

Foreword

The conditions prevailing in the world, where fast growing populations are coupled with rapidly expanding urbanization and a general increase in poverty levels, are greatly aggravating the disaster risks and vulnerabilities of a large part of the world's populations. This is further compounded by the effects of global warming as experienced worldwide manifesting themselves through irregular weather patterns often with destructive effects.

The need for a scientific approach to disaster risk management based on continuous scientific inquiry and sharing of findings has become one of the key features of disaster risk management worldwide. The existence of a number of global networks for various kinds of incident or hazard management such as those focusing on climate change matters, fire management, management of water courses, environmental management/ conservation, crime, weapons and nuclear power, communications, to mention but a few, is therefore crucial in giving effect to the creation of a platform for practitioners in the affected fields to engage one another on a continuous basis so as to, inter alia, share their implementation practices, peer review one another's practices, and suggest policy or implementation solutions and so forth.

By the same token, from a global perspective, the need for an "integrated risk management approach" has led to the creation of, inter alia, the Global Risk Forum (GRF), Davos, which is a foundation established under Swiss law in the Alpine resort of Davos, also known for the annual gathering of the World Economic Forum (WEF), which serves to contribute to closing gaps between science, policy and application by bringing together a broad group of experts, practitioners, scientists and key players from civil society and the private sector in the areas of risk prevention and risk management. This is made possible by advocating the involvement and creation of interaction between all key players, from line Ministries and disaster risk management authorities to academic institutions, the private sector and communities on matters relating to disaster risk management from a policy, science and application point of view.

With the introduction of the *Jambá* journal, academics and practitioners working in the multi-disciplinary/trans-disciplinary field in the African continent will

have an opportunity to publish articles grounded in DRR theory and not necessarily in that of any specific discipline with a bearing on DRR, such as Development Studies.

As the National Disaster Management Centre for South Africa, we are fully convinced that this journal will provide an excellent peer reviewed mechanism for issues relating to disaster risk reduction and we therefore pledge our continued support to the African Centre for Disaster Studies (ACDS) in carrying out the project.

I hope that those who contribute to this journal and all its readership will be inspired and better equipped to counteract the effects of disasters in Africa through appropriate mechanisms focusing on disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation founded on scientific evidence.

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