



Asian Disaster Reduction Center

## **Statement by Asian Disaster Reduction Center to the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2017

Cancun, Mexico

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,  
Let me start by expressing our thanks to the government of Mexico and the ISDR Secretariat for convening the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The period of late May reminds us of the first UN conference, World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held in Yokohama 23-27 May in 1994. The idea of establishing a regional center in Asia came from the Yokohama Strategy and was directly motivated by the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake that hit the city of Kobe in 1995. ADRC was established in 1998 in Kobe, Hyogo prefecture and is presently working with ministries in charge of DRR of 30 member countries. Having been guided by the principles defined in the Yokohama Strategy, the Hyogo Framework and the Sendai Framework, we have committed ourselves to implementing the DRR Agenda, by focusing on knowledge sharing, human resource development as well as international cooperation in Asia.

At this important opportunity, let us share with you priority issues we have been discussing with our member countries based on the recent progress we made following the Sendai Framework's global targets.

In February 2016, we met in Phuket, for our annual conference, Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction, ACDR2016, and discussed firstly how to survive mega disasters. A mega disaster could directly affect many countries, as was the case of the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami. In addition, a disruption of increasingly interlinked production and supply chains could bring about significant indirect impacts beyond borders and affect the people's life and economic activities. A single mega-disaster can overturn the miraculous economic growth in Asia, directly and indirectly. We thus need to be well prepared to collaborate closely with our overseas colleagues as well as those in individual countries.

Secondly, we have then focused on capacity building for those working for



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national and sub-national governments so that they could address diverse types of disasters, including those beyond frontiers. In this regard, opportunities of training and education need to be more diversified and adapted to emerging demands. ARDC has welcomed visiting researchers from member countries and the network of former visiting researchers is our key asset for future action.

Thirdly, in order to help communities better address the emerging DRR challenges, we have explored how to upgrade community based DRR by applying both advanced technologies that have become more easily affordable as well as locally-based and low-cost technologies.

In 2016, we met again in December, in Kumamoto that was hit by the earthquakes last April. ADRC 23 member countries visited the affected areas, and continued discussing our future priorities by examining the lessons learnt from the disaster in Kumamoto, as ADRC will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018. Asia faces an unprecedented economic growth, progressive urbanization, and significant societal changes. DRR challenges that Asia will encounter for the future decades will not be the same as those in the past 20 years.

Data and baseline information and knowledge sharing remain as one of our priorities together with human resource development. Nexus between development and DRR policies and mainstreaming of DRR into infrastructure development and spatial planning policies need to be further explored. Regarding types of disasters, many of the ADRC member countries have been hit by earthquakes, and we should continue learning from the experiences in Kobe, Tohoku and Kumamoto as well as those in Nepal, China and elsewhere, while more focus should be placed on climate change and climate induced disasters, and adaptation to new normal, in particular, at local level. Hyogo prefecture has been repeatedly affected by heavy rainfall and the year 2018 is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1938 heavy rainfall suffering more than 700 casualties.

We have an exciting one year period for rethinking our future, and we do hope that discussion here in Cancun will help us identify what ADRC value



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added to implement the Sendai Framework.

Finally, let me close my remarks by announcing that, this year, our annual meeting, ACDR 2017 will be held on 2 and 3 October in Baku, thanks to the government of Azerbaijan. We would like to further explore the outcome of this Global Platform in Baku.

Thank you very much.