



# G20 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION WORKING GROUP MINISTERIAL MEETINGS NEWSLETTER

Edition: October 2025 | Location: Stellenbosch, South Africa

Theme: "Advancing Global Resilience and Commemoration of the International Day for Disaster Reduction"



@NationalCOGTA

Theme: "Every Municipality must work"



# EDITORIAL COMMENT

## by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs



**Mr Velenkosini Hlabisa MP**  
Minister of Cooperative Governance and  
Traditional Affairs, Republic of South Africa

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I reflect on the outcomes of the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Ministerial Segment held under South Africa's Presidency. This milestone moment reaffirmed our collective commitment to strengthening global cooperation for a safer, more resilient world — one where no nation is left behind in the face of escalating climate and disaster risks.

The deliberations during this Ministerial Segment demonstrated the power of solidarity and multilateralism. We have witnessed a shared resolve among G20 Members, Invited Countries, and International Organizations to move decisively from commitments to concrete action — particularly in advancing the implementation of the *Voluntary High-Level Principles for Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction*, scaling up *Early Warning for All*, thus ensuring that resilience investments are inclusive and sustainable.

As Ministers, we carry the responsibility to translate Policy Dialogue into impact on the ground. Through the G20 DRR Working Group, we are deepening our collaboration across borders, sectors, and communities. This is vital to achieving our shared vision of a world that anticipates, prevents, and withstands disasters — protecting lives, livelihoods, and development gains.

South Africa remains deeply committed to steering this agenda forward, grounded in the principles of *Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability*. Let us continue to build on the momentum from this Ministerial Segment to deliver tangible outcomes that empower the most vulnerable, strengthen global Early Warning coverage, and integrate DRR into every facet of sustainable development planning.

Together, we can ensure that our legacy as G20 partners is one of foresight, compassion, and resilience for generations to come.

Ahead of the Ministerial meetings, a Ministerial Outreach Event, led by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Mr Velenkosini Hlabisa was held on 22 September 2025 in Cape Town, themed "*Coastal Protection and Ecosystem-Based Approaches*." The event showcased practical interventions to protect vulnerable coastal communities from climate-related hazards. Delegates visited Green Point Urban Park and the Atlantic coast on 8 October 2025, observing restoration projects that integrate Nature-based Solutions into urban resilience planning.

# MINISTERIAL SEGMENTS

## Setting the Scene

South Africa, as Chair of the G20 DRR Working Group, hosted the Ministerial Meetings from 12–13 October 2025 in Stellenbosch within the City of Cape Town, Western Cape. This historic gathering marked the culmination of South Africa's leadership of the Working Group, underlining the country's commitment to fostering global cooperation in reducing disaster risks and advancing the *Early Warnings for All* (EW4ALL) initiative.

The meetings coincided with the **International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction – IDDR (13 October)**, reinforcing the global call to action for *resilient communities and inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS)*. The Meetings led by the Minister of COGTA, Minister Velenkosini Hlabisa, were attended by the International Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Heads of Delegations, International Organisations, National House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders (NHTKL), Technocrats, Private Sector, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

## Ministerial Side Event: Solidarity and Resilience

A Side Event on 12 October 2025 titled, "*Advancing DRR in International Collaboration and Solidarity for EWS*" provided a platform for countries and partners to share innovative practices and experiences in Multi-Hazard Early Warning, community engagement, and cross-border cooperation. Speakers highlighted the importance of bridging science, policy, and

local knowledge to ensure no one is left behind.

**[“Early warnings are not a luxury — they are a lifeline. And cooperation is the code that unlocks that lifeline for all.”, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs]**

## Messages of Leadership and Collaboration

- The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Mr Velenkosini Hlabisa welcomed delegates, highlighted the spirit of camaraderie and shared purpose driving South Africa's G20 DRR leadership.
- The Chairperson of the DRR Working Group, Dr Elias Sithole, reaffirmed the role of the G20 DRR Working Group as a platform for collective global action, emphasizing that “*resilience is built through partnership, trust, and solidarity.*”
- Ministers and Heads of Delegations from G20 Members and Invited countries expressed appreciation for South Africa's inclusive approach and effective facilitation of consensus-building.

## **KEY OUTCOMES OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS**

The Cape Town Ministerial Meetings concluded with major outcomes that signal renewed momentum for risk-informed investment and for strengthening global resilience.



## **Launch of South Africa's EW4ALL Roadmap**

- The Minister of COGTA, Mr Velenkosini Hlablisa in collaboration with the Deputy Minister of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, Mr Narend Singh; launched South Africa's EW4All Roadmap on 12 October 2025.
- This milestone aligns with the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's global initiative and sets a model for integrated, people-centred EWS in Africa.
- The event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony, symbolizing a national step toward safeguarding lives and livelihoods through Anticipatory Action.

