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For immediate release

**Internationally Recognized ICLR Researcher Takes Important
Message to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction**

TORONTO, ONTARIO – The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR) is proud to announce that Slobodan Simonovic will be a featured participant next week at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan. Dr. Simonovic will address three sessions at the conference, the largest gathering of disaster safety experts in more than a decade.

Dr. Simonovic is the ICLR Chair, Engineering. He is also Professor of Engineering at The University of Western Ontario. Dr. Simonovic has been selected to be a member of the UNESCO delegation at the upcoming conference that runs from January 18 – 22, 2005. The conference will bring together experts and representatives from a wide variety of disaster-reduction stakeholder groups around the world to establish a broad range of disaster reduction initiatives on a global scale.

Professor Simonovic will be presenting the “International Flood Initiative.” He will also bring a message from the successful International Workshop on Water and Disasters which he hosted in London, Ontario, Canada, in December 2004. The message that he will be delivering has two main themes:

- Countries and communities must learn to live with the potential of floods. The key is to learn how to mitigate and minimize flood damage.
- Many of the hardest hit communities, have the least ability to cope financially and need help and expertise of more prepared countries.

Dr. Simonovic will impart this information during three separate sessions of the Kobe conference. He said, “It is an honour to be invited by UNESCO to represent such an important voice in disaster mitigation. ICLR has worked hard to achieve international status and our research is truly being showcased at this conference.”

Paul Kovacs, Executive Director, ICLR said, “Kobe provides an excellent forum for the exchange of information on disaster mitigation. The strategies that emanate from this conference will be instrumental to disaster mitigation initiatives for the future.”

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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