

**Постоянное Представительство  
Российской Федерации  
при Организации  
Объединенных Наций**



**Permanent Mission  
of the Russian Federation  
to the United Nations**

*Unofficial translation from Russian*  
*Check against delivery*

## **S T A T E M E N T**

**by Mr. Vassily NEBENZIA,  
Representative of the Russian Federation,  
on the agenda item 5 of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council  
"Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance: Strengthening of the  
coordination of the United Nations humanitarian assistance, including capacity as well as  
organisational aspects"**

13 July 2005

Mr. President,

We appreciate the progress achieved by the UN Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the strengthening of coordination of international humanitarian activities and continue to view respect of fundamental principles of humanitarian assistance by the UN, such as humanity, neutrality and impartiality as well as independence and respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, as a prerequisite of any success of its future efforts.

The catastrophic Indian Ocean tsunami has demonstrated a great necessity of forecasting emergencies, preventive preparedness for them and rapid response on the part of national and international humanitarian agencies. In this regard, we support measures aimed at the strengthening of the mechanisms of planning and preparedness in case of emergencies caused by natural disasters. We believe that it is necessary to further strengthen national systems of early warning, damage assessment, and mitigation of consequences of natural disasters, and to build up international cooperation in this field. All these measures have been considered by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005.

We support the work undertaken by UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission on the deployment of a regional Indian Ocean Tsunami Early Warning System. We view this system as a stage in the establishment, by 2015, within internationally agreed decisions, a global disaster early warning system. We are ready to actively participate in the work in this direction.

The magnitude of the impact of the tsunami demonstrated also the importance of having an effective and efficient international humanitarian system, which is capable of responding in a timely and appropriate manner to crises. G8 has pointed it out in its communiqué on Response to the Indian Ocean Disaster and Future Action on Disaster Risk Reduction at its latest summit in Gleneagles.

We consider, in this regard, increased international response capacity to natural disaster first of all in the light of strengthening the coordination capacity of the UN and OCHA. The Office should pay the necessary attention to the strengthening of the coordination capacity at country level, through strengthening the role of the resident coordinator in its capacity of

humanitarian coordinator, and at the international level by enhancing the UN system-wide links with a focus on existing coordination tools.

Another means of strengthening the response capacity is, from our point of view, the establishment of stand-by arrangements with both national and regional humanitarian services providers. In this regard, we believe it is important that the UN use more competitive and of high quality services by specialised agencies and organisations possessing relevant technical expertise and having experience of participation in international humanitarian programs.

Further strengthening of financial response mobilization for the purpose of humanitarian response should be in the focus of attention of OCHA. One of the possibilities we have in this field is enlargement of donor base by encouraging non-traditional donors to participate in the funding of international humanitarian activities.

We view the UN Consolidated Appeal Process as a key tool of mobilization of donor resources. It is necessary to continue to improve procedures and structures of the preparation of the appeals. An objective assessment of humanitarian needs based on comprehensive approach and taking into account of the Government priorities of the affected countries, plays an important role here.

Apart from that, we believe that the appeals should contain elements of flexibility allowing non-traditional donors to participate in international humanitarian cooperation, for example, through "in kind" contributions.

In large-scale humanitarian operations, the issue of transparency and accountability in the disbursement of financial resources both to the donors and the host Governments acquires a special importance. In this context, we appreciate the functioning of the Financial Tracking System managed by OCHA.

We take note of the recommendations by the Secretary-General concerning a possible expansion of Central Emergency Revolving Fund. We believe that the Fund plays an important role as a stand-by funding mechanism for large-scale emergencies, in particular in the first phase of humanitarian response. We are ready to actively engage in the work on modalities of its strengthening in order to achieve a decision based on consensus.

Mr. President,

To ensure smooth transition from relief to development both in the context of natural disasters and complex emergencies, the UN system should pay special attention to the strengthening of its coordination functions in the field.

To be successful, the transitional programs, from our point of view, should take into account national priorities in medium- and long-term development of the affected country. This is consistent with the principle of "national ownership" by the Governments. In the context of overcoming the consequences of natural disaster, it is important to integrate disaster prevention elements into the programs of recovery and rehabilitation.

We support the application by the UN of the "complex approach" to post-conflict situations, meaning integration of humanitarian component into multidimensional peacekeeping operations, conducted under the relevant mandate of the UN Security Council, and nomination, in this regard, of resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator as a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the country.

Thank you.