

**Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
Kuala Lumpur, 2 – 4 December 2008**

Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia 2008

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the countries of Asia and the Pacific, attending the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Kuala Lumpur on 2 – 4 December 2008,

Alarmed by the increasing impact of recent disasters in Asia, including Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh; the Wenchuan Earthquake in China; the recent floods in Bihar and Orissa in India and Nepal; and Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar;

Concerned that the Asia and Pacific region, home to 61 percent of the world's population, thus remains by far the region most affected by disasters in terms of human and economic impacts, but also in occurrence, threatening to roll back hard-earned development gains and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the region;

Appreciating that the losses, damages and costs of disasters have been reduced where Governments and the international community made effective investment in the field of disaster risk reduction;

Aware of the changing nature of disaster risk in the region brought about by the likely increase in weather and climate hazards and the increased vulnerability of communities to disasters;

Recognising the need to scale up commitment and promote innovative approaches to reduce disaster risk to achieve the goals of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA);

Noting recent global and regional developments, which are expected to further the course of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in Asia and the Pacific, such as the recognition for the first time of disaster risk reduction by the Bali Action Plan 2007; the South-South Cooperation Program under the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR); the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) resolutions 64/1 establishing a new intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction and 64/2 on the implementation of the HFA; the Tripartite Core Group comprising the Government of Myanmar, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the United Nations following Cyclone Nargis under the ASEAN led mechanism; the cooperation in the area of disaster risk management decided at the Trilateral Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea held in Japan, 2008; the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum's Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response; and the Australia – Indonesia Disaster Reduction Facility;

Noting also other important initiatives such as the calls made at the Seventh Meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee (RCC 07) in Colombo, Sri Lanka to undertake national community-based disaster risk reduction programmes in all communities at risk; the recommendations adopted by the Third Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO)-International Conference on Disaster Risk Management held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran in 2008, the proposed courses of action in advancing DRR at the Asian Conference on

Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2008 in Bali, Indonesia; the call to advocate and implement programmes for the protection of the health of the population before, during and after disasters as in the Global Disaster Risk Reduction Campaign, “Hospital Safe from Disasters”, 2008 – 2009; and the International Recovery Forum as one of the International Recovery Platform (IRP) activities;

Acknowledging the leadership of the Governments of the People’s Republic of China and India in hosting the First and Second Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction and noting the achievements of the Asian Ministerial Conference process, including the raising of awareness at the high level on the importance of disaster risk reduction issues in the region, the facilitation of national activities led by Governments and civil society organisations, the implementation of activities called for by the Delhi Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia 2007 by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Asia Partnership (IAP), including improved regional coordination, regional mapping of activities on disaster risk reduction, and the improved monitoring and reporting of progress against HFA in the region;

Recognising that governments have responsibility to reduce risks of disasters, there is a need for support and assistance from other stakeholders including international, regional and national organisations, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, civil society organisations and their networks to ensure appropriate implementation of the recommendations of the Asian Ministerial Conferences (AMC);

Appreciating the theme and objectives of the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction “Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction: From National to Local”;

DO HEREBY call on regional and national disaster reduction stakeholders:

On *public-private partnership* for disaster risk reduction: to promote corporate social responsibility and business continuity plans; to promote fiscal policies that enhance disaster risk management including micro-credit and micro-finance schemes; to encourage the establishment of multi-stakeholder mechanisms for the promotion of private and public partnerships; and to create an enabling environment for the development of catastrophe risk insurance markets that provide financial incentives for disaster risk reduction.

On *high technology and scientific application* to disaster risk reduction, *including climate change adaptation (CCA)*: to encourage dialogue and collaboration between ministries and agencies at the national level; to promote innovative partnership with scientific communities and academic institutions to enhance scientifically informed national policies for DRR and CCA; to develop partnerships between existing regional knowledge sharing mechanisms and networks on DRR and CCA with other information sharing and analysis mechanisms; and to further encourage cost-effective and widely accessible technologies in support of early warning at national to local and community levels, multi-hazards risk assessment and disaster risk reduction efforts.