The Road Map outlines national priorities to expand risk communication, strengthen local capacities, and leverage cutting-edge technology and data analytics to ensure that every community is protected. This represents an important transition from communicating in addition to ***“what the weather will be to what the weather will do”***, Mr Narend Sigh, Deputy Minister: Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

***“South Africa is proud to launch our national EW4All Roadmap, making us the first G20 country to present a national strategy at this forum – a reminder that the G20 has a critical role to play in protecting humanity from the devastating impacts of hydrometeorological disasters.”***, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

## **Launch of Key Working Group Products**

The Ministerial Meeting on 13 October 2025, saw the launch of a series of flagship knowledge products and technical compendiums that were produced under the South African Presidency. These included thematic reports on risk transfer solutions to support the most vulnerable, the scaling-up of cell broadcasting, an analysis of disaster resilient housing and facilities, a review of traditional housing designs and a compendium on good practices in Nature-based Solutions.

In addition to these, the DRR Working Group produced a Recovery Readiness Assessment Framework. Member States recognised this as ‘a valuable voluntary tool for proactive, inclusive, and sustainable recovery planning’ (G20 DRR Working Group Ministerial Declaration).

## **Endorsement of the Voluntary High-Level Principles for Investing in DRR**

Developed under the leadership of the South African Presidency, the seven Voluntary High-Level Principles provide a flexible Framework that countries can adapt to their own national contexts. The Principles represent a shift from reactive crisis management to proactive prevention—placing resilience and preparedness at the heart of economic and development planning.

The G20 DRR Working Group convened a Ministerial Side Event on the *Implementation of the Voluntary High-Level Principles for Investing in DRR* during the 2025 G20 Ministerial Meetings on 13 October 2025. This High-Level Dialogue brought together Ministers, Heads of Delegations, Technocrats, and International Partners to reflect on practical approaches and policy innovations for operationalising the G20-endorsed Voluntary High-Level Principles. The discussion focused on strengthening the enabling environment for DRR investment through risk-informed planning, financing, and governance systems that align with national development priorities and global Frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Side Event concluded with a strong call to action for G20 Members and Partners to:

- Translate the Voluntary High-Level Principles into national DRR financing strategies;
- Enhance collaboration with development finance institutions to scale up risk-informed investment; and
- Strengthen data systems to quantify and track DRR investment impacts.

This session reaffirmed the G20's leadership in advancing a resilient global economy and demonstrated the collective resolve to move from Principles to practice in DRR financing.

***“As we conclude this meeting, let us move beyond reflection to action, from funding response to funding resilience, and from managing disasters to managing risks.”***, Dr Namane Masemola, Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs]



## G20 DRR Working Group Ministerial Declaration

Prior the Ministerial Meetings, Technical Delegates engaged in constructive negotiations towards the G20 DRR Working Group Ministerial Declaration, affirming the shared commitment to accelerate global implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR (2015–2030). The discussions emphasized solidarity, financing, technology transfer, and inclusivity as cornerstones for achieving resilience for all.

G20 Ministers adopted the Ministerial Declaration during the commemoration for IDDR on 13 October 2025, reaffirming their shared resolve to strengthen DRR at a time when disasters and shocks are increasing, hindering sustainable development and straining national and global response capacities. The Declaration underscores the central importance of DRR for protecting those most at risk and for achieving sustainable development, resilience, economic stability, and prosperity. The Declaration underscores the urgency of inclusive, people-centred Multi-hazard EWS and affirms that the cost of inaction is larger than the cost of action. It further highlights the urgent need to invest in resilient and inclusive infrastructure, recognizing that building resilience is essential to safeguarding lives, livelihoods, and long-term prosperity for all nations.

**[“We are encouraged that the Ministerial Declaration will assist all of us in building a safer and more resilient world.”, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs]**

## G20 Ministerial Side Event on Scaling Up Investment in DRR

The 2025 Global Assessment Report on DRR highlights a stark mismatch between rising global risks and current investment in resilience. It estimates disaster costs now exceed \$2.3 trillion annually, including cascading and ecosystem impacts. The Political Declaration of the High-Level Meeting on the Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework for DRR (2015-2030) expressed concern that investments in DRR remain inadequate.

The adoption of the G20 High-Level Voluntary Principles for Investing in DRR is a milestone providing concise, forward-looking guidance to shift from reactive response to proactive, risk-informed investment. These Principles offer a flexible framework to:

- Systematize DRR financing
- Strengthen governance
- Foster collaboration across public and private sectors
- Enhance International Cooperation.

