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**Statement by the United States of America
73rd General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 90: Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters
Emily Pierce, Counsellor
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Protection of persons in the event of disasters is a critically important issue. The United States underscores its commitment to reduce the risks and impacts of disasters at home as well as abroad. To this end, we are promoting efforts to reduce the risk of disasters and respond to them in a way that takes into account the needs of those disproportionately affected—including persons with disabilities, children, women, and older persons—before, after, and during disasters, and to involve these populations in the design of inclusive strategies and plans to reduce risk and respond to disasters.

At its 71st session, following the International Law Commission's completion of work on draft articles and commentary on this topic, this Committee considered the Commission's recommendation that the General Assembly elaborate a convention based on the draft articles. At the time, the United States noted that this issue is best approached through the provision of practical guidance to countries in need of, or providing, disaster relief, and not through the elaboration of an international agreement.

Our view has not changed in the intervening years. We continue to believe that this topic is best addressed through practical cooperation and guidance. In that regard, we have been pleased to work with member states and stakeholders in a variety of fora to enhance collaboration in this area, such as at the 2017 Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Cancun, Mexico, and the Sixth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas held earlier this year in Cartagena, Colombia. We also support a variety of programs and activities in this area. For example, we support the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center to monitor disaster-related displacement to understand trends and factors that affect displacement so we can improve humanitarian responses. In addition, we are supporting non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government counterparts in Latin America to work with local communities to improve and disseminate strategies and plans to manage the risk of natural and other disasters.

We will continue to engage in such fora and activities to advance work in this area, but do not see a need for elaborating an international agreement, or for further considering this topic in this Committee.