**1. Know your risks.** Study your buildings you live in, work in or own: On what kind of ground are they sited? How might the transportation systems serving them be threatened? What seismic risks affect their lifelines? And how can they be made safer for you?

**2. Prepare to be self-sufficient.** Not just your home, but your workplace too should be ready for three days without water, power or food. After the Hurricane Katrina disaster, some experts changed this recommendation to a week's supplies.

**3. Care for the most vulnerable.** Individuals may be able to help their families and immediate neighbors, but people with special needs will need special preparations. And ensuring a decent response for vulnerable populations and neighborhoods will take concerted, sustained action by governments.

**4. Collaborate for a regional response.** Emergency responders already do this, but the effort should extend farther: government agencies and major industries must work together to help their regions prepare for major earthquakes. This includes regional plans, training and exercises as well as continuous public education.

**Loss Reduction**

**5. Focus on dangerous buildings.** Fixing buildings that are likely to collapse will save the most lives. Mitigation measures for these buildings include retrofitting, rebuilding and controlling occupancy to reduce exposure to risk. Governments and building owners, working with earthquake professionals, bear the most responsibility here.

**6. Ensure essential facilities function.** Every facility needed for emergency response must be capable of not just surviving a large quake, but remaining functional afterward. These include fire and police stations, hospitals, schools and shelters, and emergency command posts. Much of this task is a legal requirement in many states.

**7. Invest in critical infrastructure.** Energy supplies, sewage and water, roads and bridges, rail lines and airports, dams and levees, cellular communications—the list is long of functions that must be ready for survival and quick recovery. Governments need to prioritize these and invest in retrofitting or rebuilding as much as they can, keeping a long-term perspective.

**Recovery**

**8. Plan for regional housing.** In the midst of disrupted infrastructure, uninhabitable buildings and widespread fires, displaced people will need relocation housing for both the short and the long term. Governments and major industries must plan for this in collaboration.

**9. Protect your financial recovery.** Everyone—individuals, agencies and businesses—must estimate what their repair and recovery costs are likely to be after a major earthquake, then arrange a plan to cover those costs.

**10. Plan for regional economic recovery.** Governments at all levels must collaborate with the insurance industry and major regional industries to ensure the provision of relief money for individuals and for communities. Timely funds are crucial for recovery. The better the plans, the fewer mistakes will be made.