance for regional strategy for Central Asia allocated around €720 million for 2007-2013, with a view to supporting further regional cooperation, poverty reduction, border management, good governance and economic reform.

He expressed his appreciation of ECHO partners, international and donor agencies for their efforts over the years and wished them success in carrying on the promotion of risk reduction in the region in close cooperation with the host governments involved.

### ***ECHO's intervention***

**Mr. Martin Landgraf**, assistant to ECHO Operational Director, noted that since 2003 ECHO had contributed over € 20 million to the Central Asian states to enhance preparedness measures. In this period almost one thousand disaster zones have been mapped, 250 early warning systems have been established, and more than a thousand local community rescue teams have been trained. ECHO has encouraged the setting up of coordination mechanisms and has engaged in numerous other actions aimed at combating the risks of natural disasters that continue to endanger the region.

Despite the progress and achievements over the last years, he underlined that DIPECHO remains a relatively small programme, the success of which relies not only on the quality of the work of ECHO partners, but also on the commitment of governments and local communities. Without a strong ownership of the people most directly concerned, the efforts would not be sustainable, he added. DIPECHO interventions are meant to be pilot operations. They are not and cannot provide the sole answer/solution to the challenges of disaster risk reduction in the region.

Basically, DIPECHO projects were setup to demonstrate what could usefully be done and how best it could be done. On this basis, other more important national, regional, and international programmes need to come in and take over, benefitting from the experience that DIPECHO was able to provide.

In order for DIPECHO to become truly successful, its approach needs to be mainstreamed into local, national, and regional development policies. The cooperation with the governmental actors in the region is particularly important in this regard. The findings of various evaluations for Central Asia DIPECHO activities have indicated possible areas for further improvement.

## **4. The purpose of the Regional Consultative Meeting**

**Mr. Adam YAO**, Head of the ECHO office in Central Asia, pointed out that Central Asian states remain particularly exposed to natural disasters, including landslides, earthquakes, avalanches and floods. The example of Tajikistan was cited as similar to other countries of the region. Since the beginning of DIPECHO in 2003, ECHO has mobilised €22 million for disaster preparedness operations.

Although the DIPECHO 6 programme will succeed DIPECHO 5 in April 2010, Mr. Yao pointed out that it is time to seek more involvement of States and other long term donors in financing programmes and measures against natural disasters and emergency situations management. Mr. Yao also stressed that governments must include in their programmes not only vertical, but also horizontal management of emergency situations.

He underlined that the developed countries react to natural disasters much faster than the less developed countries, especially in the rehabilitation of the consequences. He also stressed the importance of working on the prevention of natural disasters.

He went on to mention that ECHO had initiated a participatory approach and mutual dialogue with stakeholders active in DRR management. The first Regional Consultative Meeting which took place in Dushanbe in 2007 was very useful in preparing guidelines for DIPECHO 5 Action Plan. The guidelines for DIPECHO 6 Action Plan for Central Asia will be finalised on the basis of this second RCM outcome.

In order to measure the achievements and gaps in DRR, the RCM was preceded by national conferences organized in the five countries of Central Asia in May and November 2009.

## 5. Presentation of ECHO Interventions in Disaster Risk Reduction

**Mr. Thierry Bertouille**, ECHO desk officer for Central Asia, began by underlining the key factors for reducing casualties including the preparedness of the population to the situation during the disaster and its aftermath, the timely provision of first aid, and good coordination between local and national structures, NGOs, and international cooperation agencies. He noted that for the past few years, the number of casualties had decreased in the region due partially to DIPECHO interventions.

From 2003 to 2009, the Central Asian states received €3.2 million a year, amounting overall to €22.3 million. The total number of beneficiaries of DIPECHO was 3.65 million, 1,200 rescue teams were formed, and 1,850 training courses in schools and 300 mitigation projects were organized. The 5th DIPECHO funding was allocated as follows: local communities 50%, national authorities 25%, regional cooperation 5%, and Red Crescent societies 15%.

The key components of the DIPECHO 5 programme included uniting the efforts of all donor organizations in DRR, strengthening DRR through the provision of basic equipment and the adaptation of the population to climate change. DIPECHO 6 will mainly focus on providing assistance for coordination and consolidation of national and regional platforms in DRR, the development of public and private partnerships, the participation of women in the projects, increasing their knowledge on providing first aid assistance, the protection of the environment, and the adaptation of climate change in DRR.

The adoption of the decision on DIPECHO 6 will be in late December 2009; launching of the call for expression of interest will start in early January 2010; the deadline for proposals submission is mid-February and the implementation period will begin on 1 April and end on 30 September, 2011. The implementation period for the Sixth Action Plan will be 18 months.

