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For immediate release

Canadian leadership at World Conference on Disaster Reduction

TORONTO, ONTARIO – The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR) is honoured to announce that Gordon McBean will be a featured presenter this week at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe , Japan.

Dr. McBean will speak on January 21st on a panel that will discuss actions to reduce disaster damage in urban centres. Professor McBean said, “The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction and the World Meteorological Organization have been working for a long time to ensure that the Conference would include an expert discussion about the growth in disaster damage in urban centres around the world and the urgent need for action to confront this alarming trend. I am excited that this important issue will be front and centre at this important international event.”

The presentation by Dr. McBean will address ‘Climate Change and Increasing Risks in Urban Areas.’ He said that “I will stress the importance of investing in disaster loss prevention to mitigate the alarming increase in severe weather losses experienced in major cities around the world. Our research shows that society must invest actively in disaster safety if we are to halt and reverse the worrisome trend of rising damage, particularly in urban centres.”

Dr. McBean is the ICLR Chair, Policy, and an internationally recognized expert on climate policy and extreme weather. He is also a Professor at The University of Western Ontario and he was recently appointed Chair of the International Council of Science Union's Planning Committee for the Natural Hazards Research Program.

Paul Kovacs, Executive Director, ICLR said, “This is the largest and most important international meeting on disaster loss prevention in a decade. I am excited that ICLR's leadership in disaster loss prevention research will make a significant contribution to the conference. Our safety research holds significant potential to reduce disaster damage in Canada and around the world. Often the greatest tragedy is that most disaster loss can be prevented through preparedness and investments in loss prevention.”

Established in 1998 by Canada's property and casualty insurers, ICLR is an independent, not-for-profit research institute based in Toronto and at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. ICLR is a centre of excellence for disaster loss prevention research and education. ICLR's research staff is internationally recognized for pioneering work in a number of fields including wind and seismic engineering, atmospheric sciences, water resources engineering and economics. Multi-disciplined research is a foundation for ICLR's work to build communities more resilient to disasters.

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