On *involvement and empowerment of local governments and civil society* in disaster risk reduction: to encourage ongoing efforts towards decentralising disaster risk reduction by building local capacity to integrate disaster risk reduction into local development planning; to encourage effective national legal and policy frameworks, financial and technical support to local authorities and community-based organisations to undertake DRR programmes; to

enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration with local governments and communities to reduce climate and disaster risk in urban and rural areas; to empower an increasing number of vulnerable communities, including elderly people, children and in particular people with disabilities as a means to promote their right for protection and socially inclusive disaster reduction through community-based disaster reduction activities; to acknowledge that women are impacted differently from disasters and to make special efforts to mainstream gender in disaster risk reduction to reduce their vulnerability; and also the strengthening of legal preparedness for international disaster cooperation, in particular through the promotion and use of relevant guidelines.

On *mobilising resources* for disaster risk reduction: to encourage development of legal and institutional arrangements, including innovative financial mechanisms; to integrate disaster risk reduction into national, sub-national and sectoral development planning; to encourage the setting of voluntary targets in allocating resources including by the private sector; to build capacities to evaluate financial and economic costs and benefits of disaster risk reduction to promote greater investments in reducing disasters in the region; to promote comprehensive preparedness planning to mitigate the impacts of disasters; to promote resource sharing arrangements in the region; to call on the international donor community to increase its funding support for regional and national activities for disaster risk reduction and HFA implementation; and to apportion 10 percent of humanitarian assistance funding for disaster risk reduction by 2010.

On *engaging the media* in increasing coverage on disaster risk reduction: to promote training opportunities to regional, national and local media representatives and journalists to generate public risk reduction and disaster preparedness measures; and to develop broadcasting systems for the dissemination of early warnings for the Asia and Pacific region, in close collaboration with the concerned national, regional and international organisations, local authorities and civil society for conveying warning to the 'last mile'.

On *public awareness and education* for disaster risk reduction: to acknowledge the fundamental role of public awareness and education as the necessary starting point for all other disaster risk reduction initiatives; to promote inclusive education through systematic integration of disaster risk reduction into school curricula, regular teachers' training, informal and non-formal education; to strengthen cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships with international and regional organisations, and civil society; to recognise the value of indigenous knowledge and practices, as well as technological development such as e-learning; and where governments have made it a priority, to call on donors to provide support in building and/or retrofitting schools and education facilities to meet disaster resilient standards.

WE, DO HEREBY:

Invite the Asia and Pacific regional office of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and members of the IAP to carry the messages in this Declaration to the Second Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, in June 2009 and beyond.

Endeavour to report on progress made in implementing the HFA at the Second Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, in June 2009, and to establish regular and multi-stakeholder mechanisms for monitoring, advising and reporting for disaster risk reduction of the HFA.

Encourage the promotion, wherever appropriate, of disaster risk reduction as an integral component of adaptation efforts in regional and international fora leading to the 15th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Copenhagen, December 2009, as suggested in the Bali Action Plan.

Take into consideration recommendations from this Declaration, where appropriate, within existing policies, strategies and action plans for effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, including the consideration of setting targets for public spending on multi-year disaster risk reduction programmes at the national and local levels and report on their implementation at the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2010.

Call on international organisations and regional institutions to provide technical, operational and programmatic support to accelerate implementation of HFA in Asia and Pacific countries, especially the national action plans on DRR.

Encourage all stakeholders to keep health facilities safe from disasters by intensifying efforts in advocacy, support in mobilising resources for structural and non-structural components of safe health facilities, and providing technical support in essential areas of disaster resilient hospitals such as organisation, contingency planning, and preparedness activities.

Call on regional inter-governmental bodies and regional institutions to consider contributing through their existing forums to the follow-up of the AMC ministerial declarations and preparation of future AMCs.

Invite the Asia and Pacific regional office of the UNISDR in collaboration with members of the IAP to prepare a *Regional Action Plan* on the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction as well as earlier declarations in Delhi and Beijing, and to report on its progress at the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and to also call on donors to support the preparation process and implementation of the Action Plan.

Support the Kuala Lumpur initiative on the promotion of public-private partnerships for disaster risk reduction by the Government of Malaysia, the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea, the present, past and in-coming hosts of the Asian Ministerial Conferences on Disaster Risk Reduction.

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the countries of Asia and the Pacific, attending the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and on behalf of all participants, place on record our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Malaysia for their gracious hospitality in hosting and organising the Conference and welcome the offer of the Government of the Republic of Korea to host the Fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Incheon, in 2010.

ADOPTED in Kuala Lumpur on 4 December in the year 2008.

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