In conclusion, Mr. Bertouille said that the finalisation of the guidelines will be based on the conclusions of the conference. He also added that during the evaluation of proposals, ECHO would concentrate on the following:

- the sustainability of the foreseen operations;
- climate change adaptation;
- clear exit strategy for the operations including hand-over to local governments;
- capacity building;
- use of innovation in coordination with the structures of the countries and international cooperation.

Mr. Bertouille also added that only one grant agreement would be allocated per partner, which in turn could establish sub-contracts. While responding to questions from the conference participants, he noted that the minimum amount of funding per grant agreement will be mentioned in the guidelines for the call for expression of interest.

## 6. Presentation of DIPECHO Projects in Central Asia

### *Projects in Kazakhstan*

**Mr Sabit Narbaev**, acting project coordinator of Red Cross and Red Crescent in Kazakhstan, made the presentation on the DIPECHO projects in Kazakhstan. In his intervention, he underlined the good coordination between the international organisations funded by DIPECHO. Mr. Narbaev said that UN agencies strengthen the DRR capacity by providing training for voluntary rescue teams, education programs for university students in Almaty and assistance in establishing Regional Coordination Centre on disaster response and disaster reduction in Central Asia.

UNICEF organized special classes at schools, which included training children on how to react during the natural disasters, published booklets and cartoons and issued teacher training aids which were endorsed by the Ministry of Education. In total, about 50,000 children acquired knowledge and skills on DRR.

The joint projects of the Red Crescent and the National Red Cross in Kazakhstan included capacity building for communities and schools in natural disaster preparedness and response. Under this programme, 40 schools received first aid handbooks, booklets and pamphlets. In addition, contests were organised for school teams to win awards for the best knowledge on emergency situation response .

### *Projects in Tajikistan*

According to the presentation made by **Ms. Madina Aliberdieva**, Oxfam representative in Tajikistan, on the role of DIPECHO 5 in DRR - more than 50,000 minor and major landslides had occurred across the overall territory of Tajikistan during the past 20 years. This represented 38% of disasters in the country. The landslides were due to seismic, hydro-geological and man-made factors. Other disasters included mudflows and floods (31%) and erosion (21%).

DIPECHO's operations in the country focus on community mobilization for disaster management, institutional strengthening, school and hospital -based disaster preparedness, public awareness-raising, DRR for small mitigation projects . They also focus on the development of emergency and risk reduction planning, including the cross -cutting issue of reduction of gender imbalances through creation and training of women groups.

Ms. Aliberdieva pointed out that the knowledge and application of the concept of DRR in communities had increased and there was a shifting perception of disaster preparedness and response by the communities. Rather than expecting external support during a disaster, communities are now learning that they themselves can take proactive measures to help alleviate the impact of natural disasters.

Regarding risk and vulnerability to hazards, she noted that understanding of communities to the degree of exposure to natural disasters at the regional level had improved and that the populations were prepared to prioritize the risks and act on them. Ms . Aliberdieva

also noted that the knowledge-base of DIPECHO partners at national and Committee of Emergency Situations levels, had trickled down to community level thereby increasing awareness of disaster risks.

As for the lessons learned, Ms. Aliberdieva stressed that there should be a structure to continually oversee systematic multi-hazard assessment analysis not only at the national, but also at the district level. DRR activities needed to be more linked to development activities, as there was currently little integration. In her view, this raised the issue of operational sustainability.

Ms. Aliberdieva went on to suggest the creation of a DRR structure at local level to oversee activities. She went on to say that the community and government dialogue on DRR needed to go beyond current practices and become more regular, comprehensive and more responsive to community needs. There should be considerably more ambition on the part of the government to initiate the development of DRR activities at the community and district levels.

From a humanitarian point of view, it would be absolutely “callous” to drop the issue of DRR. She said that every single disaster that occurs is a clear indication that the problems are not being addressed. It is essential to address the stumbling blocks and to ensure that DRR programmes be increased. DRR sustainability would be measured in terms of the number of lives saved, less stress and hardship for the communities and more energized communities.

As key recommendations, Ms. Aliberdieva proposed to retain current tactics but suggested changing the approach so that DRR projects be constructed to a timeframe, with projects designed for more than a year; implemented at grassroots with more participation at government level; and finally, to put in place community level funding to support longer term projects for communities. As a last recommendation, she asked for a clearer definition of the concepts of disaster risk reduction, management and preparedness in order to avoid misinterpretation which could limit DRR activities.

A representative of Committee of Emergency Situations in Tajikistan further added that a system had been developed in Tajikistan for training not only rescue teams, but also response groups to a professional level. According to the laws of the Ministry of Education, a licensed management structure is responsible for this training. CoES and the Ministry of Education were considering the possibility of opening a special department at the Slavic-Tajik University in Tajikistan.

### ***Projects in Uzbekistan***

**Mr. Djamshet Aknazarov**, Project Manager, UNICEF, Uzbekistan, presented the DIPECHO activities in his country. He mentioned that 500 schools and 72 communities in total were covered by the project.

