

Monday, 31.05.2010 | 16:50 – 18:20

## Plenary 3 (MON 6.1) Urban Risks - Mega Cities

Today, more than half of the planet's population live in cities. Metropolitan areas are growing rapidly throughout the world. They are increasingly vulnerable, as they condense human habitat, harbour factors of social unrest such as poverty and inequality and expose urban risks related to pollution, health and critical infrastructure components, systems and services. Furthermore, natural hazards like earthquakes or flooding have an impact on urban areas and megacities far above average, leading to increased loss of human life and wide destruction of public and private infrastructure and housing, transport systems, goods, etc.. Mega Cities are predominantly located in developing countries and show often extremely high growth rates. The rise of urban risks challenges a sustainable social and economic development in countries of the South even more. On the other hand, scientists are calling for an increase in urban centres to achieve a sustainable future for a fastly growing global population. Cities are seen as important centres for sustainable human development, but how to cope with the increase of urban risks? What are the key elements influencing urban risks? What additional challenges lay ahead of urban planning in the context of climate change? How can effective risk reduction mechanisms be implemented in existing mega cities?

The panel will address the challenges ahead for urban planning and provide elements for sustainable future cities.

### Part 1: Plenary Panel Discussion

#### Moderator:

**Koppen, Ida**



***Sustainable Development Strategies, Geneva, Switzerland***

Ida Koppen has worked as an expert in mediation, negotiation and facilitation since 1989. She is a registered mediator in the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland; Senior Practitioner Consultant with the Consensus Building Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Vice-President of the Sustainability Challenge Foundation in the Netherlands; and external Faculty member at TiasNimbas Business School at Tilburg University. She has Dutch and Italian citizenship. Her working languages are English, French, Italian, Dutch and German. Her consulting work focuses on conflict management and facilitation in the context of sustainable development and environmental policy. Past projects include Local Agenda 21 for the City of Spoleto, Italy; Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue at PrepCom IV in Bali of the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development for the UN Commission on Sustainable Development; International Consultation on Education for Sustainable Development in Göteborg, Sweden; mediation in *Laag-Holland* (Low-Holland) and *De Groene Uitweg* (The Green Way-out); facilitation of the ENCORE network (Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe).

Since 1994, she is a permanent member of the Faculty of the International Programme on the Management of Sustainability. She was Director of the Regional Programmes on the Management of Sustainability in Dakar, Senegal in 2006 and 2008. From 1999 until

2002 she was Professorial Lecturer of Negotiation Techniques and Environmental Conflict Management at the Johns Hopkins University Bologna Centre. Since 2006, she teaches Negotiation Skills and Techniques at the UNEP/University of Geneva/Graduate Institute Certificate of Advanced Studies in Environmental Diplomacy in Geneva.

She holds degrees in environmental studies (BA, Honors College, University of Oregon, 1980) and in law (JD University of Amsterdam, 1985). She did postgraduate research and training at the European University Institute (Florence, Italy) and, as Fulbright Scholar, at MIT and at the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School. She is a member of the Swiss network of mediators for international child abduction.

### Panellists:

#### **Abrahams, Jonathan**



#### ***Coordinator, Risk Reduction and Emergency Preparedness in Health Action in Crises, World Health Organization, WHO, Geneva, Switzerland***

Jonathan Abrahams is the Coordinator, Risk Reduction and Emergency Preparedness in Health Action in Crises, World Health Organization, Geneva. Mr Abrahams works with WHO colleagues and partners on all-hazards global programmes, technical guidance and networks on health emergency risk management, including safer hospitals, climate change, community preparedness and ISDR system's thematic platform on disaster risk reduction for health. He provides support to WHO Regional and Country Offices and partners for assessing and strengthening the capacity of countries and communities to manage health risks of emergencies, disasters and other crises. Mr Abrahams has been author and editor of articles, technical guidance and learning packages in health emergency management, disaster risk management and business continuity planning.

Before joining WHO, Mr Abrahams was Director, Public Health in Emergencies, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Thailand, and has worked with Emergency Management Australia, AusAID's Humanitarian and Emergency Response Unit and WHO's Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Alert and Response.

