Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations

Statement by Hungary
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Mr. Chair,

Hungary fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States, and would like to offer some additional remarks in its national capacity

principles underpinning the topic. In particular, we welcome the emphasis on the sovereignty of States. While the commentary on the preamble is relatively brief, the commentaries to other articles most notably Article 13, which addresses the consent of the affected State help to fill whole, the message is clear: sovereignty entails significant responsibility, particularly with respect to the human rights-related duties that States owe to their populations.

We also appreciate that the preamble explicitly states that the Draft Articles apply to both natural and man-made disasters. This approach is grounded in the observation that many disasters are the result of an interplay between human activity and natural hazards, as highlighted by numerous disaster studies.

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Turning to Article 3, subparagraph (a), we note that the definition of disasters includes, among other factors, large-scale material or environmental damage. The commentary clarifies that the ILC recognized that wide-scale damage to property, livelihoods, and economic, physical, social, and cultural assets as well as to the environment can lead to societal disruption. In this context, Hungary would like to emphasize the critical importance of protecting cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. The destruction of cultural heritage can severely undermine social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. In certain cases, it may even contribute to the escalation of conflicts. Such destruction renders communities vulnerable, depriving them of a vital connection to their identity and their past, and exacerbating divisions within societies. For these reasons, we see merit in reflecting this connection more explicitly.

This brings us to the issue of the threshold for defining a disaster, which is identified in terms of societal disruption. The commentary, however, does not clarify whether this disruption must affect an entire society or whether it can also apply to specific communities within a State. Hungary emphasizes that disasters, particularly those involving damage to cultural heritage, may affect individual communities in ways that are equally significant and deserving of protection.

Finally, Article 18, in our view, effectively resolves on the relationship between this instrument and other branches of international law. However, we have heard some delegations express the view that greater clarity would be beneficial specifically, a more explicit statement that, in the event of armed conflict, international humanitarian law takes precedence. Hungary is open to supporting such a clarification.

Thank you for your attention.

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