He noted that, so far, the DIPECHO programmes had been carried out in 11 regions and the main partners included World Vision, Handicap International, the Netherland Red Cross and UNICEF. Information materials on DRR, including brochures, leaflets, and posters had been circulated and additional information had been provided through mass media; seminars and trainings organized for teachers. Contests and exchange

programmes on DRR were also held at summer camps, orphanages and boarding schools. Mr. Aknazarov pointed out that consultative centres and information placards had been established.

He also mentioned that all eleven mahallas in Tashkent now had instructions on how to prepare for disasters, and that they were equipped with the necessary resources. Families in these mahallas had also developed strategies on how to reduce disaster risks, and more than 160 activists had undergone training on how to spread information on DRR. Moreover, 18 small-scale mitigation projects in vulnerable communities had been carried out through mobilization of communities by newly established mahalla committees, responsible for spotlighting high risk disaster areas and developing plans for DRR within their communities.

As a component of coordination, the DRR preparedness included the creation of national coordination councils under the MoES. In order to ensure coordination between hakimiyats and education and state health institutions, regional and oblast coordination councils had been created.

### ***Projects in Kyrgyzstan***

**Ms. Janna Salieva**, IOM project manager, presented DIPECHO programme interventions in Kyrgyzstan. At the beginning of her presentation, she mentioned that since 2003 DIPECHO had been funding projects in the country with the following partners: ACTED (since 2003), ACT Central Asia (since 2005), IOM (since 2005), NRC (2003), UNDP (since 2007) and Save the Children Foundation (since 2008). Their main partners today are the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Science Institute, the Management Academy under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, local state bodies and NGOs.

The interventions covered the following components:

1. Natural disaster risk management at the local level: early warning system, mapping, computerization of data and capacity development of local communities.
2. Institutional interrelation: coordination and institutional enhancement. A Scientific and Technical Council was created to ensure coordination between science institutes and state ministries.
3. Awareness-raising, education: information campaigns among the population. 1,700 training courses for over 800,000 people in 270 villages were organized under the DIPECHO 3, 4 and 5.
4. Infrastructure and small-scale mitigation works at the community level: infrastructure support and structural and non-structural mitigation works.
5. Stockpiling of food and non-food items for emergency situations.

She also identified the main problems encountered by the partners during their intervention:

- Sustainability of volunteer rescue teams and their equipment
- Gaps in the legal framework concerning civil defence at the level of local governments

- Deficiencies in legal mechanisms regarding coordination of state institutions, local governments and local communities in the sphere of civil defence
- Weak motivation delivered by the programme for local partners, including schools and state administrations
- Migration
- No integration of gender aspects in local governments activities relating to civil defence
- Absence of administrative reports at the level of local governments
- Absence of detailed expenditure in the budget classification for preventive measures and measures for the elimination of disaster consequences at the level of local governments

### ***Projects in Turkmenistan***

**Mr. Guvanch Khummedov**, (Project Coordinator of the Netherlands Red Cross and the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan) made the presentation on DIPECHO projects in Turkmenistan.

Mr. Khummedov advised that two international organizations, the Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC) and International Organization for Migration (IOM), had DIPECHO operations in the country. Although IOM implements projects on capacity development for local governments and communities exposed to natural disasters, the NLRC prepares local communities and schools to better respond to natural disasters. School programmes and curricula now include preparing for natural disasters and first aid.

Mr. Khummedov also suggested:

- To improve the system of motivation for volunteers, including school teachers;
- To stimulate the participation of communities in the decision-making concerning preparation and response to emergency situations;
- To expand the list of potential grant recipients and increase the number of practicable measures
- To include innovative methods and develop new training materials taking the age difference into consideration
- To develop structure and methodology of monitoring
- To assess vulnerability and capacity (VCA)

### ***ISDR intervention in the Region***

**Ms. Goulsara Pulatova**, regional coordinator of UNISDR secretariat office in Central Asia, presented the current situation of the implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action and Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters in Central Asia.

In her presentation she highlighted three strategic goals of HFA<sup>3</sup> in Central Asia:

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<sup>3</sup> Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 was adopted by 168 countries at the 2nd World Conference on the Disaster Risk Reduction in January 2005 in Kobe, Japan.



- More effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction;
- The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities of all levels, in particular the community level, which can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards;
- The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programs in the reconstruction of affected communities.

She reminded the participants of the five HFA objectives:

- 1) Disaster risk reduction – national and local priority, with strong institutional base for implementation
- 2) Identifying, assessing and monitoring risk and enhancing early warning
- 3) Using knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels
- 4) Reducing the underlying risk factors
- 5) Strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

Although the HFA is not legally binding, it is expected that after the 2010 HFA Mid-Term review, it could become a legally binding document. According to Ms Pulatova, those countries which adopted the HFA admitted that the disaster risk reduction should become a priority for them in the future.

