



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
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**INTERVENTION BY MR SCOTT TAN,
DELEGATE TO THE 78TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, FOR CLUSTER 1 DEBATE, WORKING GROUP
ON PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTERS,
SIXTH COMMITTEE,
5 OCTOBER 2023**

Mr Chair,

1 Thank you for giving me the floor. Singapore's interventions on cluster 1 are in three parts.

2 First, on preambular paragraph 5, Singapore is supportive of this paragraph, which recognises the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. We agree with the ILC that this reference to sovereignty, along with the primary role of the affected State, should provide the background against which the draft Articles are to be understood. As a starting point, States should have the right, even in times of disaster, to make decisions regarding the protection of persons within their territories. However, States should be open to seeking and consenting to external assistance where necessary.

3 Second, on Article 3, paragraph (a), we note that while the definition of "disaster" has certain "built-in" qualifications (namely, that the event has to be "calamitous", result in one or more of four possible outcomes, and result in the serious disruption of the functioning of society), it is wide enough to encompass events that fall within the scope or competence of existing instruments and agencies. For example, a nuclear emergency would fall within the definition of "disaster" under Article 3. However, assistance for such emergencies is already addressed in the IAEA Convention on Assistance in the Event of a Nuclear/Radiological Accident. We should therefore consider if any action we take here will duplicate obligations under existing instruments.

4 Third, on Article 18, and flowing from our previous intervention, we consider that it is important to set out clearly the relationship between any new instrument we agree and existing international instruments to avoid duplication and confusion.

5 Thank you.

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