

## Report of the IAEE Committee on the IDNDR

George Housner, Chairman

The International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction was established by the United Nations to cover the years 1990-2000. Seven "sudden impact" disasters were identified: earthquakes, wind-storms, floods, tsunamis, volcanos, landslides and wildfires. These natural hazards have caused many great disasters during the twentieth century with large loss of life and enormous property damage. In many instances the impact of natural hazards is amplified by a combination of, for example, earthquake and tsunami, earthquake and uncontrolled fire, etc.

Earthquakes can play a special role in the Decade as they have the potential for causing disasters in 35 seismic countries, and such disasters are particularly costly and, also, the



The Conference Palace

cause of much suffering. Fortunately, the International Association for Earthquake Engineering has member societies in 35 countries, thus providing a community of knowledgeable earthquake engineers, seismologists, etc. These experts can concentrate on reducing the earthquake disasters that may occur in their own countries and, in addition, can engage in international cooperation on seismic problems that are common to all of the countries.

The IAEE committee on the International Decade recommends that IAEE initiate a more active effort to reduce earthquake disasters as part of the Decade. Accordingly IAEE, in cooperation with EERI, has established a Special Committee to prepare report that describes the earthquake hazard and makes recommendations for establishing an active program of earthquake disaster reduction. The first draft of the report has been completed and distributed to the Board of Directors for comments and revisions; the revised report will then be printed and copies will be distributed to all member societies of IAEE so that it can be brought to the attention of appropriate persons in each country and thus serve as a stimulus for action. The report recommends that a non-profit organization be established by IAEE and called the "World Seismic Safety Initiative". WSSI will have the responsibility to encourage research on critical problems and to promote the application of earthquake engineering knowledge to solve practical problems. It will also have the responsibility for organizing special projects and obtaining funding. The committee that is preparing the report includes the following: Hareesh Shah, Chairman; Luis Esteva; Giuseppe Grandori; Wilfred Iwan; Tsuneo Katayama; Charles Thiel and Kenzo Toki. Recent damaging earthquakes in California, Turkey, Iran and Armenia have demonstrated that there is a need for World Seismic Safety Initiative and it is expected that all members of IAEE will support the program enthusiastically.