JINAN CALL TO ACTION: Nurses, Midwives, Health Partners Address Emergency and Disaster Priorities for Safer and Resilient Communities

We, the participants of the 2008 Meeting of the Asia Pacific Emergency and Disaster Nursing Network (APEDNN) and Health Emergency Partners, including Government chief nursing officers, professional association leaders, educators and organizational heads, representatives from areas experiencing complex disasters in conflict areas, representatives of the World Health Organization, non-governmental organizations including the International Council of Nurses and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, educators, researchers and service providers, met in Jinan, Shandong, China from 16-20 October, 2008 to strengthen nursing and midwifery’s contributions to reducing the impact of emergencies and disasters on the health and well-being of communities.

We express our appreciation to the Government of China, national and provincial health and education authorities, Shandong University and the World Health Organization for organizing this meeting and bringing increased attention to the fundamental needs of communities and populations experiencing disasters and emergencies, including disease outbreaks.

We take note of and build upon prior international and regional commitments on improving the capacity of countries in disaster preparedness and response including United Nations Assembly Resolutions (A/RES/44/236)[1] on Natural Disaster Reduction and the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (Vientiane, 26 July 2005)[2]. These agreements and obligations are of particular relevance to the health sector and nursing profession.

We have heard during the past five days from representatives of the People’s Republic of China, Myanmar, Nepal, Jordan, Thailand and many other countries about the immediate devastating effects and long-term impact of disasters and emergencies on survivors, families, communities, health workers and entire nations and the critical need for the full engagement of the nursing sector in emergency prevention, response and recovery.

We note the scope and impact of the growing numbers of disasters and emergencies and the negative effects of these and of climate change on health and development.
We emphasize that the nursing sector is a significant stakeholder in multinational and multi-sector partnerships that will strengthen preparedness for and response to disasters.

We are alarmed by the insufficient investments in capacity-building for nurses and midwives, which are needed to enable these professionals to play their critical role in disaster prevention, mitigation, response and recovery.

We are further alarmed by the slow moving pace of learning from disasters, setting policies and taking action to prevent and mitigate the effects of such events and reduce the suffering, burden of disease and disability, death and economic costs of disasters and public health emergencies.

We issue this call to action urging nurses, midwives, all health and development leaders, educational institutions, governments, health and humanitarian organizations, and civil society to take immediate actions to ensure nursing and midwifery integration in emergency and disaster policy-making and national planning, capacity-building, education, and research, including the application of evidence-based guidelines and policies and community disaster prevention, preparedness and response measures, as well as necessary resource mobilization to sustain such efforts.

**Jinan Call to Action**

We, the APEDNN 2008 meeting participants and network members call for urgent and long-term action to:

1. Strengthen network ownership, accountability and sustainability by developing and putting into action, with partners, an ethically and methodologically sound evaluation and research framework and work plan reflective of the network objectives and priorities, including partnerships, continuous capacity-building and universal access to quality health services, especially for those most vulnerable.

2. Invest in capacity-building for all involved stakeholders/partners and network members by developing network financial management and resource generation strategies and proposals to enhance communications, evidence-based education and training; emergency and disaster response, information-sharing, network membership, web site development and sustained website management and the implementation of annual meetings.
3. Intensify APEDNN’s outputs and impact through a formal, integrated work plan incorporating multiple partners and stakeholders, leading academic and other institutions, professional associations, other networks/alliances and civil society to:

· Test, apply and evaluate evidence-based guidelines, competencies and standards for policy-making and practice;

· Develop, implement, provide recognition of and evaluate core courses for trainers;

· Strengthen curricula; and

· Carry out innovative capacity-building, including simulation training.

Together we call for a broad partnership of nurses, midwives, all health partners, governments, civil society, international health and humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations to address these emergency and disaster priorities to facilitate prepared, safe and resilient communities.

[1] United Nations General Assembly Resolution: International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. A/RES/44/236. 22 December, 1989 (http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/44/a44r236.htm, accessed 28 January, 2009). The resolution, recognizing the importance of environmental protection for the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters and the strong political determination needed to mobilize and apply knowledge and resources for this purpose, called for intensified cooperation, resources and action from the international community, Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to increase public awareness, the sharing of experiences from other countries and enhanced community preparedness through education, training and other means.
The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, adopted in Vientiane, 26 July 2005, addressed the need for effective mechanisms to achieve a substantial reduction of disaster-related losses of lives and social, economic and environmental assets and called for a joint response to disaster emergencies through concerted and intensified national, regional and international co-operative efforts.