Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan

IOM and the Government of Philippines join forces to advocate for a greater focus on migrants, displacement and human mobility as part of Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies

From the 14th to 18th of March, IOM participated in the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDRR) in Sendai, Japan. This year the conference aims to bring governments and partners together to an action-oriented framework for post-2015 disaster risk reduction (DRR).

The conference was attended by high level participants from governments, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector. IOM joined the conference to promote increased focus on migration, displacement and human mobility within disaster risk reduction.

IOM Director General Mr. William Lacy Swing, one of the panelists at the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, emphasized the need to advocate mobile populations, especially vulnerable displaced persons in today’s world.

IOM together with the Government of the Philippines and with the collaboration of Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) initiative also cohosted a panel discussion on “Building the Resilience of Migrants in Disaster Situations”. About 30 people including representatives from international organizations, NGOs and the media participated in this discussion. MICIC is a state-led initiative to improve the ability of states and other stakeholders to prepare for, respond to, alleviate suffering, and protect the dignity and rights of migrants caught in countries in situations of acute crisis.

IOM was also represented at the Working Session on Preparing for Disaster-Induced Relocation. The session was chaired by Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmed from Pakistan and joined by speakers including Undersecretary Alexander Pama who is the Executive Director of National Disaster Risk Management Council and Administrator, Office of Civil Defense of the Philippines. Mr. Swing mentioned in his keynote address: “based on our 64 years of experience, IOM is committed to help governments implement new frameworks by collecting and sharing best practices, and facilitating planned relocation before, during and after disasters.” The speeches were followed by open discussions from the audience and concluded by Professor Walter Kaelin, the Envoy of the Chairmanship of the Nansen Initiative. Throughout the week IOM also presented its exhibition booth at the Public Forum to introduce its global DRR activities to visitors.