Ms Pulatova pointed out that the HFA legislative and institutional base exists in all the Central Asian countries and National Strategies for Disaster Management exist, are being developed or are under discussion in the region. Meanwhile, the national platform was announced by Kazakhstan but the speaker said that the situation was also very promising in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. She noted that Turkmenistan is not a signatory of HFA.

## **7. Presentation of Government Strategy in DRR and Gaps**

### ***KAZAKHSTAN***

**Mr. Syrym Gabbasov**, Director of the Strategic Planning Department of the M oES in Kazakhstan, highlighted in his presentation that the national platform is based on the national concept of prevention and response to both natural and man-made disasters. This was developed by the Kazakh government in 2005 through a Presidential initiative. Mr. Gabbasov pointed out that the realization of the national platform involves all government institutions, including ministries, agencies, as well as local executives.

Mr. Gabbasov also stressed that Kazakhstan is exposed to a number of well-known natural disasters that are characteristic of Central Asia. The M oES of Kazakhstan has its own strategic development plan for 2009 -2011, which stipulates three main priorities: to develop the system of civil defence, to create a force and material reserve; to prevent, reduce, and eliminate the consequences of both natural and man-caused disasters and increase industrial and fire safety.

The current plan also envisages the creation of an engineering centre in the western part of Kazakhstan with up to a thousand-strong force for civil defence. Mr. Gabbasov noted that the government intends to extend its current three-year strategic planning system to five years.

According to Mr Gabbasov, Kazakhstan has problems in the area of monitoring and monitoring services, which he said are dispersed among various ministries. Therefore, the problems associated with early forecasting and spotlighting natural disasters had not yet been resolved. He also drew the attention of the conference participants to threats which go beyond the borders of one state.

### ***Turkmenistan***

**Mr. Atajan Jumaniyazov**, Head of the Department of Civil Defence and Rescue Works of the Ministry of Defence in Turkmenistan, made a presentation on the Action Plan of Turkmenistan in DRR strategy.

He explained that the government of Turkmenistan makes great efforts in taking measures on forecasting and preventing the threat of possible natural disasters, as well as striving to alleviate the consequences. Turkmenistan is indeed exposed to various natural disasters such as earthquakes, mudflows, floods, and floods on the shores of Caspian Sea, and he pointed to the issue of the Sarez Lake.

Mr. Jumaniyazov advised that The Single State System on prevention and elimination of natural disasters had been established, uniting the efforts and resources of executive bodies at all levels, as well as other organisations, to conduct activities to secure the safety of the population, territory, environment, social-economic infrastructure, material

and cultural values of the state from both natural and man-made disasters. This system works on several levels: national, territorial, and local.

Mr. Jumaniyazov also highlighted the necessity to create and adopt a national platform as a state mechanism on DRR. There is indeed a need to align and improve the system in order to better prevent natural disasters and to increase both population and territorial safety.

For this purpose a recommendation package was developed with the assistance of IOM in Turkmenistan which envisaged the creation of a coordination mechanism between different state institutions. The recommendations also included reviewing the way in which emergency situations are forecast and monitored; identification and elimination of problems; development and signature of documents creating an interdepartmental working group and adopting a work plan with clear identification and responsibilities for each member of the group.

He pointed out that experts from different state agencies had suggested establishing a Ministry of Emergency Situations on the basis of the Department of Civil Defence and Rescue Works of the Ministry of Defence of Turkmenistan and a coordination centre composed of experts specialised in seismology, the meteorology service and lawyers. This Centre would also be responsible for creating a national platform on DRR, assisting in the integration of DRR into state policy and programmes on socio-economic development. It would also be in charge of inviting donor agencies, international organizations and public organizations to jointly work on DRR.

## ***Kyrgyzstan***

**Mr. Taalibek Temiraliyev**, Head of the Kyrgyz MoES department on External Relations and Investment, presented the strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic in DRR. He said that the State's main priorities were to ensure the safety of its people, to reduce losses and to rationalize the use of budget resources. This would require the coordination of all the activities of the executive bodies, local state administrations, local governments, international organizations, and NGOs.

The Interdepartmental Commission on Prevention and Elimination of Emergency Situations, which was created in 2006, was responsible for policy implementation. It ensures the functioning of the Single State System for the prevention and elimination of emergency situations; it takes decisions on the questions of the safety of the population and territory in emergency situations and the effective use of budget resources. Its working body is the Crisis Situation Management Centre, which ensures the implementation of the Single State System for the prevention and elimination of emergency situations.

