

DG/2.1/05/195

Sir/Madam,

UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) hosted in Paris the "International Coordination Meeting for the Development of a Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System for the Indian Ocean within a Global Framework" from 3 to 8 March. The meeting benefited from an exceptional participation from 22 Indian Ocean Member States, 26 Member States from other areas and 24 international organizations. It confirmed the leading role of UNESCO/IOC in coordinating the response to build the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System.

At the kind invitation of the government of Mauritius, UNESCO/IOC is now organizing the "Second International Coordination Meeting for the Development of a Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System for the Indian Ocean" in Port Louis, Mauritius from 14 to 16 April 2005. In this connection, I am pleased to invite you to nominate a high-level delegation to attend this meeting, which will *inter alia* (a) be informed on the status of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System and how it satisfies the needs of the participating countries; and (b) seek coordination of donor and other tsunami related activities. You are invited to communicate the names and position of your representatives to the Assistant Director-General of UNESCO and Executive Secretary of the IOC, Mr Patricio Bernal, and send it by email to p.pissierssens@unesco.org or by fax to +33 1 45 68 58 12 by Monday 28 March 2005. I have the pleasure to inform you that UNESCO/IOC will be able to provide financial support, if required, for two participants of each Member State in the Indian Ocean.

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As announced previously, UNESCO/IOC in coordination with UN/ISDR will issue a call to donors, to match national and regional funding requirements as identified in the March meeting. This call is to cover both investments and running costs for the establishment of regional and global systems as well as assessment of existing national capacities, capacity building and public awareness requirements. This call is complementary to the OCHA Flash Appeal, insofar as it addresses the 27 Indian Ocean countries on a longer time frame. The call will be issued prior to the meeting as we are including a last day meeting (16 April) to offer a forum for pledging funds for the different initiatives at the regional and national level, under the responsibility of the different partners identified in the Paris meeting that will be contributing to the formulation of the pledging document.

The working languages of the meeting will be English and French, with simultaneous interpretation provided. The UNESCO/IOC web site <http://ioc.unesco.org/indotsunami> on the Early Warning System Development will be updated constantly and will provide documentation and lists of confirmed participants at the meeting. This site also contains relevant information on the 3 to 8 March meeting.

I would also like to remind UNESCO/IOC Member States in the Indian Ocean of the agreement reached during the Paris meeting, i.e. to nominate in each country, at the latest by 1 April 2005, their official “round-the-clock” (24/7) contact information (prime and alternate) for receiving tsunami advisory information from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) and the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA). In order to facilitate this process a form is enclosed with this letter. Please send this information to Patricio Bernal (ADG/IOC) through email p.bernal@unesco.org with a copy to Dr. François Schindel  (Chair of the International Coordination group for the Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific - ICG/ITSU) through email f.schindele@unesco.org.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ko chiro Matsuura