

Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction  
Cancun 24-26 May 2017

May 25 17.30-18:00

Your Excellencies, Distinguished delegates

Let me use this opportunity to thank our host Mexico for your hospitality, and for the enormous work you have done together with ISDR in organizing this successful event.

Finland organized the 7<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction in Helsinki as European regional chair 2016. I would like to mention three important outcomes of the meeting. First, we need stronger engagement by political leaders and decision makers in moving forward the DRR agenda and Sendai Framework implementation. Second, we need strengthened coherence and mutually reinforcing implementation between the Sendai Framework and other recent international agreements and processes, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the New Urban Agenda - not only in theory but also in practice. Third, we need reliable reporting mechanism based on agreed terminology and indicators.

More recently, in March 2017, Istanbul Open Forum guided us towards this Global Platform in many ways. I wish to commend on the progress that has been made to take into account vulnerable groups and those with disabilities as highlighted in the Istanbul outcome document.

Finland acknowledges the progress made since the adoption of the Sendai Framework in establishing indicators and activating local responses, including those from the private sector. Disaster Risk Reduction should be also integrated in development co-operation, as every aspect of sustainable development can be undermined by disasters.

Disaster risk reduction related to natural hazards and climate change adaptation are highly intertwined and thus it is important to exploit the synergies. They share many mutual objectives and solutions are mutually benefitting. For example, land use management is of utmost importance for both Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change adaptation.

The disaster risk reduction calls for risk management system which consists of prevention, early warning solutions, effective response and recovery measures. Each of these four elements can be developed by three means: legislation, technical solutions and information sharing. It is also crucial to realize that preparedness belongs to

everybody: from authorities to organizations, from enterprises and even private people. However, the roles of different actors should be clear in order to make the system effective.

Civil society has a key role in successful disaster risk reduction. Civil society organisations often have a better capacity to adapt to extreme circumstances than authorities and to reach out to individuals. CSOs can also act as an important resource when authorities are stretched to the limit. When drafting and implementing local and regional plans, it is crucial that civil society is involved in the processes.

The most vulnerable people are often those who are the most silent. We need to make sure everyone is on board and included in disaster risk reduction. As mentioned, Finland recognizes the role of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction.

We need to raise risk awareness and build capacity and resilience of societies. In Finland, vulnerability may increase due to ageing of the population. Furthermore, preventing and recovering from issues like disruptions in critical infrastructure is a challenge.

Finland supports the development of multi-hazard early warning systems through hydro-meteorological projects in partner countries and is actively developing effective, impact-based early warning systems to support society's preparedness for extreme hydro-meteorological events.

Safety and security are important especially in the Arctic. Finland took over the two-year chairmanship of the Arctic Council earlier this month. Two of the four priorities of the Finnish chairmanship are strongly related to fostering safety and security in the Arctic: connectivity and meteorological cooperation. The Arctic Space Centre in northern Finland and its capabilities to receive data from all polar orbiting space crafts has a major contribution to these priorities.

Safety and security can significantly be improved by seamless cross-border co-operation between different authorities, citizens and other relevant stakeholders. Finland has a long history of effective stakeholder cooperation, enabling efficient data and knowledge sharing and effective implementation of disaster risk reduction measures. These aspects strengthen the development of our integrated disaster impact database to support the reporting of the recently adopted Sendai indicators.

Thank you