



PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

318 EAST 48TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10017
TEL: (212) 826 0840 FAX: (212) 826 2964

**STATEMENT BY MR KENNETH WONG, DELEGATE TO THE 76TH
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ON
AGENDA ITEM 87, PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF
DISASTERS, SIXTH COMMITTEE,
18 OCTOBER 2021**

[Please check against delivery.]

Mdm Chair,

1 Singapore reiterates our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his past reports on this agenda item, and the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Eduardo Valencia-Ospina, for his work which has led to the present set of Draft Articles.

2 The protection of persons in the event of disasters is an important issue for the Southeast Asian region and the world. In the past year, Southeast Asia was affected by typhoons, floods and earthquakes. COVID-19 has compounded the challenge, slowing down disaster response and the deployment of aid to affected communities. Singapore stands in solidarity with our neighbours and all countries around the world affected by disasters. We will endeavour to respond when called upon to do so.

3 Singapore appreciates the efforts to reflect the diversity of State practice in the Draft Articles. I would like to highlight three examples. First, Draft Article 9 recognises the importance of disaster risk reduction measures, including through appropriate national legislation and policies at all levels. This draws on bilateral, regional and multilateral instruments concerned with reducing the risk of disasters. These include the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response. Second, Draft Article 10, paragraph 2, emphasises the primary role of the affected State in exercising direction, control, co-ordination and supervision of the assistance within its territory. Third, Draft Article 12, paragraph 2, provides that requested entities should expeditiously give due consideration and reply to the affected State. These principles have informed Singapore's contributions in support of neighbouring and regional countries affected by disasters, both bilaterally and through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management.

4 The Draft Articles represent an important contribution to the field of international law governing response to disasters and can serve as a useful reference for States and others engaged in disaster relief. Given the important contribution they have made to this field of international law, it may be helpful to consider how the Draft Articles are already informing ongoing discourse on States' responses to disasters and interacting with other legal frameworks.

5 We note the divergence of views concerning future action and have taken note of the comments by other delegations on whether to elaborate a convention on the basis of these Draft Articles. We look forward to further discussions on this issue.

6 Thank you.