In the framework of the Hyogo Declaration and Hyogo Framework for Action, the Kyrgyz Republic developed a Strategy on Risk Reduction and a National Action Plan on capacity building on the national and community level against natural disasters for the period of 2005-2015. This strategy and plan includes the priorities of Hyogo Action Plan:

- Development of the national institutional base in reduction of emergency situations

- Improvement of early warning system
- Increasing the education capacity and science-based solutions in the creation of safe environment for response to natural disasters
- Mitigation of the sources and factors for natural disaster risks
- Strengthening of the preparedness in effective response and self-defence against natural disasters

The DRR priority was included in the main component of the Country Development Strategy for the period of 2009-2011, under the separate sub-structure titled "Complex security provision for the population and territory from the natural disasters and catastrophes".

Mr. Temiraliev highlighted the participation of MoES in materialization of the Country Development Strategy and mentioned that the Action Plan and Perspective Development of MoES of the Kyrgyz Republic covering the period of 2007-2010 had been endorsed by the Prime Minister.

Its main actions included the improvement of the civil defence system; creation of the fire rescue service under the MoES; improvement of the preparation framework and the development of MoES's international activities. This Action Plan is the main document used by the Ministry in the preparation of projects for foreign investment.

According to the MoES, the main priorities in DRR are :

- Improvement of the legal framework in the sphere of civil defence
- Strengthening the capacity building of the fire service and mobile rescue units of MoES and local voluntary rescue teams
- Establish the Rescue Services under the Ministry of Emergency Situations in major cities of the country, providing them with modern means of communication and individual safety, small mechanized machinery, rescue appliances, and special rescue vehicles
- Improvement of the state's early warning system
- Establishment of a Single State Dispatching Service
- Capacity building of training centres and courses within the state system;
- Taking measures for early preparation for possible emergency situations, planning and creation of technical and material supply provisions
- Increasing the safety of the radioactive and toxic tailing pits
- Enhancing the capacity of the local communities and populations on disaster risk management
- Creation of effective disaster risk management coordination mechanisms based on current disaster response coordination mechanisms
- Creation of an integrated monitoring and forecasting system for natural disasters based on new technologies and modern methods of distance management
- Conducting mitigation and rehabilitation actions in order to reduce the risks of natural and man-caused disasters.

Mr. Temiraliev also pointed out the problems of natural disaster risk management in Kyrgyzstan which include:

- Practical realization of projects

- Insufficient funding of local government
- Short term nature of projects and programmes on emergency situations
- Absence of sustainability in the projects
- Necessity to plan and execution of trans-border projects

In conclusion, Mr. Temiraliev said that a Scientific and Technical Council under the Emergency Situation Interdepartmental Commission had been set up in 2009. The council plays a coordinating role between the scientific institutions and government agencies.

## **TAJIKISTAN**

**Mr. Oleg Pilkevich**, representative of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (CoES), presented the National Strategy of Tajikistan on DRR. According to him, one of the key issues in the country is the non respect of security norms in the construction sector. The population build their houses in hazardous areas, thereby putting their own lives at risk as anti-seismic norms are not applied.

Digital maps of the geologically as well as hydro-meteorologically hazardous territories have been made (1:500,000 scale). Tajikistan currently intends to resume the monitoring of particularly dangerous geological situations and seismological monitoring, to gear up the main hydro-meteorological stations and to improve the functioning of the state sanitation and epidemiological inspection centre.

The country also plans to conduct a detailed study in hazardous areas, to assess the dangers, vulnerability, and risks of both natural and man-made processes, and to map the areas using the up-to-date geo-information system technologies and methods of distant probing. It also foresees assessing the situation of radioactive, biological, chemical and other hazardous wastes and developing a single methodology on how to assess natural disaster hazards and risks at both national and community levels.

Mr. Pilkevich added that the CoES is currently working on how to improve the communication and early warning systems in vulnerable regions using radio communication and cellular radio-telephones for example. Monitoring and early warning systems were established in 2004 on Sarez Lake to raise the alarm in case of disaster.

In addition, the CoES introduced other projects such as the creation of management and crises centres, the setting-up of emergency situation response funds and reserves, the purchase of equipment and means of communication for teams and brigades, and the creation of professional schools and colleges specializing in natural disaster management.

## **UZBEKISTAN**

**Mr. Fahriddin Gulomov**, representative of the Uzbek Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES), explained that Uzbekistan had established programmes for preventing each type of emergency situation, including both natural and man-caused disasters.

Uzbekistan also has a programme on the creation of territorial and local systems of communication and warning for emergency situations; a programme on the provision of modern rescue vehicles, equipment, and reserves during emergency situations, and the

construction of education centres for training and upgrading the qualifications of MoES rescuers. Moreover, the country has an education programme that specifies the measures to be taken during emergency situations.

According to Mr. Gulomov, Uzbekistan is exposed to all of the natural disasters which affect Central Asia. These include earthquakes, floods, mudflows, avalanches and landslides. He said that in order to reduce the risks incurred during earthquakes, Uzbekistan needed to expand and re-equip the network of stations and to create an analytical and monitoring centre, as well as to upgrade the geo-information system.

