

Statement by Asian Disaster Reduction Center for the APP-DRR Forum

First of all, I would like to congratulate the Secretariat on the launching of the Asia-Pacific Action Plan 2021-2024. I am sure the Plan will play an important role in accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework for the remaining decade.

Looking back at the achievements since the Hyogo Framework for Action in 2005, significant progress has been made in the governmental efforts, especially in the preparation of emergency response measures such as early warning and evacuation. This is shown in the statistics: Despite the increasing frequency and the magnitude of weather-related disasters, we have seen a downward trend in the number of people killed by such disasters. On the other hand, there is an increasing trend in the number of people affected and the economic losses. As indicated in the concept note of this conference, climate change and increased vulnerability due to rapid urbanization may exacerbate disaster risks. COVID-19 has particularly affected vulnerable populations, worsening their risk of disaster. This clearly shows that our next urgent task is to prevent the recurrence of disasters by fundamentally reducing the disaster risks especially of the vulnerable populations.

Against this backdrop, the Sendai Framework, particularly Priority Action 3, "Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience," is a major challenge for us in the remaining years to 2030. The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) will focus on this challenge and contribute to solving it through human resource development for promoting DRR. Specifically, our action consists of two pillars.

The first is to host visiting researchers from our 31-member countries. These researchers come to Japan based on an agenda set by themselves and visit various institutions to hear first-hand about challenges and efforts in the DRR field. The advantage of this system is that the researchers gain not only the technical knowledge, but also have a chance to perceive the philosophical background of DRR, which motivates them and leads to sound implementation of DRR in their home countries.

The second pillar is the DRR trainings commissioned by JICA. From the next year onwards, we will focus on proactive investment in DRR, and specialize in methods of developing regional DRR plans for this purpose. These trainings will be conducted regionally, including Africa and Latin America, in addition to the Asia-Pacific region.

The two programmes are both targeted at central and local government officials. Since DRR investments are carried out by a wide range of ministries and agencies within a government, the trainees are also from diverse sectors such as infrastructure development, planning, construction, and finance in addition to DRR.

As a conclusion to my introductory presentation, I would like to re-emphasize the importance of DRR investment for reducing disaster risks. According to one study, children born in 2020 will experience up to seven times more disasters than the generation born in the 1960s. The ADRC is fully cognizant of DRR investment as an investment for our future generations.

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