In enhancing implementation of the High-Level Voluntary Principles for Investing in DRR, Minister Hlabisa led a Ministerial Side Event on Scaling Up Investment in DRR on 21 November 2025. The Theme for the event was, “From Risk to Resilience: Scaling Up Investment in DRR”. This Theme underscored South Africa’s G20 Presidency commitment to champion action that strengthens disaster resilience and response globally. Key Highlights from Minister Hlabisa included:

- Urgency of Action: Rising global risks – climate change, urbanisation, ecosystem degradation, and inequality – demand proactive investment in resilience.
- South Africa’s Experience: Events like the 2022 KwaZulu-Natal floods and recurring droughts illustrate that the cost of inaction far outweighs preparedness.

In Scaling Up Investments in DRR, Government is embarking on the following initiatives:

- Launch of the Early Warning for All Road Map
- Review of the Disaster Management System to integrate resilience into planning, budgeting, and infrastructure
- Call for Partnerships: Scaling Up Investment requires collaboration among governments, private sector, development finance institutions, researchers, and communities
- Global Alignment: The event supported the G20 High-Level Voluntary Principles for Investing in DRR, aligning with Agenda 2063, the Sendai Framework, and the Sustainable Development Goals
- Vision for Resilience: Building communities that can withstand shocks while preserving dignity and livelihoods through strategic partnerships and innovative financing.

**[“Together, we can build a future marked by resilience and sustainability, where communities thrive even in the face of adversity.”, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs]**



## **Moments to Remember**

Highlights from the Ministerial Meetings included:

- Warm reception at the Welcome Cocktail Reception at Asara Wine Estate on 10 October 2025, hosted by the Western Cape Provincial Government.
- The inspiring EW4ALL Road Map Launch Ceremony on 12 October 2025 which was hosted by the Climate Risk Early Warnings Systems (CREWS). The event showcased the power of collaboration through Solidarity in strengthening DRR and supporting the global ambition of EW4ALL.
- Productive Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration at the Lord Charles Hotel, led by the Minister of COGTA on the day of the commemoration of the IDDR on 13 October 2025.
- Ministerial Side Event on the Implementation of the Voluntary High-Level Principles for Investing in DRR
- Hosted by Santam, the G20 DRR Working Group Gala Dinner brought together Ministers, Deputy Ministers, NHTKL Representatives, Technical Delegates, International Partners, Private Sector and NGOs. This Gala Dinner provided an opportunity to celebrate milestones in South Africa's leadership towards hosting of the G20 DRR Working Group Meetings. It also recognized the role played by the Private Sector in supporting Government in resilience building. The Minister of COGTA also took an opportunity to commend Santam for the long standing partnership with Government in advancing community resilience in risk reduction, including through initiatives such as the Partnership for Risk and Resilience Programme.

The 2025 G20 DRR Ministerial Meetings showcased the power of unity, leadership, and foresight in advancing a safer and more resilient world. As South Africa concludes its Chairship, it leaves behind a legacy of collaboration, innovation, and hope—anchored in the belief that *together, we can prevent tomorrow's disasters today.*

## **Looking Ahead**

As the G20 DRR Working Group concluded its Meetings, Members reaffirmed their commitment to:

- Strengthen Anticipatory and Risk-informed Action globally;
- Scale up investments in resilience-building;
- Enhance cooperation between G20 Members and developing economies; and
- Support the next G20 Presidency in carrying forward the DRR Agenda.

The outcomes of the Ministerial discussions and the Declaration will inform the G20 Leaders' Summit in November 2025, reinforcing DRR as a pillar of sustainable development and global solidarity.

## **Appreciation**

The Government of South Africa extends gratitude to G20 Member States, Invited countries, and International Organizations, including the UNDRR, for their Secretariat role and technical support throughout the Presidency's hosting period.

Deep appreciation also goes to the Deliverable Leads and Knowledge Partners whose expertise and collaboration have been central to the achievement of the G20 DRR Working Group Meetings under South Africa's Presidency.

Special thanks is also conveyed to the Host Cities of the G20 DRR Working Group Meetings in 2025: eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government, City of Johannesburg and Gauteng Provincial Government and the City of Cape Town, and Western Cape Government, for their logistical coordination and hospitality.



<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCxD6G>

## Key Quotes

“No one is safe until everyone is protected. Disaster Risk Reduction must be people-centred and future-focused.”

— *Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, South Africa*

“By driving smarter public and private investments, we reduce existing risks, prevent new ones, and build resilient economies, societies, and natural systems.”,

- *Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, South Africa*























# From Risk to Resilience: Scaling Up Investment in Disaster Risk Reduction

G20 Leaders' Summit – Side Event