To reduce the risk of disaster during mudflows and the rise of water, the forecasting network and geo-information system had to be improved, and monitoring from space should be introduced. In order to reduce the risks during landslides, information and analytical systems, including the geo-information system, distant probing and insurance systems should be enhanced. Maps with information on hazardous areas, including recommendations, should also be provided to the population.

Mr. Gulomov said that the warning equipment of the country was out of date and should be changed to a digital system. There was also a need to create a single automated system which would collect, analyse, and send out warnings on hazards. He went on to say that the rescuers needed to attend modern training sessions and be better equipped. He further stressed that schools, universities and the population at large should be better informed on measures to be taken during emergency situations.

## **8. Introduction and presentation of key topics to be discussed in the working groups**

### ***Linking Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change adaptation***

**Ms. Lina Nerlander** (representative of the Netherlands Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Center) made a presentation on climate change and its impact on natural disasters.

Ms. Nerlander pointed out that the average world temperature had been gradually rising since 2000 due to large emissions of greenhouse gases. This had probably contributed to the rise of natural disasters in the world. She stated that the increase in hot days has amplified the risk of death and sickness in the older population. Rainfall had also increased and caused floods, landslides, pollution and crop destruction.

The rise of temperature had also led to drought, resulting in shortages of drinking water and food. Another effect of climate change was the melting of glaciers, which would have a long-term effect on the water supply of the region. According to scientists, the temperature rise in summertime could be higher in Central Asia than in other part of the world, leading to a higher risk of heat waves and an increase in precipitations in wintertime.

Moreover, Ms. Nerlander explained that as the effects of climate change continue, the risks of natural disasters will increase with varying impact according to the geographical area. She concluded her intervention by stressing the need to better prepare populations for disasters to respond to climate change.

### ***Public and private partnership sector for Disaster Risk Reduction***

**Ms. Nargiz Nazarova**, Representative of the Tajik Babilon Mobile company, made a presentation on the use of mobile technologies in DRR promotion. Babilon Mobile, in conjunction with the Committee on Emergency Situations of Tajikistan and Mission East, participated in a project in 2008 to provide the population with guidelines for conduct during a natural disaster.

The project also included the production of social reels and booklets, the allocation of space on a website and the dissemination of information via SMS. UNITEL and MoES of Uzbekistan expressed their interest in this approach. Mission East, Babylon Mobile and the Committee of Emergency Situations are currently conducting an assessment on how the project has been received by the target audience.

Ms. Nazarova pointed out that the companies wished to develop a partnership with the Hydrometeorology Agency and to set-up a Call Centre to provide information on disaster risk reduction. She also suggested continuing current cooperation. Finally, she emphasised the need to tread careful before sending SMS messages to unprepared cell phones users.

## ***Coordination and networking of DRR actors - The REACT model***

**Mr. Dmitriy Prudskih**, UNDP project manager in Tajikistan, presented the Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordinated Team (REACT) in Tajikistan. He noted the group was established in 2001 by OCHA to provide partnership and coordination mechanisms between the government and the international community dealing with disaster management in Tajikistan. This team currently chaired by the CoES of Tajikistan. REACT activities focus not only on response but also on prevention, preparedness and the overall coordination of the Disaster Risk Management sector. Around 70 member organizations participate in the coordination, and meetings are regularly organized.

REACT has five cluster groups which include the Non-Food Items and Shelter led by UNHCR, Food Aid led by UNWFP, Health led by UNWHO, and Education and Water & Sanitation led by UNICEF. REACT regional committees have also been set-up with the participation of the CoES and different international organizations. Training was provided to REACT members to enable staff to give immediate, good quality, and effective assessment information.

## ***Risk assessment, mapping and mitigation programs.***

**Mr. Malik Ajani**, Project Manager in Focus, explained the disaster risk and vulnerability assessment method developed by Focus in the framework of the D IPECHO programme.

This method included:

- Detailed risk and vulnerability assessment and process of village mapping (from three to five days for one village)
- Recruitment of specialists, including geologists, engineers, GIS experts and specialists on social mobilization
- Coordination with local agencies and national government
- Application of GIS and distance study

Focus conducted risk assessment and mapping in more than 300 communities in Tajikistan, developed and disseminated in partners guidelines. The method was adapted and used in Badakhshan and in Afghanistan and will now be used in Kyrgyzstan with the partners of the Aga Khan Development Network. This methodology is being applied by NGOs, CoES and others.

## ***Capacity building for earthquake risk mitigation and ensuring building safety***

**Mr. Craig Hampton**, Project Manager, WHO Office in Tajikistan, presented capacity building for earthquake risk mitigation and ensuring building safety. In his intervention, he underlined the necessity to construct anti-seismic buildings with the involvement of skilled engineers.

According to Mr. Hampton, the additional construction costs for a seismic-safe building is about 10% of the total cost. He also pointed out the need to train builders to respect the



anti-seismic construction norms, to improve the current building practices which are not yet applied and to favour a building resilience approach instead of the current norms.

