

## **OPEN LETTER** **CONCERNING THE RECENT CLIMATIC EVENTS IN PERU AND THE RESULTING DAMAGES**

In the light of extreme meteorological events occurred in Peru in the last weeks, we, as the Peruvian Section of the International Association for Promoting Geoethics (IAPG Peru), of which one of the objectives is to promote the correct and effective use of geo-scientific information for reducing geo-risks, express our concern about the negative effects of the climatic processes on our vulnerable society and our solidarity and vicinity to citizens affected by those natural events.

To this regard, citizens, governments, media and scientific community need to take up effective initiatives to promote a professional and scientific discussion about the territorial management in Peru - once the national emergency will be overcome - taking into account the geological and climatic conditions affecting our country. It is clear that geo-hydrological processes such as floods and storms will always occur and affect population settled along the riverbeds and river banks due to ignorance, negligence and/or omission.

We strongly suggest to develop a national reflection about this situation and we invite all the stakeholders to take into account carefully information published by geoscientific and specialized organisms of the Peruvian State. Those data must be shared with population and must serve to make our political leaders aware that in order to stop disasters in our country it is fundamental to invest in scientific research and in preventive actions.

Likewise, in the long-term, it is essential:

- To declare the affected areas as unsafe places and to prohibit of re-building unless to have provided detailed scientific studies in order to understand the real causes of disasters.
- To avoid throwing rubbish in rivers and/or obstruct their flow.
- To prohibit to build within the river course or too much close to river banks.
- To maintain and improve man-made defenses.
- To build a properly sized urban drainage network.
- To build buffer zones along rivers and at the mouth of ravines.
- To carry out preventive actions, even through educational campaigns to population.

It is important to know about the existence of complex geological and climatic conditions in Peru, in order to develop a better preparation for mitigating their effects on population. To this aim, it is fundamental to catalogue and study old events, not only the most recent ones. In addition, enlarging the number of the meteorological stations, useful to forecast more accurately extreme rainy events in the different regions of Peru, is urgent and cannot be postponed.

Finally, the team of geoscientific professionals of the Peruvian Section of the IAPG is available to the authorities to carry out a joint work, in coordination with governmental institutions. We remind that this extreme meteorological events are occurring and will continue to occur cyclically in our country, so that it is important to involve all national human and infrastructure resources to stop disasters both in the near and distant future.

Lima, March 28, 2017

**IAPG-Peru Steering Committee**

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