

**COOK ISLANDS COUNTRY PAPER**

**SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION**

**18<sup>TH</sup> – 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2005**

**KOBE, JAPAN**

Mr Chairman,

Your Excellencies.

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Cook Islands would like to extend its thanks to you Mr Chairman, the Secretariat of this Conference and member countries for the privilege and honour extended to us to share experiences and ideas.

The generosity and hospitality of the host country Japan and the host community Kobe and their people is greatly appreciated. The warmth of their hospitality has made Kobe in winter a tropical paradise for us from the warm tropics.

Mr Chairman,

The Cook Islands is fully aware that we meet here in Kobe in the shadows of the recent past and yesterday; shaken by the seismic event of 1995 and despaired by the thundering echoes of breaking waters in December 2004.

The Cook Islands would like to extend its deepest sympathy to the communities and people sadly affected as well as our best wishes for their worthy and meaningful recovery.

Mr Chairman

There is no community in this world of ours that is free from some form of hazards that may have a disastrous impact. Where there is a difference is in the vulnerability threshold, which indicates the degrees of ability to cope and recover. Some can recover on their own and others need support. It is this reason that a comprehensive integrated approach based on the spirit of cooperation is necessary at the international, regional and national levels.