The safety of schools and hospitals should also be improved as these social facilities should have a maximum level of risk-free safety. They could also be used as shelters during disasters.

### ***Mainstreaming DRR into local development planning in Tajikistan.***

**Mr. Khusraf Sharifov**, Manager of Natural Disaster Programme, UNDP, Tajikistan, explained how DRR has been mainstreamed in his country. Indeed, developing countries are those most affected and poor people living in these countries are particularly vulnerable.

The purpose of mainstreaming DRR into local development planning is to reduce the vulnerability and increase sustainability in local communities. According to Mr. Sharifov, the situation appears to worsen every time populations are affected by disasters.

His suggestion was to integrate the DIPECHO results into the long-term development programmes of European Commission in the region. In his view, this would help protect the population and key infrastructure.

Mr. Sharifov explained that local communities are rarely consulted and are therefore not in a position to participate in the decision-making process. Spontaneous responses to disasters, including short-term or uncoordinated responses, plus isolated projects should not be an option.

### ***Achievements and gaps in DRR in the region at institutional and community levels.***

**Ms. Madina Aliberdieva**, Project Manager, OXFAM, Tajikistan, stressed the need to better train and coordinate volunteer rescue teams, to clarify their status when mobilized and to reduce the volunteer turnover. She also pointed out the necessity to check if all vulnerable groups, including school children and women, had been properly trained in disaster preparedness.

### ***Mainstreaming DRR into education***

**Mr. Asim Rehman**, Unicef DRR Expert, Regional Office in Geneva, began his presentation by reminding the participants of the permanent danger generated by disasters to the education sector in terms of safety, access to schools and education continuity.

Instead of looking at children purely as victims, the challenge was to use them as effective agents of change. "They can be the ones to bring about the change in behaviour and attitudes of people regarding disaster issues and help to develop a culture of safety and resilience," he said.

He suggested focussing on several strategies under the DIPECHO programme in Central Asia such as the integration of information and knowledge of disasters into formal school activities and informal education. This would provide children with the understanding and skills at the school level to take action when disasters occur, updating basic school preparedness plans, identifying hazards, safe areas at school, and evacuation routes.

Mr. Rehman also suggested conducting risk assessments of existing buildings and identifying the costs of improving schools' resilience to disaster and providing the results for government consideration. He stressed that resilience to disasters should be secured for both old and new schools.

To achieve this, consideration should be given to ensuring compliance with building codes, which in Mr. Rehman's view remains a weak point. He also stated that national policies should include measures to ensure the resilience of schools to natural disasters and should be financially sustainable.

## **9. Presentations of the recommendations made by the working groups**

### **Group 1. Achievements and gaps in DRR management in the region (Rapporteur - Mr. Frank Paepke, DWHH/GAA, Tajikistan)**

- To link the National Strategy on DRR at community level DRR planning with local stakeholders
- To further facilitate linking existing legal framework to incorporate Rescue Brigades into local government entities
- To strengthen and empower the existing structure to manage rapid and slow onset disasters
- To develop a standardized approach to risk assessment and risk monitoring

### **Group 2: Linking DRR and Climate Change and Adaptation (Rapporteur - Ms. Lina Nerlander, the NLRC)**

- To consider at all levels that Climate Change is an important issue.
- To conduct studies with the involvement of key stakeholders such governments, NGOs, communities, and the private sector in order to mainstream climate change into existing national platforms in the countries of the region.
- To create a network of experts from various sectors which would allow the development of adaptation measures according to social economic specificity
- To work on awareness campaigns to address climate change and its negative impact on the population's social economic development.

### **Group 3. Mainstreaming DRR in Development Strategy (Rapporteur - Talantbek Aldashev, • CTED)**

- To allocate more financial and human resources for the implementation of disaster risk reduction policies and measures
- To enhance the role of interdepartmental agencies for the implementation of disaster risk reduction policies and measures
- To develop the networking and regional cooperation of DRR experts in the region including the creation of scientific and technical councils
- To establish a forum on good practices and successful experiences.
- To integrate DRR in all sectors and levels of the countries' development strategies

**Group 4. Public and Private Partnership sector for DRR (Rapporteur- Mr. Aleksey Nikitin, the Netherlands Red Cross)**

- To develop new approaches to public and private partnerships in disaster risk reduction with the support of a working group with various experts from different sectors of activities.
- To provide incentives to private companies which contribute to DRR

**Group 5. Capacity development in earthquake risk mitigation and ensuring safety of buildings (Rapporteur- Mr. Afzalsho Nasibov, Mission East)**

- To enforce laws on construction safety without restriction
- To continue advocacy and awareness campaigns on construction safety measures and the obligation for policy makers to introduce and guarantee international standards in this field.
- To assess the vulnerability of all social infrastructures such hospitals and schools , and to take the necessary measures to reduce these identified risk factors.