#### **Giardini, Domenico**



#### ***Professor ETH Zurich and Director Swiss Seismological Service, Zurich, Switzerland***

Domenico Giardini is Professor of Seismology and Geodynamics at the ETH Zurich and Director of the Swiss Seismological Service. In his position, he is responsible for hazard assessment and earthquake monitoring and alert for Switzerland. His areas of expertise span many fields of research and applications in seismology, with a focus on seismic hazard and risk assessment, including risk scenarios, the definition of the seismic input for the building codes and the safety assessment of critical infrastructures.

He directs international projects for the UN and the European Commission, and was one of the founders of the OECD-initiated Global Earthquake Model program.

## **Krafft, Thomas**



***Director, Geomed Research Forschungsanstalt mbH, Germany***

Biography not available at time of printing

## **Liu, Shufeng**



***President of Baofeng County, China***

Shufeng Liu is part of the Communist Party of China and worked in Xinghua Middle School of West District, Education Department, Propaganda Department of Local District, Communist Youth League Committee of Local District, and Administration Office of Local District Office chronologically.

In 1994 he was elected to Vice President of West District and became in 1997 Vice President of Jia County, and then General Director of Jia County Party Committee. Since 2004 he is President of Baofeng County and Vice President of Baofeng County Party Committee.

## **Molin Valdes, Helena**

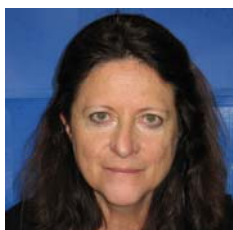


***Deputy Director UN-ISDR, Geneva, Switzerland***

Helena Molin Valdés is currently the Deputy Director of the ISDR Secretariat in Geneva, where she has coordinated a number of projects and tasks. She is also coordinating the Making Cities Resilient campaign 2010-2011. She was a key person from UNISDR in the development and negotiation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2004-2005, she coordinated editing and production team of the publication *Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives (2001-2004)* and was initially involved in developing the UNISDR-WB partnership in the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. She has worked actively in regional networking for disaster risk reduction, with advocacy, on gender issues, and was the senior policy advisor to ISDR in charge of the sustainable development linkages and Inter-Agency coordination.

An architect by training, with a master degree in development planning, Helena joined the United Nations in 1992, when she set up the regional unit for Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in Costa Rica. She also worked for the Pan-American Health Organization on disaster mitigation in health facilities. Before that, she worked for several years heading a Swedish development NGO focusing on local and municipality strengthening, local building practices and social development projects in Nicaragua, after practicing architecture in Swedish private sector.

## Murray, Virginia



**Professor Virginia Murray, FFPH, FRCP, FFOM, FRCPATH  
Consultant Medical Toxicologist and Environmental Public Health  
Visiting Professor in Health Protection, King's College**

Virginia Murray qualified in medicine. In 1980 she joined Guy and St Thomas's Hospitals' Poisons Unit and in 1986 was appointed consultant medical toxicologist. In 1989 she started Chemical Incident Research Programme and was Director of Chemical Incident Response Service from 1995. Since April 2003 she works for Health Protection Agency's Centre for Radiation, Chemicals and Environmental hazards. She has considerable experience in advising on toxicological and environmental public health aspects of response to acute and chronic chemical and extreme event incidents. Appointed as Visiting Professor in Health Protection, King's College, London (2004) she has published widely on issues identified. She is UK Government member on the UN-ISDR Scientific and Technical Committee since 2008. She is a Coordinating Chapter Lead Author for the Intergovernmental Programme on Climate Change Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation, due for publication in 2011.

## Michel, Hans Peter



***Mayor of the City of Davos, Davos, Switzerland***

Hans Peter Michel was born in Davos in February 1954, and spent his youth in Davos Monstein, where he also completed his compulsory schooling. His parents managed a farm, getting help from Michel and his three siblings. It seemed clear that he would become a farmer. In addition to the work on the farm, he completed the correspondence high school exam type C, and continued his education to become a professional farmer. At the age of forty, he studied psychology at the correspondence university Hagen, with history and literature as minor subjects, graduating in 2001 with a master. He completed more than 1500 days of service in the military, leaving with the rank of colonel, four years ago.

Between 1982 and 2004 he managed the biological farm of his parents, together with his wife and five children. In 2000, Hans Peter ended his work as a council politician, as the president of the municipality's parliament and for the next three years acted as governor. Since the beginning of 2005 he is the Mayor of Davos and chairs the governing council of Davos.

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