

Media Update

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UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 13 October 2022

Climate disasters are hurting countries and economies like never before.

Ever-rising greenhouse gas emissions are supercharging extreme weather events across the planet.

I saw first-hand the devastation unleashed by the recent floods in Pakistan.

These increasing calamities cost lives and hundreds of billions of dollars in loss and damage.

Three times more people are displaced by climate disasters than war.

Half of humanity is already in the danger zone.

The world is failing to invest in protecting the lives and livelihoods of those on the front line.

Those who have done the least to cause the climate crisis are paying the highest price.

Entire populations are being blindsided by cascading climate disasters without any means of prior alert.

People need adequate warning to prepare for extreme weather events.

That is why I am calling for universal early warning coverage in the next five years.

Early warning systems – and the ability to act on them -- are proven life-savers.

This is shown clearly by a new report today from the World Meteorological Organization and United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction.

The report reveals that such services are woefully lacking for those who need them most.

At the COP27 climate conference in Egypt, I will launch an action plan to provide early warning systems for all within five years.

I urge all governments, international financial institutions and civil society to support it.

This new report is yet another reminder that real and concrete action on loss and damage must be a global priority.

Delivering on loss and damage at COP27 will be an important litmus test for rebuilding trust between developed and developing countries.

On this International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, I call on all countries to invest in early warning systems and support those who lack capacity.

Extreme weather events will happen.

But they do not need to become deadly disasters.