**Group 6. Risk assessment, risk mapping and mitigation programs (Rapporteur- Mr. Ilhom Gulomjanov ACTED)**

- To proceed with risk assessment before starting to any mitigation work
- To prioritize the risk assessment and mitigation works and to consider community and sub regional levels as a high priority
- To apply common and standardized methodology and tools for risk assessment such GIS based instruments, and data among stakeholders with the support of the regional DRR experts network.
- To strengthen the capacity of the state system on sustainable assessment, update and control of information on risk factors
- To enhance the technical capacity of communities and States' implementation of mitigation projects
- To allow trans-boundary assessment of risk factors that transgress countries borders

**Group 7. Coordination and networking of DRR actors (Rapporteur- Mr. Jyrgalbek Ukashev, UNDP, Kyrgyzstan)**

- To set up an expert working group which will assess existing DRR coordination mechanisms at local, national, and regional levels in the Central Asian states and which will formulate recommendations in this field

- To establish a Central Asian Countries Coordination Centre for DRR with clear Term of Reference and tasks to be accomplished

**Group 8. Mainstreaming DRR in education programs (Rapporteur – Mr. Asim Rheman, UNICEF, Regional office, Geneva)**

- To include questions of educational support for DRR in state development strategies.
- To carry out school safety vulnerability assessments where this is not yet available and to implement the school standard safety measures where they are not yet applied
- To establish a regional working group involving experts in education which will study existing good practices of DRR measures worked out for schools and will recommend their integration into school curricula with a clear agenda of implementation.
- To upgrade existing emergency preparedness plans from merely nominal documents into workable ones through simulation exercises.

**Summary of Recommendations**

- To mainstream disaster risk reduction in Government strategy as an important approach to scaling up the implementation of the main goals of the Hyogo Framework for Action to build population resilience at all levels
- To set-up a regional working group with various experts from different sectors of activities in order to work on the intervention of public and private partnerships and to deliver practical outputs for Central Asia.
- To work out concrete approaches on how to address climate change adaptation in DRR through studies and the establishment of an expert network taking into account the social economic specificity of each country.
- To scale-up and to improve the coordination of all stakeholders involved in DRR and cross border projects. A regional experts working group should be established to assess existing coordination mechanisms in DRR in Central Asian States (at the local, national, and regional levels) and to formulate recommendations
- To promote the use of education and knowledge as a vector to create awareness and build the resilience of the populations exposed to natural hazards
- To reinforce the legal framework for DRR intervention and the protection of populations exposed to natural disasters, and to facilitate trans-border operations in emergency situations.

## 10. Closing remarks and closure of the Conference

**Martin Landgraf**, assistant to the ECHO Operational Director reiterated the principal objectives of the conference and the DIPECHO approach which largely focuses on pilot projects and on the promotion of innovative ideas. Compared to the magnitude of the challenges, the budget of the programme remains very small, so focussing on innovation, on pilot projects, on showing what can be done and how best to do it makes a lot of sense.

He underlined the necessity for activities which replicate proven experiences to encourage the participation of other actors. It is of prime importance to reinforce institution building within the governments. Governments need to be active and need to have much larger funds available in the sphere of development, which are concerned with institution building.

Moreover, he pointed out that the issue of "mainstreaming" was often mentioned. Mainstreaming through funding by DIPECHO, should be replicated and adopted, and institutional capacity building should be embraced.. There is a particular role for cooperation with the governments involved, which is very important.

He also recalled the notions of "Coordination," "networking," "exchange of knowledge," and "lessons learned" within the countries and particularly across borders. This had been mentioned frequently during the conference and he believed that these notions should be given particular attention in the future.

The topic of Public-Private partnership is relatively recent issue; it merits additional reflection and should be developed further even though direct funding of private enterprise is not in ECHO's mandate.

For education and knowledge as a vector to build up the resilience of a population exposed to natural hazards, Martin Landgraf suggested pursuing this approach and involving the governments and policy makers in order to accelerate the introduction of this aspect into the schools' curricula. He also pointed out the need to reinforce the legal framework for DRR interventions in the region.

He ended his intervention by thanking everyone for their participation in the conference and expressed his satisfaction with the quality of the exchanges.

**Mr. Taalaibek Temiraliyev** expressed regret that the Minister of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic could not participate in the closure due to the preparation of the celebration of the Parliament's anniversary. He expressed gratitude to all participants and especially to the guests who had travelled great distances. Special thanks were extended to ECHO and to Mr. Adam Yao for organizing the meeting and for their cooperation. Mr. Temiraliyev expressed a hope that in future there would be a meeting at the level of Government Heads or Ministers. He also thanked UNDP Programme for the support in organizing the meeting and invited all participants to a reception hosted by ECHO and to continue discussions if required.