



INVITATION

On the occasion of the 70th session of the International Law Commission at the United Nations Headquarters in NY

H.E. Ambassador María Emma Mejía,
Permanent Representative of Colombia to the
United Nations

Invites you to an
Interactive Panel Discussion

on

**The ILCs Draft Articles on the Protection of Persons in
the Event of Disasters**

Chaired by
Eduardo Valencia Ospina,
Chair of the International Law Commission for its 70th
session

Friday 18th May, 2018
15:00-18:00 hrs
CR 1 - UNHQ

RSVP: <http://bit.ly/2rFCsrm>

ILC's Draft Articles on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters

On the occasion of the 70th session of the International Law Commission

On the topic of the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters, a *disaster*, as defined by the International Law Commission (ILC), means “a calamitous event or series of events resulting in widespread loss of life, great human suffering and distress, mass displacement, or large-scale material or environmental damage, thereby seriously disrupting the functioning of society.” Such disasters have become more and more common and intense in the past years, creating social, economic and in some cases even political havoc. Managing them, therefore, becomes of great importance for societies to avoid and, in any case, be prepared for in the event of their occurrence. As their frequency and intensity knows no national borders, this is a matter that concerns all of us. Therefore, having an international legal framework dealing with this issue becomes of the utmost necessity for the international community as a whole.

This is why since 2007 the ILC commenced work on the topic of the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters and thereafter was guided by eight reports submitted by the Special Rapporteur, Eduardo Valencia-Ospina. In 2016, at its 68th session, the ILC completed on second reading a full set of eighteen draft articles with commentaries on this topic and recommended by consensus to the United Nations General Assembly that it elaborate a convention based on the Draft Articles. After being discussed in the Sixth Committee, the General Assembly approved Resolution 71/141 on 13 December 2016, by which it took note of the Draft Articles and invited Governments to submit comments concerning the ILC recommendation that a convention be elaborated on the basis of its text. To this effect, it decided to include in the provisional agenda of its 73rd session (2018) an autonomous item entitled “Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters”.

The adoption of this resolution attests to the contemporary relevance that all nations recognize to the topic and the urgency of formalizing a decision along the lines recommended by the ILC. On the very special occasion of its commemorative 70th session, which is also the year in which the General Assembly will discuss the ILC's consensus recommendation to elaborate a convention on the basis of the draft articles, the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations is pleased to sponsor a panel discussion on the topic, chaired by Mr. Valencia-Ospina and with the participation of experts from different related fields of work, including the academy, international organizations and the ILC itself.

The panel will consider the ILC's work on the topic from different perspectives with the objective of enriching the discussions that will be held in the Sixth Committee during the second semester of 2018.

PROGRAM

15:00 – 15:30 Opening remarks

H.E. María Emma Mejía, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations Dr. Eduardo Valencia-Ospina – Member of the ILC and Special Rapporteur on the topic

15:30 – 17:30 Panelists' presentations and panel discussion and Q&A

Panelists

H.E. Maria Lehto

Dr. Lehto is a Senior Expert at the Legal Service of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland since 2014. She has served formerly, inter alia, as Finland's Ambassador to Luxembourg (2009–2014), Director of the Unit for Public International Law of the MFA (2000–2009) and as Legal Adviser of the Finnish UN Mission in New York (1995–2000). Dr Lehto is member of the UN International Law Commission (2017- 2021) and Special Rapporteur for the topic “Protection of the Environment in Relation to Armed Conflicts”.

Professor Dr. Giulio Bartolini

Professor Bartolini is an Associate Professor of International Law at the Department of Law, at the Roma Tre University where he teaches International Humanitarian Law and International and European Disaster Law (Jean Monnet Module). He is also responsible of the Roma Tre International Humanitarian Law Legal Clinic. LL.M. in Political Science (Siena), PhD in International and European Law (La Sapienza University, Rome), Prof. Bartolini has also obtained the Diploma in Human Rights Law by the European University Institute. He acted as member of the board of the Italian Society of International Law (2009- 2012, President Prof. Gaja). He has published two books and numerous articles in legal journals and edited volumes, mainly in the area of international humanitarian law, international responsibility, international disaster law, human rights law, and history of international law.

Dr. Isabelle Granger

Dr. Isabelle Granger joined the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as Legislative Advocacy Coordinator, Policy and Diplomacy Unit, in January 2017. In her current capacity, she directs the global Disaster Law Program and supports the development of legislative advocacy initiatives by the IFRC. Previously, Dr. Granger served as IFRC Disaster Law Program Coordinator for the Americas (2009-2016) and as IFRC Senior Legal Advisor to the Tsunami Operation in South-East Asia (2005-2009). Dr. Granger earned her graduate degree in Civil Law from the University of Montreal, her Juris Doctor from the University of Ottawa and her Master in Business Administration from HEC Montreal. Her experience also includes providing legal advice to the IFRC’s response operations including the Indian Ocean tsunami (2005-2009), the Haiti Earthquake in 2010 and Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and the Ecuador Earthquake in 2016. She is a registered lawyer at the Quebec Bar in Canada since 2001.

Dr. Marco Toscano-Rivalta

Dr. Toscano-Rivalta is the Chief of the New York Liaison Office of United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and previously the Chief for Intergovernmental Policy Support and Legal Questions. He was closely engaged in the development and the negotiations of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Mr. Toscano- Rivalta has over twenty years of experience with the United Nations and other international organizations in the areas of refugee protection, humanitarian relief, promotion and protection of human rights, justice administration, sustainable development and disaster risk management. He holds a Law degree and PhD in International Human Rights Law, and has served as a lecturer to the Universities of Bologna, Siena, Roma e Trento (Italy) and John Hopkins.

About the Special Rapporteur Dr. Eduardo Valencia-Ospina

Dr. Valencia-Ospina is member of the UN International Law Commission (2006-2021) Special Rapporteur for the topic “Protection of Persons in the Event of Disaster” (2006-2016) and chairman of the ILC for its 70th session. Doctor in Legal and Economic Sciences (Universidad Javeriana, Bogota) with an L.L.M. and pre-doctoral studies in International Law (Harvard University), he was a UN career official, member of the UN Legal Service and elected as Deputy Registrar (1984-1986) and Registrar (1987-2000) of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). He was the fourth President of the Latin American Society of International Law (LASIL) (2014-2016) and Founder and Editor in Chief of the magazine “The Law and Practice of International Courts and Tribunals” and of the Series “International Litigation in Practice”. Dr. Valencia-Ospina is a consultant in international law, including in international judicial and arbitral proceedings to the Government of Colombia and several other States (2000-present) as well as the Law Firm Eversheds/Frere Cholmeley (London,Paris) (2000-2010). Currently, he is an Arbitrator in an International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) Tribunal and first Vice-president of the ILC.