

STATEMENT TO THE ASIA-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FORUM (APP-DRR)  
8-9 December 2021

Numerous reports, from the United Nations and others, have consistently highlighted that the Asia-Pacific region is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and to disasters induced by natural hazards.

Although the number of fatalities resulting from disasters has decreased over the past decade – a trend to be applauded – the number of people affected has declined only slightly, while most of the disaster displacement recorded globally in 2020 took place in the region.<sup>1</sup> East Asia and the Pacific for example, added 12.1 million new disaster-related displacements in 2020, the highest figure since 2016.<sup>2</sup>

It is expected that both sudden and slow-onset disasters – amplified by issues such as unsustainable ecosystem use, climate change, conflict, urbanization, and water scarcity – will increase disaster displacement in the years to come.<sup>3</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic has further compounded these challenges, presenting governments with multiple converging and cascading risks. But alongside these risks, there are also opportunities, including to intensify efforts to build the resilience of at-risk communities to disasters and displacement.

For IOM, this means doing more to address displacement, and human mobility more broadly, in climate and disaster-related policies and frameworks at the global, regional and national levels, including Sendai.

It means investing in partnerships and joint planning with governments, international, national, and local NGOs, and community-based actors, to foster locally owned initiatives, comprehensive solutions, and increased technical skills.

It means basing interventions on continuous assessment of the challenges, needs, capacities, and underlying risk drivers prevalent in different locations. This is especially important in a region as diverse as this one.

Finally, we must also tailor our disaster risk reduction strategies to address multiple, compounding challenges, such as in settings where disasters, fragility, and conflict intersect.

IOM will continue to work with countries to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience for populations at the greatest risk of disaster displacement, while at the same time promoting the vital benefits and opportunities that mobility can bring, when safe and dignified, for those seeking a better life.

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<sup>1</sup> IDMC, 2021, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2021*.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> IOM, 2020, *IOM and the Sendai Framework: A Global Review of IOM's Contributions to Strengthening Disaster Resilience*.